

Day 5

"Day 5??? Of what?" you ask. The blog-a-thon? "Did I miss the previous 4 days?" you wonder. "Where have you been Mrs. Autism with Attitude blogger?" you query. I have been very busy living life in the season of extreme ups and downs. Yet again. Wondering what color is surrender and how does it taste. Surrender is battling resistance. But I am getting way ahead of myself.

It's Day 5 of yet another cycle. My son Kyle suffers from extreme cyclical anxiety type episodes that take him out of commission for 10 days at a time. Sometimes more. Out of respect for his privacy, I will not go into detail here. They are yet another layer on top of his autism and the other challenges he faces. It seems unfair for one person to carry such a heavy load. Actually, it's 3 people carrying that load if you count us, the parents. I know, I know, "It's All About Attitude" and life is unfair so you just gotta make the best of it.

Suffice it to say, life as we all know it in our home, is put on hold and we switch into survival mode during these cycles. I confess to breathing a lot easier when they blow over.

I have been in survival mode for 5 days now and I am not yet seeing the light at the end of this tunnel.

I am surprised that I have gotten this far in the writing tonight. Good sign. I will continue, despite the potential for interruptions. Kyle is peaceful for a few moments right now. He listens to his sister's latest CD and sings along. (www.LeahNobel.com) Her voice and lyrics are smooth like the chocolate melting in the double dutch pan she sings about.

I have been accused of being "real" and that's what people often like about my writing. I take it as a compliment so don't get scared if I let it hang out in this post.

Wisdom from the Trenches

Written by Gayle Nobel

Saturday, 21 May 2011 21:50 - Last Updated Saturday, 21 May 2011 22:48

Confession: I have not been a particularly happy camper the last few days. In fact, I've struggled and have many times, teetered at "the edge". Picture what your edge might look like. I think about yoga and holding a pose and feeling that shake and burn when you know you can't go any further and should consider backing off a bit. Circumstances don't always let you back off in real life though.

Kathy, my friend and coauthor, sent me the following piece of wisdom and I'm thinking it will be useful for all of you. I am still figuring out what it means to me and trying to apply it.

hey girlfriend...I've been thinking more about what you wrote and what is going on for you now with Kyle...and I want to say this..

I think that the universe is presenting you with an opportunity and a question.

"How deep is your commitment?"

You've written two books about attitude with autism...and its easy to practice the tools when things are going well. But it takes as I like to call it, using our life muscles, when things aren't going the way we want them to. So now its your turn. And I believe that you can do it. So can I. So can Frank. So can Neil. All we have to do is practice what we preach.

Aren't friends great? What a gift this was. However, I confess to feeling a huge resistance when I first read it. So I have come back to it a few times, asking myself how I can go on to apply and live this wisdom. Lo and behold I come back to the very *Oxygen-Rich Tools* I have written about in *Breathe*.

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About a month ago, Kyle's music therapist asked me which Oxygen-Rich Tool I would recommend if I was to pick only one.

And the answer is.....

EXERCISE!!!

This tool has worked for me time and again. There is no getting away from the endorphin boost you feel when you push hard and sweat. It just isn't possible to feel as crappy, cranky, discouraged, or unhappy as when you started... even if you are feeling resistant. And guess what? If you are really pushing it, you are forced to breathe deeply at the same time. That makes exercise a twofer!

I share this because I was really in a low spot this afternoon when I set out on the hiking trail. The day had gotten off to a very rough start and I was feeling teary and angry at life on and off all morning.

I plugged myself in to my music and set off in the Phoenix sunshine. Often, when I hike, I prefer silence, focusing on the sounds of nature, my breathing, and my mind's voice. Today, however, there was no way I wanted to hear the complaining and feeling sorry for myself, reliving the mornings events, voice. Music was a fantastic antidote.

My workout playlist got me going right out of the starting gate. Music and breathing was all I could fit in. I made it to the top in record time, whipped out 30 push ups on the rocks, and felt the stress oozing from my pores. I took some time to absorb the 360 degree view of mountains and clouds, remembering why Phoenix is known as the Valley of the Sun. All of a sudden, I felt good. Time to find a rock to sit on and breathe. More good feelings. My world had not changed but for a few moments, I had changed. A shift had taken place. Hmmm, surrender tastes kinda good. My life muscles felt just a little bit stronger.

I am grateful to my husband Neil for pushing me out the door to hike today. "You REAALLLY need to go hike." is exactly what he told me." And he was most definitely right about that.

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Life was still the same when I returned home but I was a little bit different. My resistance had softened.... just a touch. That's about all I can count on right now. Helllooo life muscles. I feel you guys.

P.S.

I may be going out on a limb here, but I am thinking of starting another blog-a-thon as of... today. Do I dare commit? I must be crazy, but writing is so healing for me and it might give me something to look forward to on the roughest of days. Hoping I can figure out how to fit it in when my energy is sapped. I think I can. I think I can. I think I can. What do you think?

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Imagine me here today but 5 years older. :-)