

## Happy Birthday

Written by Gayle Nobel

Friday, 02 December 2011 15:38 - Last Updated Friday, 02 December 2011 18:37

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Today is Kyle's 28th birthday. I almost have to pinch myself to realize this many years have passed since the day my first child was born. It's been such an intense journey with so many ups and downs, challenges and joys, setbacks and triumphs. I am a much different, much better, much wiser person than I was 28 years ago when I first stepped into parenthood. And I certainly don't feel old enough to have a 28 year old son but aging is all about attitude, right?

There are so many things to be grateful for on this December 2, 2011.

Last night we were out celebrating at one of Kyle's favorites, Outback Steakhouse. As a vegetarian, I try not to begrudge him his meat, especially not on his birthday :-). I always keep the gathering small and limited to those who are truly connected to Kyle. This means the guests vary from year to year depending on who's current in his life.

Kyle was having a particularly fantastic day yesterday and it was probably his calmest, most mindful birthday celebration at a restaurant yet. He truly enjoyed the entire experience. He was able to sit calmly and patiently for a very very long time- over 90 minutes.

It was such a joy to be eating out with Kyle, watching him enjoy himself and participate to the fullest extent possible when just a week ago he was in an anxiety cycle which virtually shut him down. I am so grateful for these reprieves and hope we find a cycle solution soon. But for now, these times are the sweet nectar of his life and are to be treasured.

Eating out is a simple pleasure but has not always been so simple for Kyle. If it wasn't for Kim's dedication and belief in the possibilities, AND years and years of taking him out to eat every week so he could learn how to be at a restaurant, we may not have been sitting around that table last night and definitely not for that long.

Each person around the birthday table plays a special role in his life right now and I am so grateful to have everyone on Kyle's (and my) team. It is nice to know we are not alone. (Missed his sisters and brother-in-law but maybe another year.)

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In my life, time has been a healer. When you have a child with special needs birthdays can be bittersweet. They are a time for celebration yet a time when you may be painfully aware that your child lags behind peers of the same age. When Kyle was much younger, birthdays were tinged with sadness. Somewhere in my growing and acceptance process, I have found peace with Kyle as he is and no longer mourn for the son I expected. It is much nicer to celebrate this way and easier to feel grateful for all the little things. And for Kyle, I'm sure it is nice to be loved for exactly who he is.

The great thing about celebrating the day before a birthday is there is still another day of birthday left. Guess I better get on it!

PS In honor of my son Kyle, I am running a smokin deal on my books "It's All About Attitude" and "Breathe". Order one book, and get a second book FREE! FREE?!? Yup, no kidding. I'm a happy mom today.

How? Order on [AutismWithAttitude.com](http://AutismWithAttitude.com) and write the title of the freebie in the comments section on the order form. They make fantastic holiday gifts, ya know.



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