

People often ask me how I came to write "Breathe". Recently, I was interviewed by Kim Isaac for the [RDIConnect Newsletter](#).

Kimberly Isaac has over 14 years experience as an autism therapist and has been an RDI Certified Consultant since 2005. Kimberly practices in Arizona and you can find her at www.autismwithexcellence.com

Following is an interview Kim conducted with Gayle Nobel, author of Breathe.

Kim: Tell us what inspired you to write Breathe.

Gayle: I was inspired to write Breathe by my day-to-day experiences with my son, Kyle, now 28. I was also inspired by readers, often other parents, of my first book, It's All About Attitude: Loving & Living Well with Autism. They wanted to know how to get from here to there and I realized I had a lot to share about thriving vs merely surviving the journey of being mom to someone with autism. Over the years, I had collected a toolbox full of wisdom to offer others in similar situations. Inspiration for my stories seemed to pop up everywhere.

Kim: Sometimes people say, I don't even have time to 'think' about self-care. How would you respond to those comments and feelings that a parent may initially feel? How do you remember/monitor when to 'Breathe'?

Gayle: There are days when I feel that way too. It seems as though there is not a moment to 'breathe'. In addition to being moms, we are managers, therapists, teachers, advocates, etc. It's easy for our own personal needs to get delegated to the back burner of life. However, as I have heard and also said many times, this journey really is a marathon not a sprint. Our wells become depleted and dry very easily given the jobs we are doing. Therefore we must nourish ourselves to stay in the race. Burnout can come easily and if we are not taking care of ourselves, eventually it will be pretty tough to be there for our children. After awhile, and especially in the long term, we can't give what we don't have.

The time issue is a biggie. The tools I share in Breathe: 52 Oxygen-Rich Tool for Loving and Living Well with Autism can all be done in five minutes or less. They were written specifically

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Written by Gayle Nobel
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with busy, sometimes overwhelmed, parents in mind. The stories are bathroom length- very short.

When to Breathe? The most important times may be when you feel like you don't have a moment to do it. Or when you are feeling stressed, need to calm down a few notches, need to be there for/with your child in a situation, when things are particularly tough and you want to respond rather than react.

Practice when you think of it so you learn what it feels like to create that shift in your energy. Taking deep breaths creates shifts on a cellular level. Unfortunately when we are stressed, agitated or overwhelmed, our breath tends to be short and shallow. This is our default position. It takes an application of mindfulness to slow down for a moment and decide to take those deep breaths.

It's so easy to forget that this tool is always available and can really make a difference. The way to remember is simply to practice. It's good to practice as you are settling down to go to sleep. The more it's practiced, the easier it becomes to access when you need a "go to" strategy.

Kim: What is the single most important message that you intended for readers to gain from reading Breathe?

Gayle :It is possible to cultivate an attitude which helps you live well, to thrive, with the challenges autism presents in our lives. Giving yourself the gift of five minutes to breathe, or note what you are grateful for, or practice some form of taking care of yourself physically or emotionally is the key to creating tiny, yet very powerful shifts in attitude and perspective. Your attitude will determine your experience.

Bottom Line...nourish yourself; it is a necessity, not an indulgence. You'll be better for you and definitely better for those you love.

Kim: How has your journey with RDI affected the view of you and your child, your family life and views on the importance of rest / balance and slowing down?

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Slow down...then slow down some more...and just when you think you have really slowed down, slow down even more! That's one of the RDI tools that always seemed to be coming up. I ended up integrating that into the book because it was such an important tool to my son's growth and learning. At the same time, it has also been one of the keys to my ability to thrive after so many years on this journey.

If I was to go at the frantic pace I initially started at with Kyle when he was young, I might have exploded by this time. :-) RDI teaches about the value of normalizing family life and creating a balance with the rest of the family. It's challenging for us to do this. Balance and rest are important tools and also ended up as sub-themes in Breathe.

RDI takes us back to what's truly important - our relationships and experiences with each other; the moments. The moments are nestled within the stories and tools and photographs in Breathe.

Kim: How can people get in touch with you and / or order a copy of "Breathe"?

"Breathe" can be ordered on my Gayle's website <http://www.autismwithattitude.com>, amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com.

Contact me via my website or gayle@autismwithattitude.com. The AutismwithAttitude blog is an ongoing source of inspiration as well. <http://www.autismwithattitude.com/blog/>. I love questions and comments from readers. It's important that we support each other.