

Breathe

Written by Gayle Nobel

Tuesday, 17 April 2012 20:40 - Last Updated Wednesday, 18 April 2012 03:56

Blog-a-thon Day 16

It's been a couple of years since "Breathe" came out. I'm happy to announce it will soon be released in E-book format. At a recent conference, I met parents who said it really made a difference for them and they continue to open it to random pages when they need a lift. Just knowing that, gives ME a lift.

What's it about? Here's the Introduction.

Welcome to Breathe!

If you are the parent of a child with autism, perhaps you have searched long and hard for that one thing, the quick fix, the magic answer, only to discover it does not exist. Or, maybe you are just beginning this journey and are feeling scared, lost, or overwhelmed. You may feel as if you barely have a moment to catch your breath in the whirlwind of life that is autism. Weary or depleted, you might be in need of some well-deserved nourishment. In the form of stories and oxygen-rich tools born of my own journey with autism, Breathe is that source of nourishment.

Through Breathe, I am whispering directly into your ear, because I have a heart and soul connection with you. We are walking on parallel paths, taking journeys that ask very special and unique things of us. We are challenged daily by loving and living with children who are not easy. Our lives are packed with obstacles sometimes too large to surmount. In many ways, the obstacles on our path ARE the path.

At the same time, these stories and tools are equally valuable to those who do not have a loved one with autism. Autism becomes a metaphor for the unexpected life challenges we all face, in one form or another.

Why Breathe? Last year, I watched my son, Kyle, who is deeply affected by autism, calm

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himself in the emergency room with his breath. Instinctively, he seemed to know what to do. I realized, perhaps I need look only as far as my son for one of life's magic answers. (See "Zen" for the full story.)

Breathing is, indeed, very powerful, when we use it fully. Unfortunately, when we are stressed, agitated, or overwhelmed, our breath tends to be short and shallow. We use only a tiny fraction of our lung capacity to nourish ourselves with life's fuel -- oxygen.

Breathing deeply is my prescription for creating enhanced feelings of well being. I've found it helps me regroup and calm down. Breathing often serves as an automatic attitude adjuster. I stop for a moment and take five deep breaths. By breath number five, a shift -- albeit tiny -- has usually taken place. Then, rather than react to Kyle, I often am better able to guide him. We both benefit.

Life with autism asks some hard questions. I share my stories so I can hold your hand as we explore those questions together. Through my personal experiences, I am delighted to present some powerful, life-tested tools. These are my special elixirs that continue to help me thrive, rather than merely survive my lifelong journey with my son, Kyle. These tools fill my It's All About Attitude toolbox. They refill my personal well. They help make loving and living well with autism real.

There are no quick fixes for your child in Breathe. These stories and oxygen-rich tools do have the power to help you see your child and your life through a different lens. Ultimately, they may help you heal. As you heal, your child benefits, because you are better equipped to support and nurture him or her, as well as your entire family.

Just as the breath oxygenates our cells, these oxygen-rich tools have the power to create a ripple effect in your life, transforming your attitude and your journey, one micro-movement at a time. If you stand back, you are likely to notice a tiny shift in your personal landscape.

So, I invite you to indulge yourself. You are definitely worth it. I have heard from so many there just isn't the time. I'm with you, and I hear you! That's why each oxygen-rich tool takes five minutes or less. I have provided one tool for each week of the year, or to play with whenever the spirit moves you. Move at your own pace, but start.

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How you live your days is how you live your life. It all starts with breathing. How long has it been since you've taken a long, deep breath?

Love, live well, and enjoy!

Oxygen-Rich Tool

On your mark, get set, BREATHE. Stop "doing" for a moment. Take five deep breaths. Focus on breathing more slowly and deeply. Repeat as often as needed. Refills for this prescription are unlimited, and ideally, habit-forming.

Autism Awareness Month Special: Order "Breathe" and receive a free print. (Prints are reproductions of the inspirational photos found in "Breathe") .