

## Masks

Written by Gayle Nobel

Thursday, 01 November 2012 19:14 - Last Updated Friday, 02 November 2012 02:46

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### Blog-a-thon Day 30

I've come to the end of my self-imposed blog-a-thon challenge. 30 blog posts in 30 days. Except it turned out to be 30 blog posts in 32 days. Not bad. Not bad at all. I will still be blogging, just not daily. I have enjoyed hearing from so many readers. Thank you for your comments and encouragement.

It's been a hectic day and now for some quiet time. Kyle is at a private church rock concert with Tammy. On Thursdays, he watches a rehearsal for the young folks service at Scottsdale Bible Church. They have always welcomed him with loving arms even though we are not members of the church. No one ever asked. He gets to sing as loud as he wants to the music and dance around as much as he wants too. It's just Kyle and Tammy and the band and the sound engineers in a big dark room with wild colorful lights and loud music. It's one place where Kyle can really let loose with no judgments and little restrictions. Tammy enjoys watching him enjoy. And boy, does he enjoy.

I've been thinking a lot about the topic in yoga yesterday. Masks. The masks we wear. My teacher, Sally Jo, started off by talking about Ido's new book which she had seen me post on facebook. Ido is a nonverbal young man with autism who communicates by typing. There is so much more on the inside of Ido than what appears on the outside. He stims, stares and moves oddly on the outside, but on the inside he has a fully functioning mind with ideas, feelings, knowledge, awareness, and abilities.

Ido's outside is kind of like a mask. We see the mask and assume we know the person. But we don't. We just know the mask: what the person looks like on the outside. And in the case of Ido, and also my son Kyle, that outside mask differs from the inside. It differs a lot with Ido. It differs with Kyle too. I may never really know how much.

Sally Jo pointed out how we all wear masks. In yoga, she wears the yoga teacher mask but she is also a mom, actress, singer, and sometimes raunchy performer. We think we know her. But do we?

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I wear the mask of Kyle's mom. But sometimes I wear the mask of author/writer. I also wear the compassionate friend mask. And the mom to two amazing daughters mask. And supportive loving wife mask. I have a political mask too. I don't wear it very much but it is there and people are often surprised by it. That's because we tend to put people in boxes and make assumptions. I'm not saying that's a bad thing. It's a human thing. It's how we try to make sense of our world. Different masks for different situations.

But it's good to be aware that it's something we do. And that these are masks. And there are many masks that make up a person. And we can be wrong about a person based on a mask we see. Sometimes, it's good to attempt to see beyond the layers and try to see the person behind the mask a little better. That's what I will keep trying for with Kyle. There might be a few surprises there.

Quotacious:

*"I decided a few years ago that experts had made a lot of mistakes that everyone just accepted as gospel. Not to offend anyone, but how does everyone know for sure? Hard to know absolutely if the people you are dealing with are silent and can't write or gesture."*

~~Ido, Vista del Mar Autism Conference

Read the full blog post on: <http://idoinautismland.blogspot.com/>

See behind the mask of Ido in the video: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=dLAWNsT9HdA#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=dLAWNsT9HdA#!)