

Happy Birthday Dear Kyle

Written by Gayle Nobel

Friday, 07 December 2012 15:31 - Last Updated Monday, 10 December 2012 22:20

December 2 was Kyle's 29th birthday. Neil and I both agreed that this has been the best one yet. It feels really good to be able to say that. There are so many things to appreciate this year.

Birthdays can be especially hard and emotional when you have a child who does not develop like his peers. When Kyle was little it was a reminder of all the ways he was not growing. All the ways he was different. Each birthday was kind of like a marker highlighting that he was falling further and further behind. It wasn't long before I realized "catching up" would not be possible.

The road to acceptance has been long and challenging.

As Kyle grew older, there was sometimes a deep sadness on his birthday. I'm not sure when that sadness finally left for good. Maybe somewhere in his teens. And honestly, I'm not sure if I could articulate how I let that go. I know it was a process that occurred slowly over time. Perhaps being so busy doing everything I could to help him be the best he could be. Appreciating his progress, however slow and different, has been very powerful as well. Shifting the focus from what he can't do to what he is learning to do has been huge. Spotlighting moments of connection and thinking vs major skill acquisition has been a useful perspective too. And of course, the passage of time. Time is such a great healer when you are willing to let go.

We all love our children deeply. One of the best gifts we can give ourselves and our children, especially our children with autism, is to love them "as is". Getting to this point feels so amazingly free.

Phew! This birthday blog has gotten very serious and heavy. On a lighter note....

Kyle showed his enjoyment on his birthday this year more than ever before. Really. He demonstrated a different level of awareness and he visibly enjoyed himself and being with the special people in his life. And of course, he loved the drinks and food. He doesn't get to splurge as often as he used to so it was an extra special treat.

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We spent 90 minutes with the iPad in the evening. 90 minutes!! Kyle was so focused (I think the glasses are helping) and interested. We watched YouTube music videos, including his sister ([Leah Nobel](#)

), played the piano, posted a facebook status, and bought and sampled some new "just for fun" apps. This is huge huge growth for Kyle.

AND, we have just passed the 8 month mark of NO anxiety cycles. Whoo Hoo!! That's the best gift of all! Grateful. Very Very Grateful.

PS Pictures are on [Kyle's](#) (and my) facebook page. My blog is not being friendly to my pictures right now and I can't wait another week. :-)