

Detach

Written by Gayle Nobel

Tuesday, 28 May 2013 12:58 - Last Updated Tuesday, 28 May 2013 19:36



Disclaimer: I am writing through a very thick layer of vacation brain fog. This is a state of being where you don't have thoughts with much intensity, you are not sure what you need to be doing moment to moment, and your mind feels mushy. I often have this after being away, but this time, it seems more so. My soul is pleasantly bloated.

There's one thing I am particularly good at doing when I go away. No, it's not packing light. Or eating modestly. It's detaching. I detach very well from home and in particular, from Kyle. Lest this sound harsh in any way, I believe it is a healthy thing to do. Kyle is a high maintenance kinda guy. As you know, if you're a regular reader, because of the challenges he faces, he needs a lot of support. And it's not just physical, "in the trenches" support, it's life support. By that, I mean someone to manage his life: me. Coordination of the people and activities in his life, medical appointments, decisions that affect the micro and macro of his well being. With full life support, are responsibilities, large and small, which impact him as well as the rest of our family. Together with this, is a degree of worry or concern about making the "right" decision, whatever that means.

Although Kyle goes to a program during the day, there is a 24/7 degree of mental and emotional energy expended in his direction. I may not always be with him physically, but sometimes my mind is with him or about him. And even if it's not 100%, it is playing as background noise in my emotional psyche. This seems to come with the territory of being mom to a son with autism. There is not the same "letting go" as when typical children become adults.

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Here's where detachment comes in to play. Once I am on the road or the plane and the last note as been left and the final residual text message has been sent, I'm done. My psyche enters another realm. And I don't find it difficult. As long as I am confident in the person with Kyle, it's fairly easy for me to detach. Even when Kyle has been in crisis mode, I have been pretty successful at it.

My main strategy is not to check in at home very often. I didn't realize it was a strategy until a few years ago. It is something that has just come naturally for many years without much thought. Obviously, I do care about what's happening with Kyle at home. And my agreement with his caregivers is that they can contact me at anytime if they feel they need to or want to. It does not have to be an emergency. I trust them to know when they need to contact me.

I do call, but I don't call every day. I used to feel just a bit guilty about this, but I no longer do. Not calling affords me the luxury of not becoming mentally or emotionally drawn in to what's going on at home. In other words, drawn back in to the job from which I am trying to take a break.

A couple of days before we left on this vacation (road trip to Durango, CO to meet our daughters and son-in-law), Kyle began showing signs of an impending cycle. He had not had one in 13 1/2 months and of course, in our minds, they were/are gone for ever. Dang full moon. But of course he made it through 13 moons without one so we are not sure what is going on. He wasn't 100% ok when we left on Wednesday but he was ok enough to go to his program.

One of the few nights I called, I learned he was indeed in some form of a cycle though fortunately not of the debilitating type he had previously. But of course, my mind latched on to that and easily went into worry and problem solving mode. Not to an extreme, but I definitely left the light hearted vacation place to go there for awhile. Fortunately, my girls are so silly sometimes, they are a balm to any serious thoughts I may be tempted to grab on to. I wasn't able to stay on that path for very long. I returned to vacation mind fairly easily.

Today, I'm kind of enjoying this mushy mental state. I'm wondering how I can hang on to a few morsels of this feeling as a permanent part of my psyche. Photos and memories? Extra deep

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breaths? Taking life a bit less seriously? Hmmmm.

Detaching is a great balm for my emotional health. I believe it makes me a better human when I reattach. I engage with Kyle with renewed patience and a relaxed and easier attitude. My mushy self is more loving and appreciative.

It's good. Very very good.



Nature is a great detachment balm.