Blog-a-thon Day 4

I've been playing around with *The Pause* a lot lately. I believe it has the potential to help create some positive life shifts.

It's very applicable to our interactions with our kids with autism. It enhances our ability to respond rather than react.

I hope it will help my friend who has recently quite smoking.

I'm using it to stay focused when I write these days. It's effective but requires awareness and mindfulness. It's all about noticing, paying attention, and making mindful decisions. I completed this blog without checking email, getting on facebook, or rummaging through anything on my desk. Not bad, eh?

The Pause is from Leo Babauta's Zen Habits blog.

There is one little habit I've learned that has changed everything else in my life.

The pause.

When we fail, it's because we act on urges without thinking, without realizing it. We have the urge to eat junk, and we do it. We have the urge to check email instead of writing a chapter of our book, and so we open our inbox. We have an urge to smoke, to drink, to do drugs, to chew our nails, to play a Facebook game, to procrastinate, to skip a workout, to eat more fries, to criticize, to act in jealousy or anger, to be rude … and we act on that urge.

What if instead we learned to pause after each urge? What if we stopped, looked at that urge, paid close attention to what it feels like inside our bodies, but didn't act?

The urge would no longer control us. We would be able to make conscious choices that might be healthier for us, help us be happier.

If we can pause, we create space. Space to breathe, to think, to be without acting.

The pause is the answer to so many of our problems. Such a small thing, and so powerful.

To develop the pause, notice your next urge. Is it an urge to go check something online? Or eat something you know isn't healthy for you? Pay attention to the urge, learn as much as you can about it. If you act on it after the pause, that's OK. Just notice it, and pause, and pay attention.

Do it again for the next urge, and the next. You will get good at it with practice, and you'll have lots of opportunities to practice.

The urges won't go away, but your ability to pause will get stronger. And when you have the pause, you have everything.