

### Blog-a-thon Day 9

Kyle has been rising extra early the last few days. 4:30 AM. He is joyful and ready to begin the day, even if I am not. I don't really have a choice. This morning it sounded as if he was building something in the workout room next to his bedroom. I think it was his way of calling me to fix his breakfast.

Given my 4:30 AM wake up time, my brain feels like a bowl of mashed potatoes today. I'm guessing some of you can relate.

A lot of people have commented on my first two posts about my brother Philip. The things I shared were news to even my closest friends. This is because the focus has been more on my son, Kyle, than my brother.

Autism awareness. It's great to realize how far we have come as a society from the days when you felt you had to hide your child and were reluctant to share with anyone. Today everything is out in the open with an entire month dedicated to autism awareness. Who would have imagined this would happen back in the 60's and even the 70's?

I think it's good for people to be aware that there is a full range of people on the autism spectrum. There are adults whose autism is not very apparent and might even be missed in conversation. These people may have IQ's on the genius end but struggle with relationships. Relationships impact everything from employment to friendships to quality of life. Then there are adults like my brother and my son whose autism is more apparent and comes as a part of a larger package of challenges.

## Autism Awareness

Written by Gayle Nobel

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Awareness. Awareness of autism and the different ways it affects people. Awareness of autism and the way it affects parents. While my mother crumbled under the weight of it, I believe I have risen above the weight of it. It has not been easy.

I share my experiences through this blog to support others and also spread awareness. Sometimes my readers share back. A few weeks ago when I posted the video about Carly, who communicates through typing, I shared honestly my reaction to it. See my “Happy, Sad, Inspired, Guilty” post.

In response, one of my readers shared her experiences and feelings too.

*I know my son is very low functioning at this point and he has his moments but he is mostly a peaceful and smiley little guy. He has odd and obvious movements that sometimes draw stares and when I notice people watching him (probably more out of fear and annoyance rather than curiosity), I can't help but wonder why they are so afraid and bothered. I've seen other kids at Target or wherever louder and running down aisles and no one gives them a glance but for some reason just because they don't understand the loud squeals and the jibberish or his odd hand movement they look at him almost like he is a scary monster. And I used to get so angry about it, but now I just flash Ash a smile and give him a big hug in front of everyone because he needs no "superpowers" to win me over. He has given ME the superpower to forget the world around me and the ability to weed out the shallow people. I feel proud to have been chosen to be the mom of a special needs child. I, like you, hope that someday our autistic public that function on the lower side of the spectrum with no special talents or ability to "mirror" the general public get the dignity they deserve too. Thanks for standing up for them and for being a great role model for all the caretakers out there. Our job is IMPORTANT. We are in charge of lives without voices and fend off judgment daily. That is a hard and important job. Thanks for taking care of the people who give care.*