David’s Story

One life to live

August 1, 1994 By Richard Perez-Feria

I just read a letter from David, a 21-year-old man who wrote to us here at POZ because he said he wanted to share his story with someone who might listen. It was quite a letter.

David fell in love for the first time with a man 10 years his senior who knowingly transmitted the HIV virus to him. How one monstrous individual knowingly transmits HIV to another person is too heinous to fathom. But, to add to his horror, David’s family has stopped talking to him, stopped touching him because of their fear and ingorance of HIV. The most important questions David’s story raises are twofold: (1) how do we convince David that his whole life is still very much in front of him?; and (2) how do we stop what happened to David from occurring again?

Quite simply, HIV doesn’t mean you’re waiting to die. Far, far from it. HIV means you have a lot of work ahead of you understanding a whole slew of new terms to help you make informed choices with regard to your health and life. Every single day, HIV positive people are leading three dimensional, healthy lives full of the same joys and pains, loves and hurts that everyone else goes through. In every story, every issue of POZ we strive to show living, breathing examples of HIV positive heroes.

How do we stop what happened to David is quite simply by instituting a relentless, perpetual, no-holds-barred AIDS education campaign in our schools, places of whorship and homes. Educating our children about safer sex is the only way to save millions of lives. The radical right and well-intentioned PTA parents be damned—like David’s well-intentioned parents. May their god forgive them for turning their backs on their very frightened son.

Live your life, David. There’s so much to do.

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