Couples That Clicked

In celebration of Valentine’s Day, POZ speaks with two HIV-positive couples that fell in love through POZ Personals.

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Our readers often ask us whether POZ Personals—the fastest-growing online dating community for people living with HIV—actually works. Can positive people really find true love online?

We reached out to POZ Personals members and asked them to tell us how they met their cyber soul mates through POZ Personals, which now boasts more than 95,000 members.

Here are two stories that prove whether you’re gay or straight, in the United States or abroad, POZ Personals can help you find your Valentine.

Brian and Kathleen Davis

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Seventeen years ago, Kathleen and Brian Davis were close—geographically. They both lived in Decatur, Georgia, but neither had any idea the other existed. “I literally worked at a house five doors down from her,” Brian says. Even though they might very well have bumped into each other on the street, they never officially met until 2007, when Brian stumbled upon her profile on POZ Personals. They hit it off immediately—and tied the knot in 2007, just three months after their first date.

“We were made for each other, and we knew it,” says Brian, 38, who was diagnosed with HIV in 1990.

Kathleen, diagnosed in 1986, says she never tried online dating before setting up a POZ Personals account, and admits she wasn’t looking for romance at first.

“I expected to hopefully meet somebody who was HIV positive that I could relate to and talk with—just a friend,” says Kathleen, 41. “I wasn’t really expecting to find someone I wanted to marry.”

Now married for more than two years, Brian requires few words to describe his marriage: “[We] know a love and happiness neither one of us thought possible.”

Richard and Dean



(left to right) Richard and Dean

Long-distance relationships can be tough—especially when cross-oceanic journeys are involved—but that didn't stop Richard and Dean ("Chippy" to his friends) from finding love, international style.

In 2008, Richard was living in Los Angeles and had been a POZ Personals member for close to a year. Although while he had met some interesting people online, he just couldn't find what he was looking for in a serious, committed partner.

"I had about 100 people reach out to me on POZ Personals, and it let me practice dating, get my feet wet and find my confidence again," says Richard, 43, who was diagnosed in 2005. He had just gotten out of a serious relationship when he signed up for POZ Personals and wasn't looking for anything casual or fleeting.

But he kept looking. His work as an art gallery director in Los Angeles allowed him ample travel opportunities, and since his parents live in England, he decided to reach out to POZ Personals members in the United Kingdom. That's when he found Dean. The two spent July and August of 2008 chatting regularly via e-mail and telephone, arranging their first in-person rendezvous that September in Dean's home town of Bristol—a city about 100 miles west of London.

"This was my first time online dating, and I was incredibly fearful," Richard admits. "[But] being HIV positive created a common language and gave me a sense of understanding."

Dean, 41 and diagnosed in 1994, adds, "[POZ Personals] cuts out of all of the rubbish, really. You have an equal platform to start a relationship or a dialogue without the fear of rejection or the whole disclosure thing. And while there is a sex element there, I think a lot of the people on POZ Personals are looking for genuine relationships."

Genuine, indeed. Richard and Dean got engaged last September on the one-year anniversary of their first date.

"Fortunately we live in England where we can get married," says Richard, who, along with Dean, advocates for same-sex marriage in the United States as part of the Manifest Equality movement.

Richard's advice for POZ Personals newcomers?

"Write your profile yourself, be open-minded and be willing to take a risk," he says. "And have an idea of who you are. It will help you find the person you're looking for."

A Personals Invitation

If you've yet to sign up, click here to visit POZ Personals and set up your free account and check out our upgraded search functions. Then, once you're a member, consider upgrading to POZ Personals Premium, our new service that enables you to send instant messages to other users, save your favorite searches and receive new member alerts.

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