Show & Tell

When you feel like crap, do you play it up-or down? Summer's over, but these HIVers aren't throwing in the (beach) towel.

October 1, 2004 By Suzy Martin

ROSE TODD-STANFORD, 45
Cincinnati
When I first started meds, I had diarrhea, vomiting and fatigue. After two weeks of saying "I'm OK," my husband finally said, "You're going to the hospital." Unless it gets to a point where I can't function, I tend to go on about my business.

DEMETRI MOSHOYANNIS, 33
Los Angeles
I'm constantly anxious because of pressure I put on myself to take care of people who are sicker than me. In 10 years of being positive, I've taken few sick days. [HIVers] tell one another we shouldn't overextend ourselves, but we often hold ourselves to such high standards.

VANESSA MILLS, 48
Miami
When others are ill, I always preach, "Go to the doctor!" But when I recently had an eye infection, I was too busy. It took a lot of courage for me to finally go—and it turned out to be minor.

JOSE BOIRIE, 44
East Elmhurst, NY
I struggle with tiredness, but when I want something, I tackle it headfirst. I opened my own computer-technician business. I don't use this disease as a crutch.

CHRISTINA MARSH, 45
Honolulu
I play down my own health to uplift others. In fact, the only times I play up feeling worse is if it's my turn to clean the toilet—or if I'm not in the mood to have sex. Works as good as the old headache excuse.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Show-Tell-438-5897