



Grateful for Life

Years after finding out he was HIV positive, Gregory Charde got sober and started living.

December 23, 2025 By Gregory Charde

In 1982, I got really sick and went to the hospital. They did not have a clue what was wrong, and somehow all my symptoms went away. Turns out that was my exposure to HIV. It didn't have a name back then.

In 1991, I took an HIV test, and it was positive. I decided I was dying and stayed very high and very drunk.

On June 8, 2002, I got sober and began on the road back to living. I have stayed sober, and living life today is the greatest gift I have ever received.

What three adjectives best describe you?

Alive, sober, grateful

What is your greatest regret?

Not being able to say goodbye to so many friends.

What keeps you up at night?

Not a damn thing.

If you could change one thing about living with HIV, what would it be?

That I was sober throughout the epidemic.

What is the best advice you ever received?

Friends come and go, but family is always there.

What person(s) in the HIV community do you most admire?

All of my doctors over the years.

What drives you to do what you do?

I've got to keep moving—I can sit still when I'm dead. I volunteer at a homeless shelter just so I

never forget what homelessness is.

If you had to evacuate your house immediately, what is the one thing you would grab on the way out?

My dog.

If you could be any animal, what would you be?

A bald eagle living in Alaska.

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