Hector Quiroz

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Phoenix, Arizona
Positive since 2004

I am a 33-year-old male who is proud to celebrate 10 years of living with HIV. I was diagnosed with HIV at the age of 22. I contracted the virus from my first partner—the first person I ever had sex with. His choice not to disclose his status impacted my life. I was not given the choice to say yes or no.

However, there are no mistakes in life, only lessons. Because of HIV, I have been able to evolve into a powerful human being. In my darkest moments I learned that this gift was given to me to help and empower others who are like me and to educate those who cross my path with information to make healthy choices.

I am currently living in Phoenix. I am an HIV activist who spreads the message of hope and awareness as a motivational speaker and life coach in my community. The darkest moments in my life have been my biggest blessings. Therefore, I say I love you, HIV! Throughout my life I have learned that friends encourage us, family humbles us, but only an enemy can promote us to greatness and success.

I was born in the small mining town of Douglas, Arizona, and raised in Sierra Vista. I'm a proud first-generation Mexican American and the oldest of three boys. Although I grew up in an extremely religious home, the sheltered environment awakened a curiosity in me to find a more expanded meaning of life behind the narrow confines I was accustomed to. My path after the umbrella of religion was not an easy one, and as is typical of young adults who leave extremely insulated homes in search of a new horizons, I encountered many obstacles.

I have learned valuable lessons from my young adult life. In my effort to rebel against religion and release the anger inside of me, I focused purely on the physical—on everything other than the meaning of my spirit. For years I strengthened my body obsessively, thinking that this was the key to true happiness.

Then I hit the proverbial wall. I couldn't understand why I was so depressed. I had reached the pinnacle of physical form with intense discipline and determination, but had an aching feeling that

something was very wrong. Something was missing. It took many more years and many difficult lessons to realize that for me, just strengthening my body was not enough. A strong physical body without a deep connection to mind and soul left me feeling empty. I finally realized that my true path, my bliss, was a fully integrated mind, body and spirit.

Through my journey, I realized how the past forms our present. I now know that all the answers and solutions to our challenges lie within us. My mission is to help others on their journey to fully integrate their mind, body and spirit. My most satisfying achievement will be to help others identify and overcome the obstacles that are keeping them stuck, keeping them from living life at its full potential. I want to be an instrument in helping others find their own peace, love and happiness. There is no greater satisfaction for me as a motivational speaker living with HIV, a life coach, a personal trainer, a community member, a friend and a human being.

My philosophy is based around self-love, self-happiness, inner peace, compassion and acceptance of living life in a complete abundant and prosperous state of mind. No matter what obstacle or challenge one is facing, there are no mistakes in life—only lessons that can help us evolve into a greater outcome.

What three adjectives best describe you?
Courageous, enthusiastic, intuitive

What is your greatest achievement?
My life. The now-ness of my life.

What is your greatest regret?
I have no regrets. If I had the chance to do things different, I would. I guess that is what my next life is for.

What keeps you up at night?
Nowadays, not a damn thing

If you could change one thing about living with HIV, what would it be?
For there to be no HIV in the world

What is the best advice you ever received?
Produce yourself. Others can encourage you, but you are in charge of your life’s production.

What person in the HIV/AIDS community do you most admire?
Maria Mejia, a social media activist

What drives you to do what you do?
Passion and love

What is your motto?

He who is not courageous to take a risk will accomplish nothing in life. Therefore, I say yes to all the greatness life offers me.

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

If you could be any animal, what would you be? And why?
A jaguar! Like a jaguar, I am strong, courageous and most of the time fearless. I need alone time to produce, but when I’m in season, watch out!

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