Your Feedback

For our 15th anniversary, we decided to dip into our mailbox to share what our readers have said about the role POZ plays in their lives. We depend on your invaluable insight and read every one of your words. Please keep them coming!

May 1, 2009

I am presently incarcerated in Texas and have been so for the past 13½ years. I began receiving *POZ* in 1997, and this is the first time I've written a letter to the editor.

I am a 51-year-old, gay, black male, and I have been HIV positive since October 1986. Over the years, *POZ* has played a major role in keeping me up to date on the virus and its effects on my fellow [positive] brothers and sisters across the world.

Also, I want to thank you for making *POZ* available to prisoners who are unable to contribute financially to its continued existence. In the time I've been in prison, I've lost a lot of loved ones and family over the years. My contact with the outside world is limited to my dear sister Laura. I have other sisters, brothers and assorted nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts and cousins, yet my Laura has never wavered her support for me for the past 15 years.

It has been a pleasure writing to you. Although I miss Sean [Strub, *POZ's* founder], those of you who have come after have done *POZ* proud.

Lee J. Patton
Beaumont, Texas

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for your continually mailing me copies of *POZ*. As an HIV/AIDS peer educator, I am always seeking information on all aspects of the disease. If I am well informed, then so are those participating in my classes. Needles to say, *POZ* keeps me current on many matters concerning this dreadful pandemic.Without doubt, *POZ* has helped me save many lives. Time and time again, your articles have proved invaluable.

As I am certain you know, it's important for [people living] with HIV to understand that their diagnosis is not a death sentence. We may not be able to eradicate HIV/AIDS yet, but we [can] definitely empower people. A well-informed person possesses the power to say no, the knowledge to prevent (or decrease the chance of) infection and the ability to live longer and healthier with the

disease.

Ismael Melendez
Warwick, NY

Thank you for all the years of educating, informing, saving lives and instilling hope when there was none. We still need all of the above.

As a retired activist, I have sat back and watched the nation's AIDS policies destroyed by stigma and the right wing. Now it's time to revive [the fight against] AIDS in America! We've helped Africa, now it's our turn. No more ADAP waiting lists—talk about a crime against nature. With this new [Obama] administration, I may become active again.

I'm close to celebrating my 55th year on the planet and observing 20 years with this miserable disease. I remain sincerely thankful for your publication.

John K.
Newark, CA

I am a positive guy living in Delaware and have faced more discrimination and negative, stereotypical attitudes during the last 10 years than I ever could have imagined when diagnosed. I have learned to be strong and stay in the "warrior" mode most of the time. While reading your magazine, I am reading about myself. Facial wasting, sinusitis, fatigue, issues in the workplace, etc. It's great to know that I'm not alone in this fight. Keep up the great work.

John E. Bromley
Wilmington, DE

I wanted to thank *POZ* magazine for all of the information that it brings to the community about HIV/AIDS, especially for those behind bars. Today, I'm in jail because of my ignorance and the negative life I was living. If I had not gotten locked up, I probably would have killed myself. On July 12, 1997, I took an HIV test, and it came back positive. I was aware of HIV, but I never thought it [would happen to me].

Today my [CD4 cell count is] over 400 and my viral load is undetectable. Thanks to God and your magazine. Your writers provide me with so much information; they have really helped me move forward in my life in a positive way. Being HIV positive and behind bars is not easy because of the ignorance of a lot of my fellow inmates and some correctional officers and the discrimination they have against people who are living with HIV/AIDS.

Pedro Romera
Malone, NY

I have been positive since 1991. I am a woman who was infected through hetero sex. I speak to children in middle schools for a group called Positively Speaking.

Throughout the years, your magazine helped me to know that I was not alone. I think an article about “How to Live the Rest of Your Life” would be very helpful for me at this point in my journey with HIV. I have concentrated so much on staying healthy that I forgot to make dreams for my future. So at 50, I find myself a bit lost. Thank you for any insight you might [have]. I’ll be waiting…

Robin
Newport Beach, CA

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