Letters—April/May 2016

April 4, 2016

Mourning Our Pets

Aundaray Guess shares his grief of losing his dogs Hope and Parker in his blog post “Losing Hope” (January 25).

A beautiful post. Thanks for sharing, and much love to you.

Shawn Decker

I’m so sorry for your loss. Pets are a wonderful, endless supply of unconditional love and laughter and a very important way to focus on someone other than yourself. I hope you have found peace with the loss and will soon find another fuzz bug to love.

Dave Hicks

I was the same when I lost my Dalmatian. He passed away at age 14 and was with me the whole time I had the virus. For me the loss was almost too much, but I got through it. I hope you get another pet to help you cope. Living is a gift, so stay strong.

Rob

I can only imagine how you feel. Thanks for this beautiful editorial about your experiences with them and how much love and difference they brought to your life. My experience is very similar. I also lost my (13-year-old) boy six months ago, and there’s an irreplaceable place in my heart and home. I miss him deeply every second.

Ernesto Masis

I can totally relate to this as I lost Polly and Sassy, my two little girls. The grieving seems to last forever. It’s been over a year for me, and still I can’t bring myself to get another pet. Losing them was one of the most difficult experiences I’ve ever been through, and I’ve experienced a lot of losses through the years. Hang tight. Every day gets a little better, although they never leave our memories.

Antonio

Joining Forces

In the cover story "Black Lives Matter" (January/February 2016), writer Olivia Ford describes the intersection of HIV activists and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Thank you, Olivia Ford and POZ, for this terrific article. Racism continues to create injustice and tragedy in every aspect of our culture, and #BlackLivesMatter is the most exciting, creative and hope-inspiring movement in many, many years.

Laura Whitehorn

Excellent article. Fantastic activism at the intersection of common causes leads to fighting violence and HIV. Oppression through criminalization is a conservative strategy that KILLS.

Robert Penn

Thanks for the article! Black Lives Matter is doing the work that will liberate all of us. Without the pioneering and relentless social justice movement of black people, there would have been no Stonewall, no ACT UP. Blacks have consistently resisted the oppression we all face every day in this country to varying degrees and by doing this teach and inspire all of us to fight for our rights as human beings.

Gen

Really, POZ? Why not do [a cover] with all lives matter! HIV does not care what race you are!

Andrew Pulsipher

The rates of HIV are higher in blacks, soooooo yeah, BLACK LIVES MATTER #RespectIt

Byanca Parker

Mickey Bradford's comment that HIV criminalization is "a perfect storm of patriarchal masculinity and anti-blackness" is SO important. Recognizing the connections between sexism, transphobia, homophobia and racism is essential! I am incredibly hopeful and inspired to see a truly intersectional movement finally coming together.

Anna Forbes

Dating and Disclosure

The feature "You Can't Hurry Love" (January/February 2016) by Casey Halter tackled the issue of navigating dating and disclosure while living with HIV.

I have tried all different ways, and I hate dealing with it. If I'm hooking up, I say nothing—responsibility and accountability work both ways. Want me to wear a condom, OK. But if you don't ask, why should I have to tell you? As for dating, that's a different story. I enjoy the first date, go old-fashioned and promise myself no sex; then if I'm asked out again, I say, "I need to tell you something." Not saying my way is the best, but it works for me.

Chris

I reveal [my status] up front. I do this because my emotions are valuable, and I want to know if [the person] is worth my time. They usually turn and run, and that lets me know it would have been a waste to wait and tell.

Richard

The more people disclose, the better. It will help get rid of the stigma.

Percy

I was probably infected in 1981 and have always disclosed my status when I’m in a situation that may become intimate. I believe that everyone should do the same whether it is HIV, herpes or anything else that may be possibly transmitted during sexual activity.

Paul

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