



# Sierra Fisher

August 7, 2015

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Anderson, South Carolina  
Positive since 2012

It all started when I was 16 and I got my first job and my first car. I was a very sexually active teen. I partied almost every night and started drinking and smoking too much. I eventually started doing cocaine, which lead me to sleep with multiple men. I never even thought I would contract HIV.

On November 10, 2012, it was my best friend's 18th birthday and I asked him if we could stop at the health department that morning because I wasn't feeling well. I just figured I had a simple infection or maybe I had caught chlamydia again, or it was something I could get rid of.

It took way longer than usual, and they put me in a back room I had never seen before. It took me about 10 minutes before I realized that every poster and pamphlet in the room was about HIV/AIDS. Naturally I flipped out and demanded someone come in and tell me what the hell was going on! My first thought was, "Oh my god! I'm only 17! I haven't gotten to do everything I want and now I'm going to die an awful death."

After the doctor reassured me several times that I wasn't going to die, and that HIV was easier to live with than diabetes, I went home and researched everything there was to know about living with this disease.

I cried and slept and started thinking about love. I thought I would never find it or that I was never going to have a child. I did that for about four days, until I had to go back to the health department to pick up my birth control (just in case!).

I told my nurse my breasts were very sore, and I was tired. I figured it was just something that happens to you when you first become positive. But she gave me a pregnancy test, and when it came back, I found out I was indeed pregnant, which made me even sadder. I thought the best thing to do would be to get an abortion so my child wouldn't have to live with HIV/AIDS or die at a young age. But my wonderful doctor, Dr. Potts, told me everything was going to be OK with my child and me. I could have a baby like any other woman.

I stopped feeling bad and started being positive about life. I had a reason to live again. My child is the most wonderful thing that could've happened to me, and what better timing! I now know I can live a long healthy life. I can be a wonderful mother to my child, who is HIV negative.

HIV isn't as bad as people make it out to be. I am almost 20 years old now, I am undetectable, my CD4 cells are absolutely amazing, and my beautiful daughter is as healthy as she can be. We live like any other human being.

**What three adjectives best describe you?**

Caring, beautiful, passionate

**What is your greatest achievement?**

Giving birth to my child, who is HIV negative!

**What is your greatest regret?**

Sleeping with nasty pig men

**What keeps you up at night?**

Nothing does; I sleep like a baby.

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

The stigma! It's not a hard disease to live with. I am not nasty, and you can't get infected by breathing in the same air as me.

**What is the best advice you ever received?**

Never trust anyone.

**What person in the HIV/AIDS community do you most admire?**

All the babies born with HIV who turn out to be beautiful inspiring adults

**What drives you to do what you do?**

My beautiful, amazing daughter

**What is your motto?**

Eat!

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

My toothbrush

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

A bird

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