



From Silence to Strength

Dominique Grant's HIV story is one of survival, truth and reclaiming her power.

January 26, 2026 By Dominique Grant

I was diagnosed with HIV in 2015, but my diagnosis did not define me; it revealed me. At the time, I was also surviving a long-term abusive relationship that lasted more than a decade. The person I loved, trusted and built a life with became the source of deep emotional, mental and physical harm. When I learned my HIV status, shame and silence tried to take up residence in my spirit, layered on top of fear and heartbreak. I felt isolated, unsure of who I could tell and uncertain of what my future would look like.

But somewhere between surviving and surrendering, I made the decision to live.

Living with HIV forced me to confront my reality head-on. It required me to unlearn everything I thought I knew about myself, love, worth and strength. I learned that silence feeds stigma, but truth dismantles it. I learned that healing is not linear, but it is possible. And I learned that my story, no matter how painful, held power.

When I was diagnosed, I felt defeated and broke. It was at that moment God spoke to me and said, "I gave you the most powerful weapon: your tongue and your voice." I knew then it was time to break the silence and tell my story. That shift changed everything. In 2024, my voice gave me unwavering freedom and a platform.

Today, I am thriving. I am a proud mother, an HIV case manager, an advocate and a woman who walks boldly in her truth. I show up not just for myself but also for others who are still finding their voice. I share my story to remind people living with HIV that a diagnosis is not the end—it can be the beginning of a deeper, more intentional life. I share it for survivors of domestic violence who need to know that freedom, joy and wholeness exist on the other side. And I share it for anyone who has ever felt reduced to a label.

I live by the mantra "I live HIGHER IN VICTORY because of HIV"—Not in spite of it but because of it. HIV didn't break me. It built me. It taught me how to stand, how to advocate and how to love myself fully and unapologetically.

By sharing my story, I stand up to HIV through visibility, education and compassion. I stand against stigma by showing what thriving really looks like. And I stand in hope because as long as we are still telling our stories, HIV does not get the final word.

Together, our stories don't just change perceptions. They save lives.

What three adjectives best describe you?

Resilient. Authentic. Radiant.

Resilience is what carried me through.

Authentic describes me because I've learned to live in my truth unapologetically.

Radiant speaks to how I show up today.

What is your greatest achievement?

My greatest achievement is my three amazing children and the way they've grown into thriving young adults who have all graduated high school.

What is your greatest regret?

My greatest regret is the years I spent suffering in silence. I regret the time I allowed fear, shame and stigma to keep me from living fully and authentically. I regret believing the lies.

What keeps you up at night?

What keeps me up at night is knowing how many people are still suffering in silence the way I once did. I think about the women who are living with HIV but don't feel safe enough to share their truth.

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

Fear and judgment attached to HIV, because when you remove stigma, you create space for education, compassion, and healing. It's not the diagnosis that destroys lives—it's silence and shame.

What is the best advice you ever received?

Your diagnosis is not your destiny. Those words broke chains for me. I thought HIV was the end of my story. I thought abuse defined me. It reminded me that I am more than what I've been through.

What person in the HIV community do you most admire?

I deeply admire every woman who has found the courage to break her silence about living with HIV. Women in the community who boldly share their stories remind me daily that I am not alone.

What drives you to do what you do?

The woman I used to be: the one who was afraid, silent and broken. I do this work for her and others. I know what it's like to feel trapped in silence, ashamed of your diagnosis or afraid of your truth.

What is your motto?

"I live HIGHER IN VICTORY because of HIV." What was meant to break me became the very thing that built me. HIV gave me a platform, a purpose and a passion I never knew I had.

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

My journals. Those pages carry my journey, my prayers, my tears, my testimonies and my growth. They are the raw blueprint of me. My journals remind me of where I've been and how far God has brought me.

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

An eagle. They rise above the storm, soaring higher instead of being defeated by the winds. That's my story. I've faced storms of abuse, diagnosis and silence, yet I continue to rise.

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