# Winthrop Smith

February 20, 2015

North Monmouth, Maine
Positive since 1984

I was infected during my first sexual experience at a New York City bathhouse in Times Square in 1984. I was too naive to know about anything. The doctors assumed that I had a bad case of flu. I moved to NYC in 1987. I worked as a home attendant for the first program dedicated to terminal AIDS patients. I worked on the National AIDS Hotline. I was on the board of PWAC (People with AIDS Coalition), thanks to the late Michael Callen. In short, I have been around since day one.

What three adjectives best describe you?
Gay, minimalist, poet

What is your greatest achievement?
Three published collections

What is your greatest regret?
All those friends who are no longer with us, whose work has been forgotten

What keeps you up at night?
Financial issues from time to time

If you could change one thing about living with HIV, what would it be?
Being able to have a good HIV doctor who also sees me as a normal, fiftysomething male

What is the best advice you ever received?
Become a partner with your doctor, which sometimes means questioning him.

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

What drives you to do what you do?
The writer's need to put down words

What is your motto?
Will God I Shall (on a family crest)

If you had to evacuate your house immediately, what is the one thing you would grab on the way out?
My (three) dogs. When my East Village apartment was gutted in 1987, I simply walked out into an April day.

If you could be any animal, what would you be? And why?
A dog, because I might get back what I give them

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