Not My First Pandemic #HLTSAD #NotOurFirstPandemic

June 5, 2020 By Shawn Decker

Today is HIV Long-Term Survivors Awareness Day. This year's theme is "Not Our First Pandemic", which is a brilliant way to include messaging about coronavirus. I asked my partner, Gwenn, to get an iconic photo of me against some red bricks for the occasion. And, after 33-years of diagnosis, I requested an iced mocha from Shenandoah Joe (our local coffee shop) to celebrate the moment.

I'm only human, after all.

If you'd told me as a teenager with HIV, all those years ago, that I would be around in 2020... that I'd be taking one pill a day that knocks my HIV so far on its ass that I don't even need to use condoms with my incredibly attractive (intellectually and physically) partner.... BUT- I'd have to be quarantined at home (with aforementioned partner), and have to wear a face mask in public to prevent catching another virus... well, I think I know what that teen-aged me would have said: "That seems like a more than fair trade off."

All jokes aside, today I wore my AIDS Memorial shirt, both for the long-term survivors we've lost and those that didn't have the fortune to achieve that title. You are not forgotten. Ever.

Stay as safe as possible out there. And stay human.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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