



# Floating in Limbo and Not Caring

March 2, 2009 By [Richard Ferri, PhD, ANP](#)

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All that fucks around comes back and fucks you around again - only this time with vengeance usually relegated to that of Nixon raising from the dead waving “ a real good Republican cloth” right off the back of dear old Pat herself. Nixon looks crazed and raving mad. His arm is clutching the “Checker’s Coat”.

I told that I would be back some day!

I sneer at the rotting flesh of maggots and attempt slam him back into hell. He just laughs. I made Helm’s lock like a fucking boys’ scout . I feel the checker’s coat gripe around my ankle and know I am just about become some matter to be hurled back into a void. When I wake Jim is crying and EMTs have surrounded me to form around me clot a nice moat from as own blood congeals around me.

I spy my right great toe and wiggle it in the distance before blacking out into a mist of oblivion. The dinner quests will be here any minute and everyone sees so hyped on who is the POTUS? Well, any fool can tell you George W. is trying to figure that one out himself. He sure as shit knows he and Dick are trying to get the hell out o f town before someone tries to pin this mess on them.

But where is he now? Who is he now? It is all turned inside out! Then I wake and feel the opposing worlds of medicine and reality butt heads and smash.

In a nutshell this is where I have been. Last Friday I was standing at the top of a large flight wooden stairs in my living room and when I woke sometime later I was laying in a pool of my own blood with my neck twisted. The details that have been filled in for me include that I simply tripped over my own feet, took out several banisters as flew through the air, and formed massive pools of blood as I flew down and put a dent in the wall with my head. The rest is a bloody haze of a nightmare of fear, pain, broken ribs, a punctured lung, love and rejection.

The love part is always the best to start with I think. My partner, Jim, simply saved my life and my soul. Seeing his face made me a whole man once again. The connection between us, which has been rocky at times mainly - no totally - to my stupidities. At that very second I realize that I was one lucky man. I am loved and am in love and after all the other stuff is peeled away that is that really matters. Everything else is a window-dressing for the foolish. I have been that fool far too many times.

Laying in the limbo between life and death. During this week of suspended life I had to learn several hard lessons again about HIV, life and recovery. I have never hidden my HIV status publically or the fact that I am in recovery. I write about it, I talk about, I tell my patients about it. Some would say you simply

cannot shut me. But I also learned once again such honesty is not always welcomed and I drew the fire of hate it can sometimes flame this week.

I was screaming in pain. Trying to hold on the jagged edges of a fragile reality and I could not get my chest surgeon to understand that I was in horrific in pain. I have broken ribs, multiple contusions and a major laceration that require two pints of blood to correct, a punctured lung, numerous painful tubes sticking outside of my chest, and, of course, my good old buddy HIV right at my side.

I was screaming so loudly that some staff people told me I was scaring other patients. (Remember, I have been through the pain and collapsed lung thing before post 9/11. I am no stranger to pain and near death. Hell, they have become friends at times.)

Well, if my chest surgeon Dr. C would come and see me and what condition I was in he just might have understood. But Dr. C did not come and, as most cowardly people do, he sent some in his place to tell Jim and I that I was not only bother him again because he would not come and see me, but that he was also taking away the one extra pain pill he had already ready ordered for me because he did not realize I was an recovering addict - an addict with multiple trauma and fractured ribs who was lucky to be alive - but and addict nonetheless. I was once again being punished for my disease with my life if faltering in the balance. Jim and I fired him on the spot and demanded to see the chief medical and nursing officers on staff immediately. My partner was appalled. He could not believe what he just head. In all of Jim's years of practice as vet he had never heard any clinician talk about a pet that way.

I got immediately got a new surgeon, treatment and relief but not without the scornful looks of the medical establishment. How dare I not be perfect? I was supposed to be a clinician and not a patient!

I am waiting transfer to a nursing home today and am scared. I am too weak to care for myself alone and need some rehabilitation. I think Dr. C. could do with some himself. I may be the injured one but Dr. C is the sick one.

Remember life is short, pain is inevitable, and love should be embraced at every turn.

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