



Grieving My Former Life

September 12, 2009 By [David Capogna](#)

Hey, I'm back. I literally spent half the summer sleeping, no joke. My sleeping patterns had been reversed. When I was working at POZ Magazine I was continually tired. Without having something to occupy by days I still ended up sleeping 13 to 14 hours, missing meals and getting off schedule with my meds. Searching for answers I started with my psychologist and he suggested I go for a sleep study. No results of sleep apnea, restless legs syndrome, or even grinding teeth. Back to square one. There was talk about changing my anti-seizure medication from a "downer" to an "upper," which made a lot of sense. My next stop was with an "integrative" pharmacist, he's well-versed in homeopathic medicine, for what he really helped me with was my supplements. He concentrated on my osteoporosis as well as my sleep patterns and fatigue. The pharmacist prescribed 5-Hydroxytryptophan (or 5-HTP) an amino acid which produces serotonin to make you sleep. I thought I'd solved the problem, but it wasn't easy as that. The supplements took time to build up in my system; in the meantime I also made an appointment with the new therapist. We began to discuss my illness (or my illnesses.) Forever moving forward ready for the next challenge, I never stopped to feel the losses I had experienced. In six short months I dropped over a third of my weight to become a 115 pounds AIDS wasted weakling of flesh and bones. The doctors had to drain eight fluid ounces of ascites out of my belly just get a liver biopsy. Within two months I went on disability to deal with my illness as a full time job. After twelve years in design I basically had a week to make my decision to leave on disability. Six months later I suffered a stroke which left me without speech for a few months and the inability to write. More importantly I had to go on anti-seizure medication to calm my anxiety. So many pathways in my brain were damaged I couldn't process stress. At age 35, my teeth were literally falling out of my mouth. My jawbone was deteriorating and I had osteoporosis. Crowns were inserted in hopes that they would last for five or six years and then eventually I would have to be fitted for dentures. In 2007, just as I was getting better, my boyfriend left me after 10 years. Along with my partner, I lost a lot of mutual friends, and ultimately I was down to two or three friends and my mom, who called me every day. You're obviously getting the picture.

Rage, sadness, anger and abandonment had built up inside me since 2004. I chose this photo since it illustrates many of the losses I've experienced in such a short period of time. Max, our dog, he lived a long life and his loss was out of my control. I never went anywhere without a book or a newspaper. Today I have trouble concentrating on a magazine article. Now I just download audio books and listen to them on the subway. Despite my persistence in going to the gym, I'm only roughly around 130 pounds. It's all muscle, skin and bones. My butt is nonexistent and although I've had my face filled, it's never quite the same. I was staying with a longtime friend that I knew since I was in college, at his beach front home in The Pines. The last time I spoke to my "friend" was in 2007. My boyfriend shot the photo and I'm sure he coaxed the smile out of me, like always. Loss, loss, loss...at first I was having trouble dealing with this. Mourning a person that died is one thing, grieving your former life is very abstract. The grief will always be there in some way, but I can't let it deter me from looking to the future.

Keep on keepin' on,

Dplus

[to read more of my gibberish visit my website](#)

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/grieving-my-former-l>