Is This My Beautiful Life?

May 18, 2013 By Peter Staley

A few days ago in New York City, a huge community forum was held titled "Is This My Beautiful Life? Perspectives From Survivors of the AIDS Generation." I was honored to work with the group that planned it, and to join the panel that kicked-off the discussion.

This all started for many of us on that Tuesday morning in December. Three days before, Spencer was making a seemingly strong recovery, and we thought he was out of the woods. Then everything went to shit, and we all rushed to that hospital none of us had ever heard of at the very tip of Manhattan. Spencer Cox was one of the youngest of ACT UP's alumni, and his death at only 44 sent a shock-wave to all of us—not just the current and former activists, but our generation—our AIDS generation, men and women, positive and negative.

A huge and largely healthy discussion ensued - with long phone calls, dinners with friends we hadn't seen in recent years, Facebook threads, blog postings, and even

a long article in a Sunday *New York Times*. A kind of bubble had burst. What did this say about us? How are *we* doing now? How are we treating each other? Is there a community that even cares about us?

Please watch this powerful eleven minute “trailer” of what many felt was a moving and cathartic night. The needs and concerns of the AIDS generation should not be ignored.

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