



Learning to Find Hope & Love After They Were Stripped Away by Another

People who are HIV negative don't realize some of the privilege they get to enjoy every single day.

November 15, 2024 By [JMV](#)

The air outside has a crisp feeling while the sun beats down on me as I strolled from therapy to my favorite Chelsea spot to sit & write—Café Flor. There's no need for me to turn on my own headphones filled with jazz music because the perfect whimsical jazz is already creating the chill vibes I desire to write in. It's soothing yet motivating. I sip my honey-lavender-oat-milk latté & romanticize my words to match the beauty of the saxophone & piano keys. It has been a while friends.

For the last several years, I've told my story in chronological order. Somehow, I've lost my inspiration, as you can tell by my lack of posts. But I do feel motivated to talk about my current life & world events. I live with HIV, so that will always be relevant. Maybe it's time for me to now tell my story day-to-day with some flashback posts sprinkled in. I have so many archived posts just waiting for use, but they'll have to wait.

So here I'm sitting in this café, feeling serene mixed with an urge to do more. I don't want to live with "what if?" feelings & regrets because I didn't do things I wanted to do in my youth—yup, thirty-five is still very young. I want to look back on my life with a fondness of my accomplishments & the wonderful community I've built around me. I want to go out with love & adoration & assurance that I'm leaving my world better than I found it.

I've been incredibly self-indulgent lately. I don't think the mental & emotional burnout helps any. Some days I can't bring myself to get out of bed. I find myself asking the question, "What's my purpose?" What if I were to reinvent myself? Would I be happy then?

At the end of August my lover of over a year dumped me or cut ties with me—whatever we had together has ended, at least for now. It didn't break me or shatter me, but it did hurt & disappoint me. It made me realize how much energy I was putting into it & taking away from myself with just the anxiety from uncertainty alone. There were so many factors that were draining & distracting for me where I didn't feeling like I was being met even halfway to where I was at. A lot of it was having unrealistic expectations of another human that just isn't ready for the same things that I wanted with him, so I felt like I was a nuisance & a burden most of the time. It ate away at me.

Any relationship requires a level of care, understanding & support from both partners simply to maintain the relationship & it requires even more for it to grow. I'm always speaking out about my own issues & topics I like HIV. Sometimes it can wear down the people I'm with.

I remember mentioning to my partner that this was a reason for my anxiety & instead of feeling supported, I was met with, "You mentioned the HIV thing as an excuse before." I felt so invalidated & my first thought was, "Well, yeah. I live with HIV daily & I'm healthy & I've come to accept it over the years; however, when you combat stigma, you do it on a regular basis & it can chip away at you bit by bit."

People who are HIV negative don't realize that it's a privilege to not have to deal with people who hate you for living with a virus. It's a privilege to not have to deal with people who want you dead or hoping you die of AIDS-related illness.

My "partner" definitely didn't mean for his comment to cut that deep, but again that's part of the benefit of not living with HIV.

I don't blame or shame him. Nor do I believe he wished to stigmatize. Dating & relationships are hard. Connecting & caring & supporting others can be difficult. Having patience for others is important & I surely attempted having patience with him as I know he tried with me.

I think back to when I first saw him dancing on the bar for Whip It Out! Wednesdays at the Ice Palace in Cherry Grove. You think it's easy to fall for someone on Fire Island? Maybe lust is easy to find, & for that moment I was lusting. But I didn't realize I would fall for this person who wouldn't fall for me.

The first few months — maybe the first five — were glorious. We talked throughout the day & called each other "baby." We would go out of our ways to see each other & have sleepovers. We spent Christmas & New Years Eve together, spoke every day when he was on vacation for two weeks — we even found the time when I was in Australia for work.

As we entered March, I felt him pulling away significantly. Things had started to get very real for a few months. Then suddenly each time I felt us getting closer, it seemed like he'd pulled away harder when it felt like we finally connected again. I can't speak for him because I'm not him, but I wanted to get closer. I didn't want him to keep one foot out the door. I wanted support & commitment. He didn't.

The last seven or eight months I've had this feeling of delusion, out of hope & desire, that we'd be more. But I have recently come to terms that the person for me is one who wants me the same way I want them. I want someone to care for me the way I care for them. The way I work for things when it gets hard, I deserve that in return.

Last night there was a full moon & today I see leaves changing colors outside & falling to the pavement showing that, just like nature, it's time to change my life for a successful future. I want to do more & be more & in a lot of ways I spent too much energy pining for someone that wouldn't

pine for me. It has definitely been a tough pill to swallow—which is funny for me because I love to swallow, but I'm moving forward with me.

For the future, I promise to sit in cafes & parks & write & be true to me. I'll find inspiration in everything to continue being artsy & creative. I'm going to discuss the happenings in my life & go back & write about the past when it's relevant for me. I appreciate you all staying with me this long. I'm going to try to keep a positive attitude.

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