



“You’re On MTV!” Sharing My Amazing, Undetectable Life With HIV

It felt emotional and inspiring to be part of an HIV-themed PSA for MTV, VH1 and Logo.

March 20, 2024 By [JMV](#)

The sound of oat milk being steamed and the aroma of coffee and flowers make a lovely atmosphere as I sit here listening to my Workday Jazz Spotify playlist. The beautiful chandelier and sunshine illuminate the café I frequent when inspired to write. I have a few coffee shops I like to visit and do some writing, but this one just may be my favorite. It’s a popular place called Café Flor in Chelsea where many New Yorkers go to do their work. The atmosphere is perfect to get work done or be around friends for a social afternoon latte.

I just published one blog entry and decided to continue writing while the vibe is correct for me. The last few entries have been about Provincetown and love, romance and where they will go. Right now, I’d briefly like to shift to tell my readers and supporters about something really awesome that happened to me in the summer of 2018. This isn’t something I want to skip because I think it’s truly important in my journey as someone living with HIV.

When I was first diagnosed with HIV, I really didn’t think I’d live to be 30. If the virus wouldn’t take me, I certainly wanted something else to off me. Morbid? Quite! That’s a lot of what I thought in my early twenties, and I’m not ashamed of that part of my story because it led me to finding purpose.

In my formative years, I never envisioned that HIV advocacy and activism would be a part of my life, but it’s something that I’m grateful for now, and in 2018 I received a DM that would change things for me and help me see that I was speaking up and being heard. I remember this phone call that followed an email exchange; I was standing behind the box office at the Post Office Cabaret one afternoon. The sun was beating down on my shirtless torso. My skin was glistening from my bike ride around town.

I spoke to someone who wanted me to do a public service announcement of sorts for MTV, VH1, and LOGO. It was called Quiet Heroes. We would tell our stories living with HIV and describe one person in our lives that was a hero to us. I chose my friend Robert to mention as one of my heroes because of the way he stepped up to help me when I needed it the most in those early stages of being HIV positive. The case worker, the doctor, the meds, the programs... all of it. I needed the support and he was there and clearheaded with all of it. The stability is something I really needed

in that stage. Back then, I felt like a wreck.

I had to leave Provincetown for a few days to film this PSA in New York City. I can recall arriving at the building where we filmed downtown and feeling very well taken care of by the production assistants and entire team. I had a makeup person on set that gave me a cute, natural little beat. I was in good hands.

I had such a good time on set, laughing and joking around with the crew. I was nervous once the camera was rolling, but they had my back. I spoke my truth about living with HIV and about Robert. When I started talking about him in depth, they revealed that he was there! When I saw him, I let out a giggle of pure joy.

There is something so magical being a part of a project talking about my HIV status for a network such as MTV. It meant all of our messages were going to be seen on a large scale and we all came from such different backgrounds and life experiences. We were able to discuss what it means to live a healthy life with HIV in 2018. That was really important for me to be a part of.

A few weeks later I received an email saying [“You’re on MTV!”](#) and clicked the links to see my face amongst this amazing group of people sharing their stories. The editing, music and lighting just made me so emotional. I felt emotional and inspiring. I wanted to continue doing things to spread awareness for HIV and AIDS. This seemed like such a huge moment for me, but time would prove that I’d experience many more moments using my voice to celebrate enjoying an undetectable life.