Ordinary Time

October 9, 2011 By Richard Ferri, PhD, ANP

The silence I have forced on these pages has been intentional. It is the silence and patience that widowers and trauma victimize learn about far too late and far too alone. It is that odd period of social indifference that morphs into anger. It is when the world expects you to " get over it." "It" being the most tragic loss of your life to date. "It" being a part of your soul. "It" being you. But there never was just a "you" and that is the really scary part.

Since I last keyed in my thoughts the world has stopped for a brief and pathetic nod to remember intolerable things gone bad. The attacks on our country on 9/11, the made up beginning date of the AIDS crisis, and some personal loses that I no longer expect anyone else to carry with me except God. Having God to share my burdens is a blessing of faith.

I waited for some time to pass before writing like the widower forgotten after the death and the immediate aftermath. This the "time after time" that few like to travel to or when once there feels an anxious compulsion for escape . When all the attention fades, the bodies are buried, and the return to normal expected. Like the day you tested positive. It was just another day, an ordinary day. Nothing special about it really. Just another day in your life. Yet normal and quite times shatters life as you know it. You pick up hat from the sofa. You turn a door knob. Sit in a chair... and the world you knew before you sat down is gone forever.

Yet as someone says words and information that is meant to pierce your armor the very basics of all previous knowledge and actions are suddenly wrong. This cannot be. These things just cannot be happening. I have given in grief,, blood, and T cells already. Please move on. You are you after all. You did not wake up one day and think: "*now wouldn't it be grand to live a life with AIDS*". Yet there you are, and yet here I am.

So time passes. Like the time since I last wrote. You lived your life. I lived mine. Some of it was joyous, some sad, and possibly some anguishing despair. Yet most of it was just ordinary time. Time that passes all to quickly. Time that lingers all too deadly.

During these times I go to work, I laugh, I ache, I get angry, and the world doesn't spin out of control no matter how much I feel it should. I am merely a man ticking down with a viral bomb throbbing through my body. Today I feel like a dirty bomb despite not truly knowing what one is in reality. But it doesn't matter I live a life where I am in the dark about many things that lots of folks feel I should be more on top of, but they do not bleed virally like we do. They will not understand the constant supplication and prayers we offer daily, sometimes hourly. Sometimes they become our time, ourselves and there isn't any difference between our prayers and our being except we cannot see it. We get lost in woods of our own bodies.

We pretend swallowing pills changes things. It does not. We are forced into a world of stigmata. For some the markings are purely physical, for others the stigmata pierces the soul, but for the majority of us we swirl in a soup that constantly needs attention. Being alive with HIV in these glorious times of advanced therapies is a living hell that dare not be voiced for fear additional abandonment.

We have been clearly told to“sit down and shut up” and are now paraded out like old Miss Americas a once relevant icon now forgotten, and frankly an embarrassment. We are the new wounded trophies for the social and political convenience of others.

We have no one to blame for these circumstances but ourselves and the time of viral outbreak. We took too much at the beginning, demanded more, became spoiled and tainted, and now do not have the balls to stand up and ask for pardon. We honestly though we all were going to die since we were told this. We justifiably raged. We stammered and hollered. We echoed silence. However, justifiable rage last only so long before it becomes life’s white noise.

So here we are today being told the panic is over, nothing much they can’t handle. But what never seems to be clarified is who is talking about who? But it doesn’t really matter. It is just another day. Just some ordinary time in a life gone viral.

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