The Positive Reinforcement Tour

Everything in my life was changing for the better. As I prepared for tour, I continued to discover I was worthy of more.

September 24, 2019 By JMV

The weekend is over, and I'm on the subway headed to Chelsea in New York City. I had a busy schedule Friday through Sunday at RuPaul's Drag Con NYC working with Miss Fame. It was wonderful, almost like a family reunion at this convention of drag queens and queer artists. It really had me reflect and find gratitude for the life I have today.

In my last entry, I almost forgot to tell you how great our show went at the Borgata Casino and Resort. It was fantastic, the audience was receptive, and the meet and greet was glorious. I enjoyed seeing so many fresh faces as well as the loyal fans who come to every major show. I was still glowing from the idea that I would be dancing and choreographing on a tour with real dates at major venues. It was all very exciting.

It was like this door of opportunity had just swung open, and all I wanted to do was smile all the time. Plus, I had a lot of work to do. I had to find another dancer to tour with me and the group. I had to prepare choreography and start considering that my life could take off from that point forward. I needed to start planning ahead.

After holding auditions, I hired an awesome dancer named Vinny. Then the producer booked our flights to Los Angeles where we would be rehearsing with some pretty brilliant drag queens.

Every time something new and exciting like this happened, I was reminded that my life wasn't like this at all just a few years ago. I was the guy making myself sick and wasting my life away using drugs and alcohol. But now, the shame and the stigma of living with HIV and being a gay man were suddenly dissipating more and more each and every day.

I was in LA! I got paid to rehearsal! And when I went out, guys actually desired me sexually—proof that PrEP was changing the game and impacting the way men having sex with men interacted. It also meant that I wasn't defective or a degenerate. I was worthy of attention and respect from men. I deserved to be treated kindly. This felt new to me. I liked it.

My life was showing me things and taking me places and allowing me to do things I never deemed possible. This wonderful progress continued until, before I knew it, it was time to fly out for the first tour date in Seattle, WA. It was time to let me life take off. I was done holding myself back.

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