What is Remembered Lives — David Loebl

The AIDS Memorial on Instagram revisits some of the amazing tributes submitted to the account.

June 21, 2018 By Stuart @theaidsmemorial

“25 years ago my phone rang. It was David, my son. He had pneumonia. 10 years earlier, David had become HIV positive. I had dreaded receiving this phone call for years, yet I was totally unprepared.

David, from the beginning, we both knew and denied the fact that your days might be limited. For me, as I hope for you, the intense decade that followed your infection was a mixture of highs and lows. I was terrified and clutched at every superstition and treatment opportunity, no matter how ridiculous or quackish it seemed.

Nightmares woke me up and I panicked when the phone rang unexpectedly. Yet we grew very close and I experienced deep joy doing many ordinary things with you. Fortunately, those memories stayed with me more than those of my anguish.

We flew to Hawaii in 1987. When we left San Francisco you were so weak from AZT that you could barely lift my suitcase. But just before our trip, your doctor reduced your AZT dosage. Your strength returned rapidly and we had a ball. We fell in love with Kauai, the bird’s-eye views we took in from a helicopter, its rugged coastline, our little apartment with its lanais.

We spent another 6 years trying to pack the love of a lifetime into whatever time you had left. We spent quiet moments in San Francisco, Maine and NYC You traveled with and without me. You acted in two plays, ate in restaurants, spent a lot of time in doctor’s offices, charmed most of those you met, fought with others.

You always took such joy in small things, like getting a lei, a free drink, solving the NY Times crossword puzzle, mixing a new cocktail. You were such fun to be with that in many ways life lost its luster after you were gone, but I also remember you admonishing me in the hospital “not to cry,” and my promise to you that I would be alright, even if I lost you.

The last time I saw you well was February 1993.

I had come to San Francisco to celebrate your birthday. Your many friends and I made the usual fuss. You were such a birthday nut.

David, your love left all of us strong enough to continue life without you, but we miss you terribly.” — by Suzanne Loebl, author of The Mothers’ Group: Of Love, Loss, and AIDS

Want to submit a story about your loved one to feature on The AIDS Memorial on Instagram?

Simply email your story to theaidsmemorial@yahoo.com

with up to 10 photos and a message under 400 characters.

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