Serodiscordant Questions

December 23, 2008 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

It's understandable for people to be curious about the HIV status of my partners/boyfriends, especially since I've been in relationships with HIV-negative men and HIV-positive men.

However, here are a few questions that make my head hurt:

Does he (my partner/boyfriend) know that you're HIV positive?
Yes. Do you really think I wouldn't tell him? You're supposedly my friend, what do you think of me that you would think that I wouldn't tell him? (OK, I suppose it's your duty to keep me honest.) Are you asking me this to be on the record, so to speak, with my answer just in case it should come up in a court of law someday? Or are you asking me this because you couldn't think of another way to get to juicier questions? Such as...

Are you being safe?
Yes, I'm being safe.

Are you sure?
Yes, I'm sure.

Are you really sure?
Yes, really.

OK then, so what exactly are you doing to stay safe (you know, like specific details on condoms and lube, what kinds of sexual acts, which one of you is in which position during said sexual acts, etc.)?
Stop right there. I discuss such things with my partners/boyfriends. Perhaps I might share such things with you, but the fact that you're presuming that I would is a bit uncomfortable for me, to say the least. If and when I'm ever ready to share such things with you, I'll let you know.

Isn't it great that he (my partner/boyfriend) is willing to date you?
Yes, it is. I mean, I'm such a hideous freak, after all. The fact that anyone would ever date me is a miracle. Being HIV positive only adds to my hideousness. Is this the line of thinking that you meant for me to suppose this question was coming from? If not, please strike the question and rephrase.

I could go on, but it seems that I've developed a headache.

Click here to read "Mixed Doubles" by former POZ copy editor Ben Munisteri from the June 2008 issue of POZ, in which he reveals being the HIV-negative partner in his relationships with HIV-positive men.

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