The Normal Heart [VIDEO]

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By Michael Halliday (Art Production Manager, POZ)

Last week I went to see the Broadway revival of *The Normal Heart*. Though I had never seen the play before--it debuted off-Broadway in 1985--I was all too familiar with the arrival of HIV/AIDS in New York City in the 1980s, having lived through that terrible period.

The play brought back memories of the struggle to deal with so much suffering and personal loss while trying to understand the changing times. For quite a number of years I attended and volunteered at the organization Friends in Deed (friendsindeed.org). There, so many of us, both HIV positive and negative, found strength, hope and inspiration through support.

When the night's performance of *The Normal Heart* ended, Cynthia O'Neal, the founder of Friends in Deed, and Anthony Rapp, an original cast member of *Rent*--a New York City AIDS musical set before the advent of combination therapy--took the stage and talked about their personal experiences of HIV/AIDS in the era of *The Normal Heart* and *Rent*.

Watch a video of the discussion:

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