

Tuesday, June 17, 2003

I finally got the courage to talk to my aunt Nancy. The circle of my inner support system was almost complete, and overall, it was much easier than I had anticipated. But I also know that “all that glitters isn’t gold,” and they are dealing with emotions we aren’t discussing. It seems to have affected my best friend, Mike, the most. He’d never admit it, but I can read him like a book. After a year of talking almost every day, and lengthy conversations at that, it wasn’t hard to tell by his reactions that it is affecting him. If he only knew that one of my first thoughts after hearing the news I was HIV-positive was that I definitely screwed up my chances of winning his heart. But, alas, I would never tell him that because I wouldn’t want him to hurt even more than he already does.

Part of me wonders if I’m not masking my emotions and hiding behind my “Everything happens for a reason” ideology.” It’s rare that I let myself show “weak” emotions, at least not where anyone can see it. I am not too keen on emotions in public, period. From the conversations I’ve had with other HIV-positive men online the last few days has shown me how far I have come in dealing with disasters in my life. There’s no way that the “old Terry” from two years ago could’ve handled this. That Terry thought my world had ended when I lost my job over an email joke. It’s almost mind-boggling to look back at all the disappointments that I have overcome, only to be faced with a greater, more uncertain challenge. Sure, they’ve come a long way with advancements in HIV treatment, but it still didn’t negate the fact that I average four sinus infections each year. I just keep telling myself that if I focus my energy to that which I want and not on what I don’t want (getting sick) I will be just fine. There is no room for stress when your life is on the line. I guess this experience was as eye opening as my dad’s heart attack was to him back in January of 2002. Both of us are hard headed and apparently need lightning bolts to shake us up to realize you can’t abuse your body and expect it to keep going.

I’ve decided to look into Buddhism and becoming a Zen Master. I am determined to find an alternative method to treating and curing HIV. I totally believe that the virus is attracted by negative energy and there must be a remedy to offset it. But, for the next 30 days, I’m not going to try to solve the problems of the world, or find a cure for HIV. I am going to focus on me for a change: taking better care of my health, learning to set limits and stick to them. No more will I give my body freely just because someone expresses an interest in me.

It seems that each day that passes, I get a little bit better at finding good things that can come from this situation. I understand now why Oprah’s gratitude journals have helped so many people. But finding good things in your life, you begin to flow positive energy to the situation, and then your perspective of the situation changes. But even though I had reached a level of acceptance being HIV-positive, there was still a small part in me (the part that believes in miracles) that believed if I just flow enough positive energy to the idea then maybe, just maybe, it would go away. Call it a terrible mistake on the lab’s part. Say it’s not explainable. I don’t care! I will probably always hold onto that hope. There’s always hope!