

Sunday, July 6, 2003 – 2:20 a.m.

The energy that was pulsing through my body was no doubt what doctors would classify as being “manic.” My sleep patters are erratic. I went from Wednesday at 10 a.m. until Friday morning with no sleep, working Wednesday night until midnight, then working again at 9:30 a.m. Thursday until 5:30 p.m. I laid down Thursday evening but was still too restless to sleep. I went over to Jackie’s on Thursday night and scrubbed her bathroom until 2:00 a.m. and wasn’t able to fall asleep until 5:30 a.m. I slept until 3:30 p.m. on Friday, and it was everything I could do to pump up my physical and mental energy to want to work. My energy level was noticeably high, but I felt this incredible torn feeling, wanting to spend the 4th of July celebrating with my family, I also had the feeling that I had to meet my responsibilities of working and being able to pay my bills. I tried to think of it as me spending the evening with my work family. I tried listening to several songs over and over to boost my spirit to want to go into work. Once I get to work, it’s easy to step into my role. I have to be positive at work, especially with my guests. After all, my income depends on it. I have probably worked harder the last four days than I have in some time, but I was pumped full of energy and more than happy to be able to utilize it at work. Every guest that sat in my section had to be aware of my high spirits, but all were receiving the benefit of it. In moods like these, hardly anything or anyone can bring me down. I always know that the energy won’t last forever, so I try to make the most of it while I can.

Sunday, July 6, 2003 – 6:07 a.m.

I believe our biggest problem as a people is we put too much importance on the messenger instead of the message or being the messenger to ourselves. “Thou shalt have no other God before me,” therefore, can be interpreted to mean that WE are in direct connection to the source that is God and shouldn’t put anyone before us in receiving and interpreting those messages. From all that I’ve experienced, it seems we are learning this lesson gradually, as we awaken, yet again, to the awesome power that we are.

Throughout our history, there have been many who have understood this important fact. Thomas Jefferson had a profound understanding of our reality when he drafted the Declaration of Independence. He was no doubt in direct connection to the source that we are when he wrote it. While it was written to symbolize our freedom from those that seeked to control our government, it serves today to hold truth to every aspect of who we are as a people, and who we continually choose to be. Yet it seems we constantly get caught up in our mundane realities with fear and intolerance and lose sight of the truths that our founding fathers so eloquently wrote about some 200 years ago. We have been controlled by fear for too long!

Our government has lost sight of its true purpose, no doubt because the majority of our leaders have become greedy and egocentric in accomplishing goals that serve the few and cost the man. Our balance has shifted from serving your principles well to manipulating the laws of the Universe to reach a greedy goal quickly. That doesn’t stop me from

dreaming, though. I still dream of a world inspired by nonprofit corporations who compete to donate the most TO the most, instead of a world filled with greedy corporate executives whose only motive lies in making a profit for investors while filling a “need” in society’s structure. I dream of a world filled with companies who value employees as much as, if not more than, they do their customers. Their motto would be, “One happy employee = Many Happy Customers.” Instead of a world filled with bottom-dollar, narrow-minded, heartless, greedy executives, who value employees only in the good times, but summarily discard them in the bad, while Mr. CEO spends six weeks of his year on vacation in exotic locations around the world. I dream of a world where everyone you meet smiles and says “hello” because he will think to himself, “No harm could come to me by saying hello to this stranger. After all, there are no strangers in this life, only friends I have not yet met.” And most importantly, I dream of a world where no one is afraid to be who they are or who they want to be. There would be no judgment of others or their actions or choices. Everyone would think to himself, “Just because I would not make this choice myself at this point in my life does not make it wrong, nor should I cast judgment upon it or call it “bad.”

Sunday, July 6, 2003 – 3:54 p.m.

I started thinking about the reasons why I had been unable to find true happiness in any of my romantic relationships over the past three years since I broke up with my ex, Buddy. While I suppose I realized this on an unconscious level before today, it was even more clear now. I came to this understanding by looking at the people I had attracted in my life before I became HIV-positive, and then those that I have attracted since. It was abundantly clear to me that I was vibrating a much less positive vibration than the one I am now. Even though I had met a countless number of guys online, and had thousands upon thousands of conversations with people around the globe, very few had the same outlook on life that I have been developing. The few that did were either not interested in me, or twice my age or completely unattractive to me physically. There always seemed to be something about them that just didn’t “feel right.” I saw it as though I was trying to fit a piece of my life’s puzzle into place, but as much as I wanted to believe it could fit there, it just didn’t look right.

Since Friday the 13th, I’ve met so many guys that share a similar “joi de vivre” (Joy for Life) that I do. After I became poz, I said to myself that since I used Gay.com to get me into the situation I was in, I was going to use it to get me through it, too. I went on a three-week mission to meet as many poz guys as I could and try to gain a better understanding of what I had gotten myself into.

The majority of HIV-positive guys that I perused in the Poz chat room still seem to be living in the “hamster wheel of life” as I call it, going around in circles totally oblivious to anything going on outside their little cage of life. But in comparison to the hundreds of others who routinely chat in the local chat room, the Poz guys seem to have a greater appreciation for life and a yearning to stay optimistic. I have clicked with at least ten different guys over the past three weeks, each of whom I shared a deeper level connection than usual. Two guys in particular, Eli and Mar, felt they could be perfect matches for

me. Unlike before Friday the 13th, I'm just taking things day by day instead of trying to figure out my entire future with someone. But if I have learned one thing over the last three years of dating, it's that I should trust my instincts and stop trying to prove myself wrong. Being a skeptic, that's not an easy thing to do, but I was experiencing more and more just how keen my intuition was and couldn't deny it any longer.

There was also another advantage that I had discovered to chatting with guys in the Poz room. Since most of the guys I had talked with were in cities far from where I live, my motivation was not meeting them (at least not right away). I often wondered why it was that I had always seemed to have the strongest connections with guys far away from me. It had always been like that since 1995 when I began chatting online. I believe that it's because we are more likely to be our true selves with people we don't fear rejection from, or have less to "lose" by being who we are. Since these guys were so far away, in my mind the likelihood (although not possibility) that anything would physically manifest itself were not that great. So the barriers to protect ourselves from hurt are not as strong or don't exist at all when connecting with others from a distance. The only downfall to connecting to guys afar was that I couldn't have the spiritual, mental, emotional, AND physical connections that are necessary for any relationship to stand the test of time for too long (especially with my short attention span). That didn't mean, however, that these connections were any less valid. There are plenty of relationships that only connect on the physical level and never reach a level of intimacy connecting on the higher planes of our mental, emotional, and spiritual being.

My head had been anointed with oil and my cup runneth over. I was beginning to have a better understanding of my own reality and being able to relate it to others I have and do associate with. Life was once again exciting to be able to have greater hope that these experiences were not without meaning in my life, even though I had always wanted to believe that. I had never met any guy from online without the hopes of the connection being something more, even against my gut instinct (which has always been right). I have high ideals and will always believe in the good of people, because the hurt of disappointment when they're not is far exceeded by the reassurance of my faith that it can happen, but only when I choose to create it in my life.

My greatest hope right now was to hold onto this zest for life and never let go even in the darkest of times when I doubt everything I once believed to be true. At least now that I've begun writing down my thoughts and feelings, I can look back on them with reverence of my faith in myself and God. I came across an Easter card just a bit ago that my mom had sent me several years ago. I had put it in the bottom drawer of my TV stand and it had been sticking out of the crack at the bottom for quite some time, but I decided to pick it up today when I was vacuuming the floor. It had the following poems in it.

He's the kind of special son
Who means so very much,
And that's why every thought of him
Holds such a loving touch.

Because a son like you deserves
The best of everything,
This comes to wish you all the joy
That Easter Day can bring...
And because a son like you should know
You're thought of every day,
Here's hoping you'll feel all the love
This message brings your way!

My mom then wrote, "And may God's love and tender mercy lead and guide you. He's only a prayer away. Stay close to Him. He loves you more than anything. And don't forget, no matter where you go, or what you do, you can always come back home. Love Mom"

I'm not surprised that as I write this, the songs playing in the background on my computer are the same four songs that played when I was driving home for Easter weekend in 2002 and had my spiritual awakening. Again my eyes were being opened to all that life has to offer, and the great abundance available to me, but only when I chose to embrace it. Listening to the lyrics of Celine's song "A New Day Has Come," the feelings that were pulsing through my body were stronger than ever. "Let the rain come down and wash away my tears. Let it fill my soul and drown my fears. Let it shatter the walls for a new sun. A new day has come." That song always restores my hopes that tomorrow will always be better, even when I'm lower than low. Some days, like today, the meaning of the song holds greater resonance, because I can see those truths more clearly.