

Dear all

We often come across to the people who are living with HIV and coping very effectively with the physical, mental and social challenges of the disease. Such people are source of inspiration for others. Their courage and devotion is really exemplary. They are fighting with the harsh realities and setting new standards of commitment and dedication to life. Today we are sharing with you some stories of such people living with HIV & AIDS.

Stories

Tara

Hi,
My name is Tara I am a college student who loves to teach and play music. My goal is to become a missionary somewhere in Mexico. I'm from USA and reside in FL. I will turn 30 next month! Why is this such a celebration? I have been diagnosed with AIDS for 15 years.
I was 15 years old when I was told the news. I received a blood transfusion which caused me to have tainted blood. My family didn't know about it until years later when I got sick.
My family and I have gone through hard times with discrimination in early period and sometimes even now! Yet, it's by the grace of God that has pulled our family together. I have never dated anyone because I'm afraid to hurt someone. =) My point to this story is don't give up on your dreams from a test. I have beaten so many odds and I'm still living my dreams. Keep your faith, stay strong with God and you will have a great life too. My other point is that AIDS can happen to ANYONE. Please be smart and protect yourself.
God Bless.
Tara

A mother, 34

I don't really know where to start. I guess by saying that I am 34 years old and I am HIV positive. I only found out when I was 13 weeks pregnant. I remember looking at the piece of paper and seeing it I didn't cry or do anything I just said am i going to die is baby going to die.
at the clinic they took my blood gave me advice the works i had to give names of ex partners that was easy I have only had 4. I don't know who gave me HIV when i split from my ex he kindly told me that he had given me something he has but i just thought he was being a partner.
any way i had to tell my partner and it was so hard but i did it and we just talked he said I am going to die and i said yes but not yet. i put it to the back of my mind and got on with being pregnant it was so hard i remember crying praying that everything would be ok and thankfully it was on the 26th of Jan 2006 i gave birth to a boy.. I came off my treatment and got on with it.
Its now a year on and I am still not on any treatment my little boy is negative and I am doing ok. i must admit i am thinking about it more and i am worried. i kiss my boy every night as i fear i wont be there in the morning. i am going to have counseling as i think it will do me good I am not ready to give up yet and I am not going to my little boy needs me.

Dudu

my name is DUDU and this my story. I am a married mother of a sixteen month breathe taking baby boy. I am a health care worker who has been very foolish, ignorant and selfish as i refused to take an HIV test as at the time was in excellent health and had other family issues to settle without adding more stress to myself and pregnancy.
Come 6/12/06 have been very ill with oral thrush and shortness of breathe got admitted in to hospital with cd4 of 10 and viral load of 73000 [signs of advanced HIV infection]. I honestly thought the doctors will tell

me to find a hospice but The almighty has kept His promise, What strengthened me were my husband, sister, and sister in law who has been so supportive. Above all God kept my hopes up. Just the thought of my son whose father is unemployed and being in UK, my son would be taken by Social services recovery was not an option and more. I told myself what the scriptures said 'believe in your heart and confess with your tongue'.

if i was asked how i felt i would say i am well. I am now recovering at home now after two weeks in hospital and i feel healed. However the nightmare is far from being over yet as my hubby will receive his results tomorrow and my son his the day after. I believe God will save them and they will be negative. I honestly would never forgive myself if my innocent toddler is positive. I don't want to even think of it but do I have any reason to doubt the Power of God. after all I feel so well after just 2 weeks of illness with such a CD count of 10. I believe whatever i have done to deserve this God has forgiven me and I have NO DOUBT MY SON IS NEGATIVE because, GOD REIGNS SUPREME. and he forgives and heals that's the GOD i PRAY TO.

I may be judged as Selfish, one has every reason to and I was I am not proud of it I wish the ground will swallow me but not yet I have A Son to Raise in the way the LORD want me to. I have dedicated him to the Lord to use him in his will.

Update:

Today month after diagnosis. my husband is negative my son positive. I know the Lord will lead the way I still trust in him He is the only one who can turn the situation over. The Lord will continue to heal me and keep my son healthy as always.

I have developed Hemolytic anemia, some bone marrow suppression and mild congestive cardiac failure with swollen ankles, I still Glorify God he reigns supreme for he is the Lord that health thee. I am not bragging but with how the condition presented itself and been admitted in hospital 4 times in 4 weeks, other people will have suffered years. Some one tell me why I can not give God the Glory really.

My son's results crushed me its unexplainable I suffered a nervous brake down. The Lord strengthened me, through my sisters from my own family and Definitely God gave them strength to be strong and sane. I can deal with my own diagnosis but learning about my son hurt so bad it hurt. In all this the Lord has been my strength; He never left me and never will.

Unfortunately my husband already has changed and my instinct tells me something is amiss, Ladies you know when something is not right. I still praise God and I have prayed about it and asked God to reveal the truth to me. My husband will have a repeat test in 3 months time.

Somethings that the Lord does you can not Question. Remember Job in the Bible did he not have a malignant boil from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head, Lost everything the Lord had given him and yet he gave the evil one no chance, He praised God without failure.

Ladies the Devil looks for those with faith in the Lord to make them loose faith in God because those who do not believe are already the devil's. Stay strong Ladies, gentleman and children because the Lord will not put you to shame if you trust in him. Watch the space and stay blessed.

Anon

Hi my name is not important right now my story on the other hand is I was diagnose HIV on Sept 24, 1999 I was 33 years I remember that vividly even though seven years have gone by here's my story at the age of 23 I meet the man of my dreams true love you might say he was a caring loving good providing man but he had one bad habit that at the time I didn't know about he like to sleep around, I always used to question him about the subject but he always manage to denied until one day that I caught him we had a big fight didn't spoke for months yet we still lived in the same home time past by until one day I began to get sick I began to loose weight, getting fatigue a lot of chest pain but since I have asthma and congestive heart failure since childhood I associated all this symptoms with my Illness," SILLY ME", so I was taking to the hospital but in intensive care unit I was literally dying until an "HIV TEST WAS CONDUCTED AND THERE WAS THE ANSWER "

Seven Years have gone by since that dreadful day I'm still trying to cope with the fact of dying and leaving my two sons behind but you know what I have learn to 'LIFE TODAY LIKE IT WAS GOING TO BE YOUR LAST' and PRAY AND THANK THE LORD THAT TOMMORROW HE HAS ALLOWED YOU TO SEE A BRAND NEW DAY OF THE FUTURE THAT EVENTHOUGH WE ARE SENTENCED TO A LONG DEATH PEOPLE LET'S PRAISED THE LORD WE ARE STILL HERE ABLE TO SHARED OUR STORIES

WE ARE ALIVED GOD BLESS US ALL'

Loke

Part one:

Hi. My name is not important, so here is my story.

I met a man at church and the first words he spoke to me was "HI I'M GOING TO MARRY YOU" I didn't know this person so I thought he was some kinda nut, smile any way. We started to date a few weeks later and married six months later, our families was not pleased with the marriage since his mom was married to my step father. So we got married in another state and later we had a wedding at home with our families.

We were married less than a month when he got a call from the health department informing him that he was HIV+, what a shock that was to me, he told me that he had no idea that he was infected but that he was a reformed drug addict. However he was still using drugs without my knowledge since I worked nights, I'd come home and go to bed thinking that he was sleepy sometimes because he worked nights also.

Well any way I had not even thought of being tested until one afternoon he told me that his DR. said that I should be tested. OK I thought I know that I couldn't possibly be infected since I didn't use drugs and not gay (Stupid me). I got the test, and what you know I was positive also it really blew my mind, I couldn't think straight or anything, this must be a mistake, so I went to work and about three am it hit me. I remember answering the phone and the Dr. said I'm sorry but your tests are back and you 're positive, I'm going to give you the name of an infectious disease Dr. that you should see. I was sitting at my desk and I just started screaming no! No! No! No! Tears were streaming down my face.

I went home later and I remember saying how could you do this horrible thing to me don't you know I have a child to rise? I wanted to kill him, but I didn't. We broke up for a few months and after listening to my Dr and praying we got back together so that we could support each other since we didn't know of anyone living with this disease. Well it's been fourteen years now, he has developed congestive heart disease, end stage renal failure, emphysema and several other problems, he has lost a lot of weight and is on dialysis three times a week. As for myself I've had two minor strokes but I'm fine gained a few pounds, but Glory be to God I'm undetectable and doing well.

On the other hand he has begun to drink, smoke cursing staying all night and literally stopped going to church. By the way I'm a minister and will never stop attending church and praising My God for he's been too good to me and he continues to bless me daily even though I don't deserve it. My husband left home last week and stayed out for two nights and came home and told me that he'd been drinking and thinking, and he had decided we should part because he wasn't doing me any good, wasting money couldn't work no sex in our life and he was really bring me down.

A few days later he left again after promising to pay some of the bills; he got his check and never showed up leaving me holding the bag. I was injured at work and still under the Dr. I have no income at all everything is going wrong I've been evicted from the apartment phones off etc. but he says I love you. I'm trying to hang in here and be supportive of him but it's hard. Since he's walked out on me he's somewhere here in town, but I have not seen or heard from him since Monday morning, I gave him a car to make payments since he was driving it. I had paid eight thousand dollars on it and the balance was nineteen hundred dollars now it's over three thousand because he has not made any payments. It bothers me because it's in my name only and lately he drives too fast and falls asleep driving, I'm in a pickle and don't know how to deal with it since I've never been without a job or money to provide for myself. I really would like to hate him and move on but God will not allow me to do so. All I'm asking you to do is pray for me sometimes.

I love you all

Loke, Alabama, USA

Part two:

Hi my name is Loke.

I've told most of my story, now is the gruesome middle, my husband stayed away from home for five nights, then returned and said "I came to pickup my clothes and began packing" After a few days the weather was changing, becoming colder so he telephoned to say 'I'll be coming out your way to get my coat so I hope you'll be home because it's getting cold' I said, no you'll come and get all of your clothes and

do not come back, I'll not have you going and coming after days away and broke. So he came got the remaining clothes and one of the cars that I had been paying on and left.

This man received this SS check on the third and didn't offer me one penny nor had he paid any money on the car that he had told me he was going to take the notes on So today it was respond today and he had the nerve to call me and asked if he could come and spend the night because it was cold outside. My response was no! no! So he replies I guess I'll have to sleep on the streets and frizzed my nuts off. I reminded him that he'd chosen to leave a clean, warm and good home for the streets and there would be no return unless God himself comes down and tells me otherwise.

Ladies please don't be taken in by these guys no matter how sad the story line is all they do is bring you down and I know that God has better plans for us, By the way I was dumb enough to ask why did you leave in the first place, don't you think you old me some kind of exclamation, He rudely stated I don't old you nothing I'm doing what I want to do. I was just tired of being married. It is hard enough to live with HIV knowing that any day you'll going to become ill and have to leave your love ones behind maybe sooner than anticipated (especially your grandchildren), but we certainly don't have to be stressed out by the man that claimed he loved you and leaves you with this demon. Well continue to pray for me as I'm praying for all of you.

Part three:

Hi this is Loke again,

I just wanted to say that I'm finally getting a divorce from my husband which makes me very happy. I've also re united with the man that i dated and loved over thirty years ago and we are extremely happy , i never dreamed we would meet again yet we have, and we are very much in love and i plan to be his wife in the future, when i told him of my HIV status i thought he'd turn away from me instead he loves me and truly wants to be with me i thank God for him every day I'm no longer alone. So if it happened for me it will can happen for you just keep trusting in God and continue praying , my t-cell are over a thousand and my viral load is undetectable i know it is God that's keeping me i celebrated my sixty- first birthday a few days ago.

by the way my grand daughters said that my friend and i act like a couple of teens just meeting for the first time , both of our children are happy for us and no he is not positive, he's such a wonderful man and i 'm truly blessed to know that we found each other again and are still in love. Ladies take care of yourselves, take your meds ,eat right ,stay healthy, keep a positive attitude and most of all continue praying and trusting in God.

I love all of you

Loke

Part four:

I'm still married seems like I can't get unmarried (joke) the judge dismissed my case because of some unsigned documents. So now I have to start all over again but I know that God is on my side and that devil may as well get his hands off my freedom. As for the man that was in my past, well we are still communicating, but not like we were when we first got together, he's calling less and less and makes excuses for not calling, (he called one night and "stated that the reason he's not calling every week is because he's too sleepy when he gets off work "but continues to say that he loves me), well I've heard that before and I believe that love is what love does. I'm not falling for that line, I'm just going to keep holding on to the one true love of my life and that's my GOD. My health is very good and I've been doing quite a bit of traveling and enjoying my children, grandchildren and great-granddaughter, but most of all I've enjoying my ministry and telling people about Jesus and his love for us.

It's been fifteen years now since I was diagnosed and I just thank and praise God each and a everyday for keeping me, at first it was hard but I had to take a good look at what had happened to me and where I had come from, when I look back over my life I realized that I could have been dead and gone but grace and mercy pleaded stepped in and pleaded my case even when I didn't deserve to be alive because I truly was bitter when I first found out this virus, but thanks be to God I'm still alive with a high cd count and undetectable virus load. Sisters all we can do is continue to praise God for everyday because he's good to us even though someone else tried to destroy our lives so we are going to keep the faith we will not let the enemy win ok.

I was just sitting here reading over our stories and the Holy Spirit spoke to me concerning us. We are very

special people because of our coverage to take a stand and fight for our life, we are beautiful inside and out, one thing I realized while reading was that we're all sharing the same goals and that is to live a long and fruitful life. I've faced many of the same problems that you have and it was tough, but with each day I awake with a new song in my heart.

You see what I didn't tell you about was the rejection, from family, church members (even the pastor), on my job and I was even asked to quit college. I was trying to get my RN degree since I was an LPN [Licensed Practical Nurse], but the dean said that they couldn't license me, crazy world we live in. people are so judgmental in this world always pointing their fingers at us and looking down their noses, those are the people I feel sorry for, so many of the people that were cruel to me have since died or are bed ridden with some other medial problems.

I'm writing this because I don't want any of us ladies to give up or feel down about our situation, especially the young woman with the three children. love is the key to our illness and God has plenty of love for us all, but if you start to feel alone just remember that's when God is carrying us over our rough spots. Be encouraged for the impossible is possible with God.

Love to all of you

Loke

Gail

Hello, my name is Gail

I was having the time of my life. I had been raising my son on my own for the past 4 years and one day out of the blue, his father calls and says he is on his way. I could not have been more happy. I have been back and forward with this man for the last 2 years because he was married. Like every woman in love I believed what every he said.

Things did not work, after being together for a week, he was not ready. He moved 2 hours away we still continued to see each other until, other women got involved. Things really went bad when I had a miscarriage. After the way he treated me, this time I was through.

I moved on with my life and found someone new. He was like a dream come true, much older man and he loved all of his children. Things were great for the two of us for awhile, until I thought he was cheating. I went to my doctor told her I wanted every std test and a pregnancy test. Went through all of that and still did not do my blood work then. A month later I did. With my results this time things were different.

I have been born and raised in the church all my life and you would not believe by knowing me but I am a "preachers kid". The nurse called 3 times that day and finally we spoke. I went end that evening, left work early and only to get the news that I had been hear for God for the past 2 years. My doctor and I are like sisters, and when I saw her face I knew that my results were positive. I did not know whether to cry or laugh.

I did not know how to tell my partner, my son's dad, nor my family. It was hard but after leaving my doctor, I started praying. God help me through. I was able to tell my family and my partners. The most hurtful part was my parents and my then boyfriend. I felt like I had let my parents down. With my man, he was hurt, but we are still good friends and still in somewhat of a relationship, on the other hand my sons dad, he pretends to be ok with this because in the end he and my boyfriend tested positive.

I try to keep a positive attitude and it has been hard but, I have all of my trust in God. I have been blessed, I don't have to take medications and my health is still good and I know that is because of God. Pray changes things.

Never stop believing in God

Rae

Hi. My name is Rae. I live in Texas.

I found out I was pos 3-4 years ago. I got it from my husband, who is now my ex-husband. Ever since i found out I've still been in a relationship with him, putting up with so much mental abuse. He continued to cheat and became so much more disrespectful to me. I thought because of my status I would never be wanted by anyone else so I put up with his behavior, even though it hurt like hell. I was made a fool in so many ways behind my back with his friends or dead to my face... yet i put up with it.

Finally one day i decided i didn't need that and I didn't deserve it. It has been a month now free of him. Before i had given up and refused to take my medicine, knowing i had a daughter to raise (he is not the

father). Now I take my medicine religiously with my daughter's help. She knows I take medicine everyday but doesn't know why. She loves me so much, she is now 11, and I just can't see myself telling her because she would worry about me so... I have gotten closer to God. He keeps me going with his strength, grace and mercy.

I have attempted to date. Out of the two attempts, I told one up front. He didn't call for a week but then came around. He is a good friend, ironically enough seems more interested in sex. I didn't tell the second one. I've come to the conclusion that I shouldn't have to tell such information unless its getting serious. Today I am practicing abstinence. I'm holding out until I get married.

I trust my God. I trust the man he has designed for me will be able to understand and accept my situation. He will love me no less. Yes it is lonely sometimes but God is truly the only One who can fill that void. I am content in my season of singleness! I am now 28 years old. I don't believe I will leave this earth one minute sooner than I've carried out God's purpose for me!

Tess

Hi, my name is Tess, a mother of a three young children, and this is my story. I was only 14 when I got married to an American man he was 38 years of age. Because of our situation I was forced to get married at a very young age. Little that I know he was a womanizer and a drug addict. It was a very bad experience for me but I loved him despite of everything. Anyway after a couple years of our marriage I finally have the courage to leave him. We had two kids already when I decided he wasn't going to change. After a couple years after I left him I have found out that he was very ill never thought he was infected. After he died his brother told me he had aids since we meet and I was just shock to find out because I was pregnant again with my new boyfriend. I thought that it was the end of the world for me when I found out. I didn't know what to do. Not, only I was scared for myself I was going to have a baby again. I got so scared I never went for a test coz I was to embarrassed to let other people know about it. But, last May of this year I had a really bad pneumonia and that's when I have the courage to find out what was going on with my body. I was on denial because I was ashamed. And my T-cell was down to 26 I got so scared because the doctor told me I was going to die. I wasn't afraid of dying I was more afraid of leaving my three children. I'm still on medication right now. I have very little money to buy medicine but I have very strong will to live for the sake of my kids. I am not good in writing nor in English I just wish that people would be more considerate with other and think about what they feel. I am so sad be coz I have kids with no father and my family didn't want to do anything with me. I only get my strength from god... I still feel lucky to live other day.

THANK YOU

Keshia

Hello my name is Keshia I'm a 27-year-old single parent of three living with HIV. On the outside I look happy but on the inside I'm filled with sadness. I ask myself all the time how could something like this happen to me. I'm a very nice person and help others all the time I have a good soul. So how and why this illness has be placed upon me. Knowing one day I'll be leaving my children who I love more then anything behind in this awful world to take care of them one day. But and do nothing but be grateful of the days I do have with them and thank the lord for giving me another day.

Aimee

My name is Aimee and I discovered I had AIDS on my 26th birthdays this year.

I had a strange bruise-like spot on my left breast that continued to get bigger and bigger. Soon, it covered my entire breast. I went to 7 different doctors and no one knew what it was. I was admitted to hospitals, specialists took pictures and yet, it was a mystery. I went to a general surgeon on December 28, 2004 and had a biopsy done. He told me I would be OK. I had to get my stitches out on Thursday, Jan. 6, 2005---my 26th birthday. He told my mom and I that it was something called Kaposi's Sarcoma. Found only in end-stage AIDS patients. As you can imagine, my head was spinning. I had had an HIV test and a Hepatitis test in December and had not received word of the results. Thinking no news was good news, I assumed it was

negative. It wasn't. The doctor just never contacted me to tell me the results.

I remember thinking that it was a nightmare and I would soon wake up. My family sat around and mourned for me. We all thought I was dead. I remember my dad crying out "My precious baby girl!" That was the first night I ever saw my dad get drunk. We just couldn't cope with the news. My family cried like wounded animals, and I was in a state of shock. I put the pieces together and now understood why I had been so very ill the last year. I had been hospitalized, I had shingles 3x and my hair was falling out. I had rashes on my skin that itched so bad. I would lay in bed for months at a time, having no energy. It would take everything I had just to get a shower and put make-up on. Doctors told me it was stress. I knew it was something serious, but never imagined AIDS.

I went to an incredible Infectious Disease doctor who gave me my first ray of hope. He said it was no longer a death sentence, instead, a chronic disease and with a healthy lifestyle and medication, I could very easily live to be an old woman. WHAT? I was so excited. I had blood work done and my T-cell count was 15. My viral load was 750,000. I was almost dead. I weighed 95 lbs in contrast with my usual 130lbs. I started on the medications Sustiva and Truvada along with Bactrim and Zithromax. I've been on the meds now a month and a half and my T-cell count is climbing! It was 160 last week and my viral load was 2,100. My doctor believes my viral load will soon be undetectable and my T-cell count over 200 in the next few months.

I have my life back. I've enrolled in grad school, run with my two dogs, work, work out at the gym, and enjoy life again. I'm even dating. If I can be brought back from near death.....emotionally, spiritually and physically, then so can you! My outlook on life is this: Love as you've never loved before, dance as though nobody's watching, be truthful regardless of the cost and trust in yourself as well and the Lord. I am lucky enough to have a supportive family, friends and a love of the Lord that gets me through this. I am not angry.... saddened, yes, but not angry. I have forgiven those that I feel have done me wrong as I know the Lord will forgive me of my sins. I look forward to keeping in touch with all of you so when I dance at my children's' weddings, I will know I HAVE LIVED LIFE!

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