



JOEY'S JOURNAL.

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I was diagnosed on paper on 3/3/91. I was 19 years old and was not aware what HIV was, and was majorly in denial thinking it was a normal cold. I began reading and found out how serious HIV was. The family doctor who diagnosed me, who has already passed away, referred me to who at that time was the best in dealing with HIV in central Florida, who is Dr. Jaime Carrizosa with infectious Disease consultants. Dr. Carrizosa began treating me by doing lab work...the Elisa test, at that time. My lab work came back not too good since I hadn't been taking care of myself being that I didn't know what I had to do. Dr. Carrizosa explained about the virus, which totally depressed me and brought my self-esteem down. I felt dirty. I became a totally different person at that time. My mother came to an appointment with me, and seeing how it destroyed her and when she told my father, someone who has lived his life by being a machista man and seeing him breakdown and cry, it totally broke me. I began doing research on my own and it was totally the wrong thing to do since all you heard was how people with HIV were dying and going through so much turmoil. This really brought me down to the point of locking myself in my room, not wanting people to see me. I felt as though I had a sign on my forehead saying I was sick, someone who has Aids, and, well, stopped living.

I continued my care with Dr. Carrizosa for years to come, but something that struck me while in his care was he said due to the medication being used @ that time, "AZT" a lot of people were dying and they did not know why, so he told me I probably would not last past 25 years old. At this time I was 20, but I continued strong and learned to be positive from my parents who always been behind me throughout this journey. In 1993 I began taking medications known to many now days as ARV's. The Dr. began with AZT which was horrible to take. I had all sorts of side effects. I was constantly nauseous, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach cramps, lip and tongue numbed, tip of fingers numbed and stained my face. Throughout this, I took other meds:

Viramune, Crixivan
 Viracept, Lexiva
 Videx, Narvir
 Combivir, Viread
 Kaletra, Zerit
 Truvada, Abacavir
 Isentress

Many did not know how to deal with the side effects, so as patients we had no choice but to deal with them, which is maybe why I have taken so many meds, me thinking another regimen would not be as bad and some times they were worse. During all this time I began to ease up on staying

I love all my family because without them, I would not have made it.

Dad- Jose Pineda, SR
Mom- Lucrecia Pineda
Martin Pineda brother
Jose Pineda, JR, brother
Robert Pineda, brother
Christopher Pineda, brother

I love you, the rest of my family for not looking down on me.
I hope this, though this not all my life's story in 10 pages, helps some one.
Life goes on. Always positive, head held up high!



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