

My Life & Achievements

I would like to address myself as K. I am a 31 years old women and a HIV+ for the last 8 years. In this article I would like to share my life experiences before and after I become HIV+. I was married off at the age 19+ without much information about safe sex or even sex except for what I learned in school.

In the year 1995, my husband was diagnosed as HIV+ and he was quite ill. In the same year I was tested too but my results was negative. My parents asked me to divorce him since I do not have the sickness and I also do not have a child with him. But after being consoled and explained with further information about HIV/AIDS by the Professor at the hospital that sooner or later my results will be positive as I am still in the window period. I did have a premature delivery where my baby died just three days after he was born in the year 1994. So I decided that I wanted to take care of my husband because I also did not have the heart of leaving him just like that. We were in and out of hospital for quite some time but his condition got worse, he had TB by the year 1996.

In January 1997, I was diagnosed as HIV+ but I did not tell my family or his about my status because my husband was very ill by that time and he died in March 1997. Later when I informed my in laws about my status they said that I am the one who caused the death of their son and I am the one who actually gave him the sickness. I become very depressed and emotional. I explained to them as much as I knew about HIV/AIDS but they would not listen. I even asked them if I was the cause why am I still alive and he is dead. Just in six months, I could see that my health was not very good and listening to them was actually killing me faster than the virus. I moved to my parent's home in September 1997.

My family was very supportive towards me and they actually understood about this sickness that I have. My mom cooked healthy food for me everyday until I was feeling so much better and I also gained some weight. But as the years passed and I started working, I did not know that a HIV+ person should not be stressed and overwork because being self-employed I was trying my best to be somebody in life and earn as much as I could.

Eventually, I fell sick and had to start treatment, which was very costly. I was lucky that my late husband was a government servant and I was entitled to make medical claims. I was afraid to make claims as I was not sure whether they will reimburse the claims so that I can buy medicine the following month. With the help of the doctors who wrote a letter to the Medical Officer in charge at my late husband's working place, I have been on treatment since the last 2 years and I know that I have to take the ARV treatment for as long as I live.

Now I am feeling so much healthier and I am now working in my father's company. Even though I am only earning a low salary, it is enough to cover my car expenses and some money for myself. I am happier now and I try to live my life to the fullest. My nephew and nieces love me so much; same goes to the rest of the family. All my relatives and close friends know about my status and they don't mind because they know how this virus is transmitted not by talking, hugging or sharing food. So what if I am HIV+, end of the day I am a normal person and I live my life positively.

Not all of us can get family support the way I had but remember there is always someone who is willing to listen and help us. Nowadays, I have a lot of HIV+ friends and I can talk and ask advice from them because I realize they understand me better because they are also going through the same thing as I am. I can actually be more open about discussing HIV/AIDS issues with my friends than my family.

With LUV,
K