



Strength in Numbers

Colorado

<http://www.strengthinnumbers.org/>

The Official Newsletter for the Colorado Chapter of Strength in Numbers

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Inside this Issue

Start of Denver's UB2	1
Letter from SIN Founder	1
Changes to Ryan White Part B Program	2
SIN Trip to Pike's Peak	3
Updated ADAP-Approved Medications	4
Community Ed. Forums	5
Coffee Talk	6
Shadowcliff Retreat 2008	6
Clinical Trials Update	7
Men4Men4Life.com	7
Resource for Veterans	7
Fasten Your Seatbelts...	8
Circles of Life	9
HIV Resource Pages	10
SIN List of Upcoming Events	11



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Strength In Numbers is to provide social support and educational resources to HIV+ gay men around the world thereby helping to improve their quality of life, quality of health and their ability to help others. Our activities include operation of an interactive Internet-based communications system, development of programs that increase self-esteem and social interaction skills, organization and guidance of activities that increase physical abilities, and promoting volunteer opportunities by our members in HIV-related efforts including fundraising for treatment services and research (such as AIDS Walks and the California AIDS Life/Cycle) and HIV prevention campaigns.

<http://www.strengthinnumbers.org/>

THE START OF DENVER'S UB2

December 14, 2007

By Rod Rushing



Welcome Sin members, community members, service providers and future SIN members:

This is the first edition of the Strength In Numbers (SIN) newsletter. It has been so much fun connecting with other men and putting this together. It certainly is not perfect, but hopefully it will get better over time with your help and input. Individually, we all have a good working knowledge of how to take care of ourselves. Imagine how much stronger that effort can be if we put that knowledge together. We definitely welcome your feedback and your input to help make this newsletter a useful tool for both new

positives and for those long-term warriors.

When Bryan Levinson wrote me a note informing me that he made me the moderator for SIN Colorado, I thought he was crazy. I had so many things going on; I did not imagine I had the time to devote to such an undertaking. But I knew things might be a bit up in the air following Chuck Lane's passing. Therefore, I thought I would temporarily take the responsibility to help out.

As it turns out, this has been one of the most fun responsibilities I've had in quite awhile. I have met so many great guys who happen to be poz. I have had laughs, and my share of coffee, resulting in a rekindled desire to take better care of my own health. It has also afforded me to offer some of my own insight to other poz guys. I have learned quite a bit these last few months, but most importantly, how good it feels to share what I have lived.

(Continued on page 3)

LETTER FROM SIN FOUNDER, BRYAN LEVINSON:



Welcome to the first newsletter for SIN Colorado. The Rocky Mountains have always attracted and compelled Americans to climb and conquer them. Yet as everyone knows about the weather in Colorado, it will not be tamed or controlled. We as people living with HIV/AIDS have our own peaks and valleys to navigate, and fortunately for many of us our virus can be tamed and controlled. That certainly doesn't mean it's gone away nor the stigma of being HIV+ has diminished. We all continue to face unique and sometimes even frightening challenges while living with this disease.

I tested positive in May 2000, and two years later I started Strength In Numbers with a small potluck party for single HIV+ gay men in Los Angeles. From that we've expanded to chapters around the world, crossing continents and even language barriers. But one thing has remained the same, the powerful realization that we are not alone in battling HIV/AIDS. SIN is made up of thousands of poz men and their friends from around the United States and the world, united by all the differences and hardships that would normally make set us apart.

So when the wind at your back is freezing, when you need a place to turn to for life-saving advice, or when you just want to have a good laugh with some guys who understand you, please know you will find a warm welcome in SIN. This group was started by a loving man named Chuck who recently passed away. We have endeavored to continue his hard work to make Colorado a better place, a stronger community, one humane being at a time.

Have a fantastic new year!

Bryan Levinson

Founder, Strength In Numbers (aka SIN)

CHANGES TO RYAN WHITE PART B PROGRAM

Hello! My name is Todd Grove, and I work with the Ryan White Part B Program at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). I have been asked to provide you a basic overview of changes that have been made to some of the programs that you may utilize if you are a Person Living With HIV/AIDS in Colorado. Due to increased funding and new initiatives, we have been able to make some exciting changes to help PLWHA in Colorado. If you have a computer, please check our website out for full details of any of the programs listed below, as well as other HIV/AIDS resources for care: www.stdhivco.org (see the Care and Treatment page).

For the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), we were able to raise the maximum amount of money that a participant can make annually (gross) from 300% to 400% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This means that for an individual, you can earn up to \$40,840 a year and still receive free HIV medications if you are not eligible for insurance or for Medicare or Medicaid. Additionally, we have added a number of new medications for complications of HIV to the ADAP formulary. Even some psychotropic medications have been, or are scheduled to be placed on the formulary in the near future. There have been adjustments in the amounts of assets that you may hold and still qualify for the ADAP as well. See our website for the ADAP application and formulary. If you want information about the ADAP Program, contact your case manager, or the ADAP enrollment coordinator, Santos Rivera, at (303) 692-2716.

The insurance continuation program is probably one of the least known assistance programs that we offer PLWHA. If you, a partner or family member are working, and can access insurance through an employer (or a COBRA policy through a former employer), this program may be for you. Depending on your income level, this program may pay for your insurance premiums, deductibles, or medication co-payments up to \$500 a month, and in some circumstances, up to \$10,000 a year. This program is also capped at 400% of FPL a year in income. If you are struggling because the cost of insurance or if you have opted out of an opportunity to get insurance at work because of the cost, please contact the AIDS Service Organization that serves your county. For those in the Den-

ver metro area, contact Colorado AIDS Project. Other enrollment agencies are listed on our website.

For those of you who have Medicare, either because you have reached retirement age, or have SSI or SSDI, there is a particularly exciting new program in Colorado. Many of you know that until 2006, Medicare did not have a pharmacy benefit at all. Medicare Part D changed that, even though it is an extremely complex program to understand. People that have dual eligibility for both Medicare and Medicaid suddenly received a significant new benefit, and no longer needed the ADAP.



Others who did not get a full Low Income Subsidy (LIS), or even a partial subsidy from Social Security found that they had some significant out of pocket costs. Even though the ADAP Medicare Part D program was able to pay for their Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) premiums, deductibles, and co-pays for the ADAP formulary medications, many found that they had to deal with paying 100% of the cost of some of their medications when they were in the "coverage gap" or donut hole. This was a bigger problem with PLWHA who had significant health challenges besides their HIV, such as heart problems or diabetes. There was only one PDP in 2006 and 2007 that offered a plan that didn't have such a donut hole, and they have both been discontinued for 2008. We have made extensive efforts to help qualified PLWHA who are affected by this change, and are proud to announce a new program.

Beginning in January 2008, CDPHE will launch a new program called "Bridging the Gap, Colorado", or BTGC. CDPHE and the ADAP Review Committee established this program as a way to help Medicare Part D eligible ADAP participants to pay for their medications. You will need to use an ADAP qualified pharmacy (which will include Kaiser Permanente for Medicare participants only). BTGC will now pay all eligible participants PDP premiums, copays, deductibles, as well as the "coverage gap" fees that all plans will have this year. Basically, if you qualify, you will have no cost associated with any medication that is on your chosen PDP from January 1st, 2008 until you reach the far side of the coverage gap. BTGC will pay all of these fees (which can amount to over \$5,400) for you until you reach the "catastrophic level" on your plan. At that point, you would only have to pay your drug plans co-pay per prescription for the rest of the plan year.

All Medicare Part D PLWHA who are currently enrolled in ADAP should have received an enrollment packet from the BTGC benefits coordinator, Public Health Services Bureau, in December. This packet included an application and a release of information form that have to be sent to CDPHE in order to participate in BTGC. If you think you may qualify and did not receive this packet, please see the website listed above for more information, or contact me directly at CDPHE:

Todd Grove - Project Administrator
DCEED - STD/HIV Ryan White Part B 3835
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO
80246
(303) 692-2783
todd.grove@state.co.us

I wish you the best of health in 2008, and look forward to sharing more information that can be of help or interest to the PLWHA community.

THE START OF DENVER'S UB2 (CONT.)

We are teaming up with the PLWH committee from the Mayor's Office of HIV Resources, and the Mile High Meth Project to kick-off what will hopefully become a great new tradition in Denver- UB2. UB2 is ongoing in other cities, and has had many successful events. UB2's are an opportunity for poz guys to get together and have fun without feeling any sort of stigma. This is a direct response to the personal ads that would separate poz men out. It celebrates the idea that I'm HIV poz – UB2.

The first UB2 event will be Sunday January 27, 2008 6 p.m. at Lannie's Clocktower Cabaret (see below). There will be no cover charge and a cash bar will be available. SIN founder Bryan Levinson will be the guest speaker and will spend time meeting with attendees. Performer Lannie Garrett will be there to sing a little, and we hope that entertainment, fun, and laughter will prevail.

Please RSVP 303-825-8113 xt 13 or at www.strengthinnumbers.org. Click on Colorado and then click on databases. We definitely are planning on a standing room only event. That would mean 150 poz guys. If you are HIV positive, you are invited. And bring a poz friend, too. Oh, and plan on talking with at least 5 new people. We love poz guys! We believe there is indeed Strength In Numbers. I have been poz for 22 years and presume for many more years to come. . . UB2

Sincerely,
Rod Rushing
Strength In Numbers Colorado
Rebuilt + Committee



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS TRIP TO PIKES PEAK

The morning started off a little cool, but by the time we got to Manitou Springs it was even colder.

We got our tickets and boarded the train. The ticket office advised that because of high winds we were only going up about 8,000 feet, any higher and the train could blow over! As the train started to ascend to the peak, we were all talking about S.I.N and what we thought S.I.N should be doing as a group. Along for the ride was a S.I.N member "Mr.

Front Range Bear 2007, (aka Daniel Murphy). We talked about how he won the title.

The terrain going to the top of the peak was spectacular. Everything was covered in snow like a winter wonderland! Half way to our destination we passed the Santa train and got some pictures of Santa Claus and his fat wife.

On the way down, we stopped at a scenic overlook and were allowed to get out of the train to take photographs. We took some photos of the train and the scenery to share with those unable to attend. Maybe next time!

After the train returned back to the station, we all went to eat at a local restaurant in Manitou Springs. All in all, it was a great event for a sunny Sunday afternoon! Hope those that were unable to attend this outing, will look for future events, on the calendar on the website and plan to attend.



UPDATED ADAP APPROVED MEDICATIONS

AS OF DECEMBER 7, 2007 THE FOLLOWING MEDICATIONS HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE COLORADO ADAP FORMULARY.



Antihypertensives:

- Hydrochlorothiazide
- Lisinopril with Hydrochlorothiazide (combination)
- Atenolol
- Metoprolol

Antiretrovirals:

- Isentress

Psychology:

- Depakote
- Mirtazapine (Remeron)
- Kepra

Diabetes:

- Metformin (Glucophage)
- Glyburide
- Metformin/Glyburide (Glucovance)
- Lantus Insulin
- Humalog Insulin
- Lancets
- Blood glucose strips
- Glucometer

Smoking Cessation:

- Varenicline (Chantix)

Women's Care:

- Low dose Birth Control pills
- (Alesse) or Generics: Aviane,

Lessina, Levlite, Lutera

- (OrthoNovum 1/35) or Generics: Necon 1/35, Norinyl 1/35, Norel 1/35
- Vaginal Ring (NuvaRing)

Miscellaneous:

- Leucovorin
- Metronidazole
- Chlorhexidine Gluconate rinse
- Amoxicillin
- Pen VK
- Androderm
- IM Testosterone
- Tricor
- Loperamide
- Lomotil

For more information contact:

Tammy Ruddick, PharmD.
Clinical Coordinator/ADAP
303-499-2879

*(AIDS Drug Assistance Program)

COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL FORUMS



The **Educational Forums** are programs on HIV and HIV-related topics. They strive to be informative and useful for people living with HIV. They are organized and conducted with the belief that **KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!** The Education Forums afford an opportunity for POZ individuals to socialize and network.

They typically start between 6 and 6:30 p.m., and offer a free dinner. The Education Forums were started and organized by the PWA Coalition (now defunct) about 12 years ago. Then they were organized by CAP for several years. Currently, they are being coordinated each month by a small group of individuals. These individuals are not associated with any agency (hence the motto: "by the community, for the community"). If you would like to help plan the Educational Forums, please send an e-mail to Michael at forums.colorado@gmail.com or call 303.587.0233. We would like to have more community involvement.

The September forum was about co-morbidities (how other health issues affect HIV & vice versa). The October forum was in conjunction with BCAP in Boulder on living better with new treatments and ways to deal with complications.

The November forum was about the immune system and therapies. In December, the Forum entailed a treatment update from the very knowledgeable doctors at the University of Colorado Clinic.

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The community forums have been held in a variety of locations, but we think the rest of this year will be in the community room of Our Saviors Lutheran Church at 9th & Emerson. It's in a central location with decent parking & bus service, has a kitchen for catering and preparation, plenty of tables & chairs, a screen, PA system, etc.

The Educational Forums **do not require** individuals to RSVP. They are typically scheduled on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday evenings the first or second week of each month. For 2008, these will mostly be held on Tuesdays. A limited number of flyers are distributed at various agencies and clinics, as well as the food bank at CAP, and in the monthly CAP Notes newsletter. We also have an e-mail distribution list. If you would like to be notified of these forums by e-mail, please request that in an e-mail to: forums.colorado@gmail.com. Remember we will NOT share your e-mail and only use it for forum notification. We will always BCC (blind carbon copy) to hide your e-mail address.

Education Forums* for the coming months:

January 15 – Other infections, communicable diseases and plagues—what we need to know and be concerned about (everything from West Nile Virus & MRSA to the common cold & flu, and everything in between). What are we at high risk for? What should we be vaccinated for? What should we watch out for?

February 12 – An update on lipoatrophy & lipodystrophy—causes, symptoms, treatments, etc

March 18 – not yet scheduled (Contact Michael with suggestions)

April 15 – Highlights from the annual Retrovirus Conference.

May 13 – HIV Services (info on services including insurance programs & an update on Med D, dental care, housing, etc). Again, we welcome all ideas and input!

June 17 - HIV Services (info on services including insurance programs & an update on Med D, dental care, housing, etc).

July and beyond – not yet scheduled (ideas include a forum on legal issues and an HIV nutrition update). Again, we welcome all ideas and input!

*All forums are subject to change. Check the SIN website -calendar section- for updates

Coffee Talk

By Kevin Dougherty

What's all the coffee talk about?

As a fairly recently diagnosed individual (2005) and still in denial of my status, the last place I wanted to go on a Sunday morning was to have coffee with a group of HIV positive strangers. At the insistence, and strong perseverance, of a new acquaintance I agreed to attend with great skepticism. Trying to convince myself that this was not a group for me, I planned a quick appearance, and a quick excuse to conveniently exit. I was proven wrong. As a newcomer to the group I was made to feel comfortable and welcomed. I recognized several individuals I had known in the community on both a personal and professional level from many years back. The conversation was light, humorous and I felt engaged in the group dynamic in no time. Planning of where SIN is headed was a primary focus of the meeting as the SIN group takes a more inclusive focus direction. As the meeting broke up, I was told to come back next time, bring a friend, spread the word of the group.

I returned for the next gathering. Coincidentally, it was the weekend I started on HIV meds for the first time. In the past year I had been resistant to starting meds, feeling like I was surrendering control to medications and HIV. I discussed this at coffee that Sunday. I was met with comfort, support of my feelings, and understanding. There was no judgment that I was a new guy, only living with HIV for 24 months, as compared to those others with decades of HIV. Everything I was feeling was validated. I have returned for subsequent meetings on Sunday mornings.

SIN is not a support group. However, support is created through the social networking that occurs at the Sunday groups, and other social activities sponsored by SIN. Check the calendar on the website, or news letter for dates. The meetings are held in the private community room at Panera Bread at 13th and Grant. The community room provides a comfortable setting to discuss topics of HIV in a private manner.



SHADOWCLIFF HIV RETREAT 2008



The 2008 Shadowcliff Retreats will be held June 19-22 and July 17-20.

These annual retreats are held at the Shadowcliff Lodge in Grand Lake, Colorado. The Retreat begins on Thursday afternoon and concludes on Sunday afternoon. Shadowcliff is a beautiful historic mountain lodge adjacent to Rocky Mountain National Park (and several park trailheads), built on cliffs overlooking the lake, the mountains, and the town of Grand Lake. Our retreat has exclusive use of all facilities for the entire weekend.

The Shadowcliff HIV Retreat is always an exceptional, empowering experience for the participants and volunteers. The Retreat is a 3-day event with a full program of workshops & forums, a variety of body therapies, and other social activities. The purpose of the Retreat is to provide a proactive environment where people can empower themselves with skills and knowledge about health, healing, and coping, in a social setting of fellowship, safety and acceptance, in conjunction with various body therapies and other activities.

Previous year's presentations and workshops have included: HIV and Nutrition, Native American Healing Practices, Energy Work, HIV Treatment Updates, Living Well with HIV & Coping with Side Effects, Meditation, T'ai Ji & Qi Gong, Journaling, Art Therapy, Cooking Classes, Yoga, light exercise, breath work and healing circles. A variety of body therapies have always been offered - Massage, Reiki, Acupuncture, Reflexology, Chiropractic, Energy Work, Belief-Shifting, and more (all volunteers are certified and/or licensed practitioners, in compliance with Colorado laws). The presenters, workshop leaders, and therapists all volunteer their time.

Other activities include hikes and nature walks in Rocky Mountain National Park (which borders the property), boat rides on Grand Lake (also known as Spirit Lake), and other social and group activities. The Retreat prohibits illegal drugs and alcohol, and Shadowcliff is a non-smoking facility.

The cost of the retreat starts at \$80 for persons with HIV. This includes 3 nights lodging, all meals, social & educational activities, workshops, and all body therapies. Transportation to the site can be provided if needed (from Denver). Registration forms will be available February 1st (or sooner) by e-mail, on the website, and also on paper through most AIDS service organizations and medical clinics in Denver and Colorado.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Michael at:

Shadowcliff@hotmail.com -or- 303.587.0233

www.shadowcliff.org/sc_programs/hivretreat.htm

UPCOMING AND ONGOING RESEARCH AT THE COLORADO AIDS CLINICAL TRIALS UNIT

The Colorado AIDS Clinical Trails Unit (ACTU) is a research center sponsored by the National Institute of Health. It conducts research studies for people with HIV/AIDS. The research is conducted at the Anschutz Medical Campus (formerly Fitzsimmons).

It currently has studies for people who have recently been infected with HIV, and has a vaccine study for people with HIV who are on a successful regimen.

Within the next two months it will open a study for people who have developed resistance to many of the antiviral drugs currently available. It will also open a study for people with some neuro-cognitive impairment.

If you are interested in learning more about research studies at the Colorado ACTU, call

Graham Ray
303-724-0712.



Men4Men4Life is a peer-driven, grassroots movement to promote and support health and wellness among gay and bisexual men in Denver and the surrounding communities.

Our intent is to start a broad-based community conversation wherein we, each of us for ourselves, explore our attitudes, values, wants and needs related to our health and wellness.

Please participate and be a part of this new and innovative approach by which we all join to support ourselves and our brothers.

For more information, please contact Christopher at (303) 825-8113, ext. 24 or Christopher@men4men4life.com

RESOURCE FOR DISABLED VETERANS

If you are a disabled veteran with an existing service connected disability at less than a 30% rating or a disabled veteran seeking information on how to initiate an evaluation review for service connected disability (this includes ex-servicemen who tested HIV positive while on active duty), Disabled American Veteran's services are available to assist you. Please contact:

The American Legion Department of Colorado

John McCartney

Department Service Officer

E-mail: aldso@coloradolegion.org

(303) 914-5587 Office

(303) 366-7618 Fax

1-877-917-5381 toll free

John is available on Thursday mornings from 9 until 12 on the first floor of the Veteran's Hospital located on 9th Avenue in Denver.



FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS. . .

By Arthur W. Powers



For this first issue of SINEWS, and in future issues, this column will be devoted to the immense importance of AIDS/HIV related public policy and political developments, generally, in Colorado. AIDS/HIV public policy and political developments deserve our close, heart-felt attention and engagement because, among the many facets that comprise our lives, being a Person Living With HIV/AIDS is inherently political, in my view, whether we consciously acknowledge this (or not) as we navigate through our daily lives and our endeavors to survive and THRIVE! (The abbreviated name of the HIV/AIDS community advocacy organization this writer and colleagues founded this year, see below).

First, though, I wish to acknowledge the wonderful and watershed initiative-taking that Rod, Chris, Henry, Kevin, and Ron have exercised in developing and publishing for SIN - Colorado the newsletter that you are either reading from your E-mail or holding in your hands. When the Colorado AIDS/HIV communities lost the historic P.W.A. Coalition and its superb publication, RESOLUTION, in 2004, we lost a crucial pillar of communication and information-sharing invented by Chad Kenney in 1988 and refined by Jeff Davis, Chad, and Sarah Brighton subsequently over years of service by both men and Sarah. Chad and Sarah remain among us, thankfully, Jeff tragically does not. I see this SIN - Colorado newsletter as the harbinger of great things to come in terms of a restoration of an information and communication vehicle for our communities statewide, potentially, and, whatever may evolve with SINEWS in the future, right now our thanks are owed to Rod, Chris, Henry, Kevin, and Ron.

Many of us are able to recall the famous line of Betty Davis from the film, ALL ABOUT EVE, "Fasten your seat belts; it's going to be a bumpy night!" Well, the upcoming Colorado State Legislative Session of 2008 starting this January will have potentially vast implications for all of us in the AIDS/HIV community and for the majority of Coloradans, generally, because the most prominent, banner theme of this next legislative session (and probably the 2009 legislative session, as well) will be HEALTH CARE REFORM which Colorado's woefully inadequate and crisis-ridden health care system desperately needs. Approximately 800,000 persons in our state of just over 4 million residents have NO health insurance whatsoever, a difficult-to-determine number of whom are persons living with HIV including this writer, making access to health care profoundly problematic and deeply anxiety provoking for all of us without insurance. {Many others are painfully under-insured with high deductibles and co-payments for primary care and prescription drugs, as well.} Of course, this is especially true for those of the uninsured (and under-insured) who, like us, experience chronic or terminal illness, and have to pay "out-of-pocket" for some or all of our medical (and mental health) care such as the HIV anti-retroviral and opportunistic conditions fighting drugs, and related T-cell and viral load testing, that are central to keeping you and me alive. As someone without health insurance myself, I am keenly aware that in this upcoming legislative session as in the past, I will be advocating for our lives and well-being with my colleagues in CORA (Colorado Organizations Responding to AIDS) as I join with many terrific advocates from other disability and chronically-ill related communities (and others) who are members and/or representatives of "vulnerable populations" to achieve over the next two years as beneficial a set of TRUE health care reform outcomes for all our communities as we may extract from a political process which will present many challenges (and adversaries) for us. We have a bumpy ride ahead, indeed.

In the span of twenty-two years, since 1986, of Colorado State legislative advocacy in which I have engaged with wonderful colleagues and friends both living and, sadly, too many passed away on behalf of the interests of the AIDS/HIV communities of our state, few legislative sessions have seemed to me as important as the two coming our way over these next two years. In these pages, I will strive to keep our community, for me our family in a very real sense of the term, informed of broad developments, state legislatively, as they unfold. Much work already has been done preparatory for the legislative session of 2008 on behalf of our communities - our interests have been represented at many of the key "tables," such as the Colorado Health Care Reform Commission, and in key organizations revolving around health care reform and other issues - and much lays ahead with deep meaning and significance for the well-being of all of us.

Of course, we also have going on all around us the inestimably important election cycle of 2008, the reauthorization of the Ryan White Care Act in two years, and a host of other, public policy related developments perpetually in motion to consider, track, and with which to be DIRECTLY involved, too. After all, as my friends and colleagues in the disability communities emphasize, "If it is about us and affects us, NOT WITHOUT US, ever!" Since the Spring of 1982 with the Gay and Lesbian Health Alliance of Denver (GLHAD) - founded by Barry Gaspard and Barry Kryzweicki (may their contributions and those of many others with whom I have worked then and since never be forgotten) - which is when my work on AIDS/HIV public policy and other issues started, I have dedicated my life and my life force and health to this principle as a person living with HIV/AIDS for over twenty-six years, now.

Please write us at this newsletter by way of the SIN website or write me directly (constructively, please). Having an authentic dialogue or "conversation" in our "family" will only help our advocacy efforts in the future, and, gee, here's a thought, could be a whole lot of fun, too!. Thank you for your attention. - Arthur W. Powers, Managing Director, THRIVE (!): The Persons Living With HIV/AIDS Initiative of Colorado (arthurwpowers@yahoo.com).

CIRCLES OF LIFE: POZ IN RECOVERY

By Jim Erickson

I am in the flow of the circles of life so that I am never alone. This is a phrase from my daily mantra that keeps me grounded: Alive to live, Awake to love, Alert to grow, Aware to forgive, I accept to welcome all.

I take my inspiration for circles from an essay by Ralph Waldo Emerson, in it, he writes: "The eye is the first circle; the horizon which it forms in the second; and throughout nature this primary picture is repeated without end." I tested positive in July 1995. I learned from the outset that I was a person living with HIV. I grew in my acceptance of this from my first experiences at the AIDS Alternative Health Project, in Chicago and then by moving to Colorado and being under the care of Dr. Charles Steinberg, founder of AIDS, Medicine and Miracles in Boulder.

My life has been an ever changing of cycles, t-cells up and down and now back up to 800, 33 pills a day to 9 pills each day, not to mention the endless articles I've read and conversations I have had about HIV, long before we knew what to call it. I lived when many others I knew did not, and even that would not take away my desire to escape from how to cope with my feelings about this disease. It was my diagnosis at 35 that made me seek the escape that would eventually lead me to my next acceptance: that I was addicted. It then took me almost another 10 years of dancing with fate before one day I realized that I was also a person living with addiction.

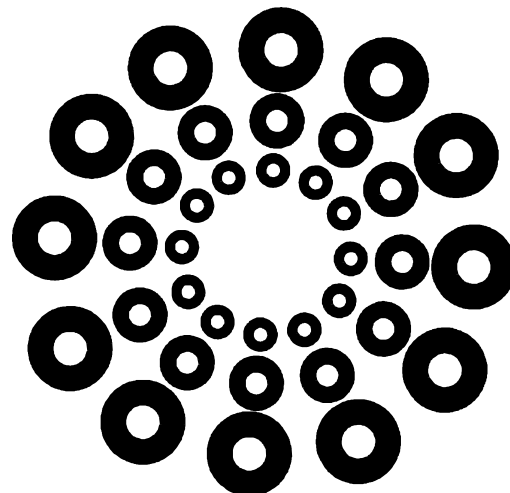
My holistic approach to living with HIV served as my example of how I could grow with living with my addictions. My clean date is 2 March 2005, free from alcohol and drugs.

In recovery I live in the workings of the 12-Step Programs. I was attracted to my first sponsor because he identified himself as a person with HIV. If I was learning to live with my HIV, then I also would need to integrate this knowledge into how I would live as an addict. Today, I do this on a daily basis, one day at a time.

In my experience with being poz, step one tells me that I am powerless and my life is unmanageable with being HIV positive. That is the diagnosis, the next eleven steps tell me of the remedies to deal with being positive. I learned to take my meds with regularity and to be thankful for the doctors that prescribe them to me, and the researchers that have afforded me an opportunity to live well beyond what I first anticipated. Recovery has challenged me to grow spiritually and to deepen my first encounters with HIV, because these experiences were positive. The circles of my life began to take shape as I see how my life has developed. I know today that the flow of my life, from living with HIV as well as living with addictions is an amazing cycle of transformation. Today I am all about change because that is what works in my life.

I find myself today in another cycle of change, one circle of life changing to another circle of life, and yet they each overlap. I find myself in continuous change. I comprehend Emerson's thought, when he says: "Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth that around every circle another can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, but every end is a beginning." Being an addict and being HIV positive are only a series of definitions of who I am today. I am in the flow of the circles of life so that I am never alone. Today, my life centers around my recovery and because of this my life has changed. I take my meds and attend lots of meetings and reach out to others. In learning to live with the disease of addiction, I have been able to grow in my recovery. I have also been able to improve my health with being HIV positive. I am never alone.

Several months ago a friend introduced me to SIN, and since then I have grown to believe that we are Strength in Numbers. My world has brightened as I have grown in fellowship with others on this journey. The potential of ub2 poz gay men is limitless. I welcome this challenge to grow in new ways. Today, I integrate my life with this acceptance, and once again I see how I am in the flow of the circles of life. Thank you for allowing me to overlap into your flow of the circles of life. I look forward to change.



HIV RESOURCE PAGES

CLINICS AND/OR CLINIC REFERRAL:

AIDS Drug Assistance Program
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246
Todd Grove, Program Manager
303.692.2783
<http://www.atdn.org/access/states/co/co.html>

Denver Health Medical Center
605 Bannock Street
Denver, CO 80204
303.436.7240
fax: 303.436.4779
<http://www.denverhealth.org>

ARTS (Addiction Research and Treatment Services)
Special Services Clinic
2121 East 18th Avenue
Denver, CO 80206
303.355.1014
fax: 303.355.0899
<http://www.artstreatment.com>

Howard Dental Center
1420 Ogden Street
Denver, CO 80218
303.863.0772
fax: 303.832.7823
<http://www.howarddental.org>

Children's Hospital HIV Program
Denver, CO 80218
303.764.8233
<http://www.chipteam.org>

University of Colorado Hospital
1635 N. Ursula Street / PO Box
6510, Mail Stop
B163
Aurora, CO 80045
720.848.0816
fax: 720.848.0192
www.uch.edu

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:

Mental Health Corp of Denver
1555 Humboldt Street
Denver, CO 80233
Carl Clark, MD, Program Director
303.504.6649
fax: 303.757.5245
carlclark@mhcd.com

REGIONAL AIDS PROJECTS:

Boulder County AIDS Project (BCAP)
2118 14th Street
Boulder, CO 80302
303.444.6121
fax: 303.444.0260
<http://www.bcap.org>

Colorado AIDS Project (CAP)
(Colorado Health Network)
2490 W. 26th Avenue A-300
Denver, CO 80203
303.837.1501
fax: 303.837.0388
<http://www.coloradoaidsproject.org>

Northern Colorado AIDS Project (NCAP)
400 Remington
Suite 100
Ft. Collins, CO 80524
800.464.4611
fax: 970.4848.4497
<http://www.ncaids.org>

Southern Colorado AIDS Project (SCAP)
1301 South 8th Street
Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
800.241.5468
fax: 719.578.8690
<http://www.s-cap.org>

Western Colorado AIDS Project (WestCAP)
805 Main Street
Grand Junction, CO 81501
800.765.8594
fax: 970.243.5791
<http://www.westcap.info>

HIV RESOURCE PAGES

HIV AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES:

Empowerment Program 1600 York Street Suite 201 Denver, CO 80206 303.320.1989 fax: 303.320.3987 http://www.empowermentprogram.org	Servicios de la Raza 4055 Tejon Street Denver, CO 80211 303.458.5851 fax: 303.455.1332 http://www.serviciosdelaraza.org	Sisters of Color United for Education 2895 W. 8th Avenue Denver, CO 80204 303.446.8800 fax: 303.446.8799 belinda.garcia@sisterofcolor.org
Women's Lighthouse Project 1400 Dallas Street Suite 1-A Aurora, CO 80010 Shannon Conn, Program Director 303.344.1878 fax: 303.568.0019 womenslighthouse@aol.com	It Takes a Village 1475 Lima St. Aurora, CO 80017 Mailing: PO Box 471733, Aurora CO 80017 303-367-4747 Fax: 303-3670227 info@ittakesavillagecolorado.org	

ADAPs (Aids Drug Assistance Programs):

AIDS Drug Assistance Program 4300 Cherry Creek Drive Denver, CO 80246 Todd Grove, Program Manager 303.692.2783 fax: 303.691.7736 www.atdn.org/access/states/co/co.html	Denver Health Medical Center 605 Bannock Street Denver, CO 80204 Pat Gourley, RN, Clinic Coordinator 303.436.7240 fax: 303.436.4779 http://www.denverhealth.org
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WEBSITES:

www.aidsinfonet.org	—great fact sheets on HIV / AIDS
www.kff.org	—national and international statistics and fact sheets
www.aidsinfo.nih.gov	
www.projectinform.org/index.shtml	—comprehensive fact sheets
www.hivresources.com	
www.aegis.com	—AIDS Education Global Information System
www.aclu.org/hiv	—HIV and the law
www.aids-ed.org	—AIDS Education and Training Centers National Resource
www.thebody.org	—HIV/AIDS information site, questions answered

The intention of the Resource section is to provide a concise practical HIV guide for the community to reference. If you have a resource, or have accessed an HIV resource that has been beneficial, please submit it to the SIN website, message section, so that it may be added.

SIN COLORADO

LIST OF UPCOMING EVENTS

**January****Sunday 1/13/2008**

Coffee Talk
(Panera Bread 13th & Grant)

Monday 1/15/2008

(Community Forum Our Saviors Lutheran Church,
9th & Emerson)

Topic: Other infections, communicable diseases and plagues—
what we need to know and be concerned about (everything
from West Nile Virus & MRSA to the common cold & flu, and
everything in between). What are we at high risk for? What

Sunday 1/27/2008 (A.M.)

Breakfast
(Panera Bread 13th & Grant)

Sunday 1/27/2008 (P.M.)

HIV Awareness
Program
Lannie's Clocktower
16th Street Mall

February**Sunday 2/10/2008**

Coffee Talk
(Panera Bread 13th & Grant)

Monday 2/12/2008

(Community Forum Our Saviors Lutheran Church,
9th & Emerson)
Topic: An update on lipoatrophy & lipodystro-
phy—causes, symptoms, treatments, etc.

Sunday 2/24/2008

Breakfast
(Panera Bread 13th & Grant)

Strength In Numbers would like to thank The Council for
providing printing resources for the newsletter.

