

BABES TALKING

NETWORK

empowered by the ywca

A Sisterhood of Women Facing HIV Together

BABES Talking is a quarterly publication of BABES Network-YWCA. The goals of our publication are to share information, publicize events, and create a forum for the voices of women living with HIV/AIDS to be heard. We encourage you to make **BABES Talking** your newsletter by writing a story, submitting artwork, or setting up an interview with a staff member.

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**All articles are personal stories/opinions and have not been reviewed by a medical provider or endorsed by BABES Network-YWCA.*

INSPIRATION

Volume 28 Issue 1

Winter 2019

START



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<http://LeesDoodles.blogspot.com>

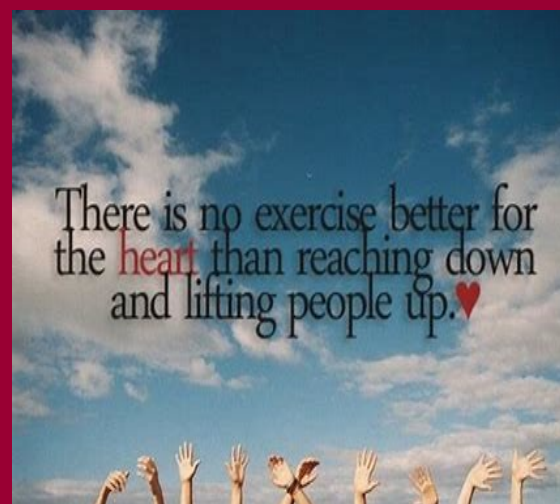
Hi BABES-

Happy 2019! I sure hope your New Year is starting off awesome! I am really enjoying the sunny weather we are having lately, feels like Spring has sprung and this California girl loves her sun! We asked the BABES and staff what, or who, has inspired them. Thank you to those that shared your inspirations with us. When I was preparing to write this, I was thinking I have a lot of inspiring people in my life, but; the first person that came to mind is my big sister Jenny. Jenny and I are seven years apart and I think I have always looked up to her since I was born. Not only is she beautiful, inside and out, she is very smart; dedicated; successful; a hard worker; thoughtful; neat freak; bad dancer; penny pincher; she is someone I really look up to and am inspired by. I am very lucky to have her as a sister and best friend, she is always there when I need her; with a thoughtful ear; good advice (as she says: "listen to your big sister, its cheaper than a therapist!") and also direct...in a loving way. I was telling her the other day that, I wish we had a helicopter to fly to see each other and just hang out for the day. Maybe someday?

I love you so much sister!! Love, Nikki

Sincerely-

BABES Network-YWCA, Program Manager



9

ONE DAY RETREAT

A Day of Self Indulgence and Self Awareness. For Poz Women.

JOIN US

Saturday, February 9, 2019 @ YWCA
Seneca—MPR

9:30am—4pm



...and how she made it through

Over the holidays this year, I split up with my partner of the last 7 years and moved out of the home that we shared. Slowly parting over the course of the last year has been painful, and often infuriating and exhausting.

Even though I know I am moving forward into a life that will be better for me, the last few months have been littered with moments of regret -- regret for staying so long, and regret for leaving, too.

But basically any time that I am feeling down, I can think of a BABE who has been generous enough to share with me about a hard decision that she has had to make, a time her life changed drastically, a breakup, a divorce, a diagnosis, an addiction -- and how she made it through.

When I feel regret about the years I have been pouring my best self into a bad relationship, I think of a BABE who talks to me about feeling like she lost her best years to addiction and will never get them back. I think about all of the life that she has created for herself and how much more she is than those years, and I feel strong, bigger than my regrets.

When I feel fear about what my future is going to hold and having to take a different path, I think about a BABE who was told she was going to die and then suddenly given her life back and had to relearn what that meant for her, and I feel strong, bigger than my fears.

When I feel angry with myself for pouring so much of my love and nurturing into someone who didn't respect it, I think about all of the ways that I see BABES love, care for, and forgive each other. I think of a BABE who rolls her eyes as she watches her friend make the same mistake for the 75th time but still shows up -- and how that love changes people. And I feel closer to forgiving myself.

So thanks, y'all, for being so much more than your regrets, your fears, and your anger. Thanks for showing up, again and again, for yourselves, each other, and me. Thanks for bravely sharing your worst moments, your secret fears, your greatest accomplishments, and your joy. Your strength makes me feel brave, too.

Here's to more of making each other brave in 2019.

Julia Rosenfeld

Living for Today

I believe I've lived every day of my life like it could be my last. As a child I believed I would die before my 18th birthday. Growing up, it seemed there were regular news reports about high school students dying on the field or on the court. Of course, that meant my life was going to end while running. I loved to run as fast and as long as I could. I'd wait to recover and do it again, for hours. I loved the runner's high. Tomorrow was not promised to me, so I might as well run! However, just in case, I better do my homework and prepare for plans B, C and D.

Living with cancer while being HIV+, brings me back to that childhood philosophy often. I'm told by my doctors neither disease will be the death of me. I will take their word on it. The treatment for my cancer did kill me a couple of times during my first battle over cancer. It was ugly. My blood levels kept dropping to near zero, I was severely dehydrated the entire time, and my reactions were terrible. Three months into treatment my heart gave out. I was brought back in a coma for about 10 days. The second time it happened about six weeks later. I was in a coma that time for about a week. Each time I came to, my hospital room was full of family and friends. Only then did I realize my life actually mattered to anybody. I love living by myself. Living for myself is not so satisfying. Surviving that round has made me a better advocate for my health. My HIV treatment has been a very different experience. I have felt little to no side effects at all. One medication caused me to have high cholesterol. That's about it. Running is not an option these days. Finding other things to do that brings me joy can be fun or at least interesting.

Over the years I have had to learn how to live within my abilities and at the same time challenge them. For a while housework or hygiene was my options for the day. During that time, I learned that a messy apartment was okay as long as I cleaned. I no longer put things away immediately. As long as I'm not tripping over it and I have space to do what I want to do, it's all good. I try to work on some kind of physical challenge daily. It helps keep me living independently. It's funny how some of the simplest stretches can feel like a marathon sometimes, making time and energy to spend with friends and family is important to me. Depending on the planned activity, the energy part can be tricky. I have to make sure it's a good time in my treatment schedule and I haven't over extended myself the day before.

I've been living with stage 4 cancer for eight years and in treatment for it for as many years. The last five years I lived on the west coast, getting treated better by my Oncologists. I haven't been hospitalized since my move. I lived in Virginia during my first diagnosis with cancer and when it came back. Both times, I could not go 18 months without hospitalization. I feel great now compared to then!

Living with cancer and being HIV+ is different. The key word here is "LIVING". You are not dead until you are DEAD dead. I was brought back twice. Every day try to find your joy or purpose. If you are having a bad day, take joy in that. Wallowing in ice cream, bed, Netflix or any number of things in any combination can be just as rejuvenating as a walk in the park. Tomorrow is another opportunity to be productive. Right now I have on a night shirt that reads, "Coffee, Nap, Sparkle, Repeat". I love it.

Lavinia B

“Thanks for bravely sharing your worst moments, your secret fears, your greatest accomplishments, and your joy. Your strength makes me feel brave, too.”

Willing to be Outstanding

I never thought, in a million years, that I would see an African American President of the United States of America. Well, I have. It was during Barack Obama’s first term, that I decided to go back to school and launch a new career. It was also during his first term that I received my AAS Degree in Psychology, and attained gainful employment, for the following four years.

Throughout his tenure as President Of The United States, I was excited to be one of his fellow citizens, who believed he had done a great job leading our country and the world. I would often get teary-eyed with joy, as I followed his Presidency unfold. I watched him transform the White House and the Nation.

Before his Presidency, there was very little to my day. I was not taking my meds the right way and was no more than an empty shell. I separated myself from my family and moved to Seattle, hoping for a better life. When Barrack Obama became President Of The United States, it was as if a huge burden had been lifted from my shoulders, just knowing Mr. Obama was the forefront of our nation. Economically, he was leading us down the road to financial freedom. Which, I believe; starts with one simple step, and the willingness to do something outstanding for yourself.

Dee Kelley

ARE YOU READY?



...she taught me resilience

As I began to write this, I had thoughts of who it was that inspired me. It finally came to mind, who was my inspiration & it was a hard choice to come to, for there were many. But, my conclusion to pick one... it had to be my Mom.

My Mom was a strong willed German lady who had feistiness & and strength to her; and was the backbone to our family.

Growing up in our family, was a peculiar situation. We literally took the "fun" in dysFUNCTIONAL to a whole new level and if it weren't for my Mom holding it together in our family...for her strengths was not only being the "Suzy Home Maker's of literally A SUZY MAKERS; she was the mediator, the...let's just say she's the 'wore the pants in the house person'. She kept us in line.

The thing I remember most about my Mom, is; she was THERE for me. The day I got diagnosed w/AIDS, she was the only family member that stood by me, for; the rest of my family disowned me.

My Mom taught me how to love myself; to be strong & resilient; to have manners and to be grateful with humbleness for what I have. She taught me to stand up & not bow done to challenges given to me in life.

So, though there are many who inspire me (Y'ALL KNO WHO YOU ARE: my case managers; the ladies of BABES; my Drs. The list can go on) I have to say...

MOM was the most inspirational person in my life. RIP MOM!!!!

Marilyn Mora





BABES Network-YWCA is a **sisterhood of women facing HIV together**. BABES reduces isolation, promotes self-empowerment, enhances quality of life and serves the needs of women facing HIV and their families through peer support, advocacy, education and outreach.

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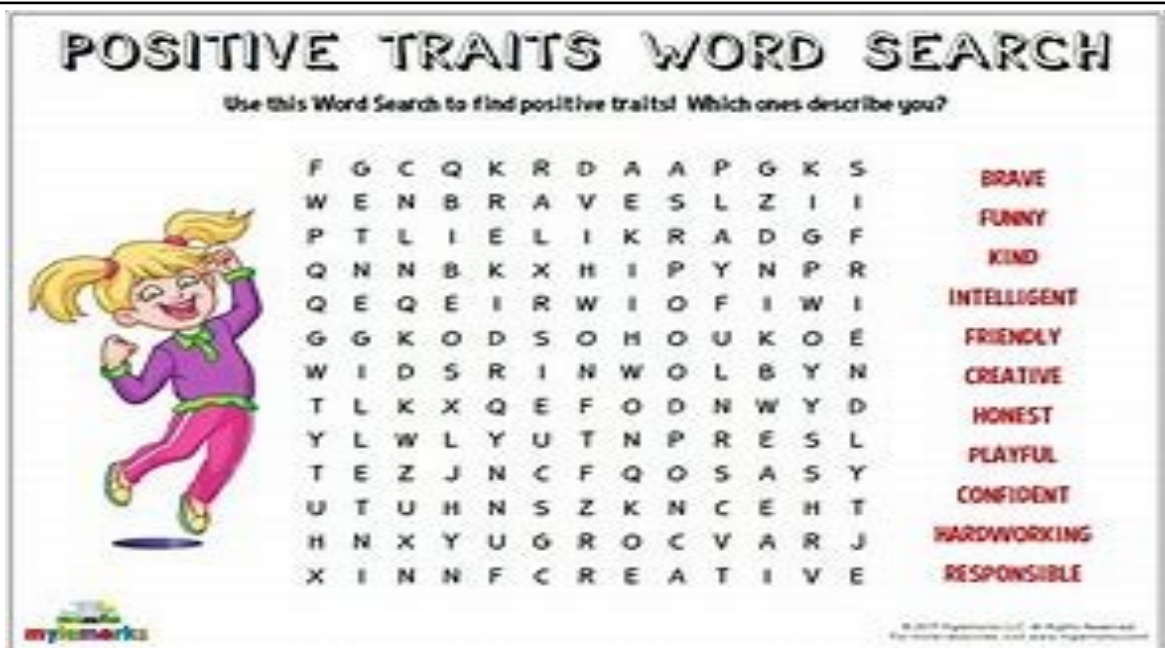
BABES Office Hours

T-F: 10am-4pm

BABES Network-YWCA Services

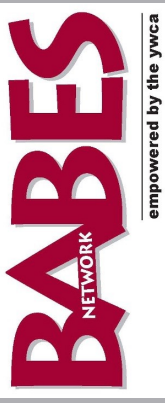
- **Peer counseling**
*One-on-one support from another HIV+ woman.
- **Support groups**
*Weekly support groups for HIV+ women and monthly Co-Ed groups for HIV+ women and men, meals provided.
- **Events and Retreats**
*Fun social gatherings that provide an opportunity for HIV+ women and their families to network with each other.
- **Educational Forums**
*Informative educational groups focusing on HIV treatment adherence and other important health issues.
- **Non-Medical Case Management**
*Providing support to the whole person, attending Dr's appointments, home visits, emotional support
- **BABES Talking newsletter**
*Quarterly newsletter available worldwide.
*Monthly calendars available on our website and monthly e-newsletter.
- **Advocacy**
*HIV+ women teaching each other how to successfully negotiate government and healthcare systems, while also training community agencies to better serve the complex needs of women.

In inspiring others, we are inspiring self



"You never know how strong you are, until being strong is the only choice you have."

February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> BABES Office Hours Tuesday-Friday 10am-4pm </div>					
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Office Closed	defeatHIV CAB meeting 5:30pm @ Cal Anderson House	HIV Hep C testing @ YWCA Seneca 10am-2pm	Support Group/Lunch 12-1:30pm @ BABES		One Day Self Care Retreat 9:30-4 @YWCA
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Office Closed			Support Group/Lunch 12-1:30pm @ BABES		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Presidents Day Holiday Office Closed			Support Group/Lunch 12-1:30pm @ BABES		
24	25	26	27	28		
	Office Closed	Everett Support Group 6-7:30pm @ YWCA				

Coming Soon...

BABES Network Staff

Nicole Price
Program Manager

Julia Rosenfeld
Lead Case Manager

Alora Gale-Schreck
Peer Advocate

Dee Kelley
Peer Advocate

Lakesha Johnson
Peer Advocate

Brenda Higgins
Peer Office Support Assistant

Peer Volunteers

Tina J
Pat M
Kate E
Tranisha A

BABES Support Group/Lunch

For HIV positive women

Every Thursday

12-1:30 pm

@ BABES Network

Snohomish Support Group

Tuesday, February 26th

6-7:30pm

@ YWCA Everett

SAVE THE DATE

BABES Annual One Day Retreat

Saturday, February 9th 2019

9:30am—4pm

@BABES Network - MPR Room

BABES ANNUAL 3-DAY WOMENS RETREAT 2019

New Dates, New Location

8/30/2019 - 9/1/2019

Rainbow Lodge Retreat Center
North Bend, Washington

Funding for this Program has been made available as a result of grant awards from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, and Public Health-Seattle & King County.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the following foundations and donor groups:

**eliminating racism
empowering women**
Seattle | King | Snohomish

ywca

**MAC
AIDS FUND**

THE SISTERS OF
PERPETUAL
INDULGENCE



THE ABBEY OF
St Joan

