

and needn't — work; it only brings misery and death.

It was much more fun working with sex than with AIDS. I don't like having clients die. I have never had real "burn-out"... whatever that is. But I did go through a period, after mourning the deaths of dozens of men who went through my group, in which my emotions were drained out of me. I kept on meeting with the group and I guess I kept on saying the right things, but I didn't let myself really care. Finally I stopped, got my act together and now I lead the group again — with more emotional moderation.

When I facilitate the group now, I think about all those things concerning group process that I would in any group. But there are other thoughts that race through my head: I wonder when will this nightmare end? Will it be in time to save any of the men sitting in front of me? What were each of these men like before they were infected? How did their lives before infection mold the way they have responded to the virus? And what keeps them going?"

At other times I think about how AIDS has brought homosexuality into the spotlight and earned greater acceptance for gays and lesbians, and I wonder how will gays and lesbians be treated if a day dawns when HIV becomes just a frightening memory, and all people can love without fear.

In my most sober moments I wonder whether I and other "sex is good" sex educators of the 1960s and 1970s

unwittingly contributed to this epidemic.

I hope not. ☐

SEEDS OF FAITH (to lori)

skinny as a scarecrow
with stuffing half-spilled
you fell into my classroom
a frightened lost bird
your gorgeous older sister
dazzling queen of golden dreams
your stiff impeccable father
impossible to please
squeezed you in the corner
brittle—bleeding with loneliness
starving for a drop of nectar

but you couldn't even stay after class
too strangled with self-consciousness
to let us (even after six semesters)
a few minutes alone to talk
yet in your spiral notebooks
heart-to heart we met
discovering in the words between us
ideas more real than reality
wrestling with identity
struggling to unravel
(in humanity and your own mind)
a little more of the mystery
beneath your searching words i confessed
"you could be a psychologist"

now I get your letter
about your dissertation
and wonder as that sly magician
truth
(always dropping hints never proof)
in your life gratefully
i seemed to alter history
(and if in you
then who knows who else)

we touch each others souls so invisibly
never knowing what kind word or act
might stir the sleeping bud to blossom
might ignite the dormant flame
to keep the fire burning
and blossoms ever blossoming
in others invisible far away waiting
crushed in some parched empty corner
starving for a drop of nectar

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