

SCRIPT

POSITIVE HELL

VOICE OVER 1

It was in the early 1980s that people, some of them very young, began to be told they were going to die very soon. This was because the antibodies in their blood had tested positive to a so-called deadly new virus called HIV 'Human-Immune Virus'. Imagine the sudden announcement of a plague, and a death sentence with no real science to support it. It doesn't seem possible does it?

CAPTION: YOU ARE GOING TO DIE

RAQUEL

Many times I've thought I was going to die – and more so when I didn't feel well.

RAQUEL

And I thought it's my turn now – I'm going to die – especially after seeing so many people – friends – family –

MANUEL

When they told me that my test was positive – well obviously it hit me hard – because at that time we were told that we would die in a few years.

MANUEL

Well I felt terrible, terrible ...I don't know, it's difficult to put into words how I was feeling.

MANOEL

I was with my mother who was accompanying me. We were there together. So then I asked the doctor how this could affect my life and he said that unfortunately I was going to die – that I had at most three years to live.

PABLO

It was a devastating blow because I remember that my mother and my father had a terrible time. It was very hard for me and for them. My parents are dead now. They helped me a lot at that time, you know. ...And my sisters had a terrible time.

SUSO

Oh man... I remember in the first moment after being told, the shock was pretty spectacular, for many different reasons but little by little you begin to adapt the idea in your head and then...

SUSO

...And it became clear to me I just had to get that out of my head, that I didn't have to take notice of any of them and carry on my life with absolute normality.

MUSIC – Sea shots

VO2

Who would have believed that the people we've come to meet have lived on for 27 years and more with an HIV-positive diagnosis? Some of them, like physician Dr Manuel Garrido, have never taken any antiviral drugs. He's been swimming against the tide of medical orthodoxy for three decades. Strenuous exercise indeed.

Raquel has had two children who are fit and well and are HIV-negative.

Others like Manoel took antivirals for a while and found they made him feel so ill he stopped taking them.

How can this be? Haven't we been told that everybody who tests positive is sure to die? Do these people have a special magic gene that protects them against HIV? Or could it be that this death sentence has been mistaken all along?

CAPTION: IN BRIEF

MANUEL

My interest in this subject began when I tested positive in 1987. It's been 26 years. I've never taken antivirals and I am perfectly well...

MANUEL

And I can certainly say, as a doctor, that what I have seen and experienced and what I have been able to deduce is that this is all a fraud – that you shouldn't take any notice of the prognoses – they're not what we are told they are – nor of the diagnoses – The tests don't count for anything – nor of the drug treatments because the majority are toxic.

RAQUEL

I've been HIV-positive for 27 years. I have had two daughters and with one of them I took AZT. Both of them became HIV-negative after 18 months. They are both perfectly well. It was with my second daughter that I took AZT. She has atypical skin. I don't know if that's a consequence. Over the past 27 years I took antivirals for 8 years – and I am never going to take them again because – I feel well like this – not taking anything – I feel happy and full of life – without taking any drug treatment. It's the treatment that, for me over these 27 years, has made me feel ill.

MANOEL

I've carried on with this for 25 years – I have never been ill. So, I would say to people – If you get ill then it's the illness itself that you have – you don't have AIDS. If you get 'flu then you have 'flu. You have 'flu not AIDS.

SUSO

I have been HIV-positive for 27 years. I have never taken any antiretroviral treatment and I have always looked after my health as any normal person would. I've never suffered any consequences from being seropositive neither has my health deteriorated

because of it and I see that people... I can prove personally through the experience of many people I know that the mere fact of being diagnosed has caused their health to deteriorate immediately.

VO3

We came to meet this remarkable group of individuals in Santiago de Compostela. This town in the heart of Northern Spain's province of Galicia has for centuries been the destination for Christian pilgrims who've trodden the well-worn paths in search of a stronger faith and a spiritual awakening.

Our group was keen to tell us of their own long and arduous journey towards the truth about their condition. Were they really going to die or were they the victims of a colossal medical and scientific blunder?

In this seaside town of Cangas where Manolo lives, young people are energetically enjoying all the summer sporting pursuits. Manolo's youth was very different. As a teenager he became involved with drugs and alcohol and then, having tested HIV-positive, he entered the 'AIDS Zone'.

When he realised that he wasn't about to die he began to gather information from around the world from scientists who challenged HIV as the cause of AIDS and others who maintain that HIV has never been isolated and that the HIV test is simply an antibody test that reacts positively when our immune system is challenged for different reasons. Manolo attracted others who were in his position and he soon decided to set up a website called "Overcoming AIDS".

CAPTION: LOOKING BACK

MANUEL

I was one of those drinkers who drank until I collapsed – so to speak... I wasn't a drinker who stopped and then – no, no – I was never a methodical drinker. I was always a drinker who was pretty uncontrolled. It created many problems for me, obviously...

MANOEL

I started off smoking hashish (marijuana) – after hashish we had already started on pharmaceutical products and we started stealing from pharmacies – then we started doing morphine – then opium – then on to laudanum – then amphetamines – those were the kind of things we first got into.

MANUEL

This had a huge impact on my life. To start with I was preparing for some medical exams – studying to get a placement. I had to drop it all and it pretty much ruined my life – if I wasn't looking after myself before, I did it even less – I had no motivation to keep on living or to carry out my work – nothing. A few years passed and my problems with alcohol got worse – a problem that had dogged me for years. It led to six disastrous years of my life until I heard about other points of view that helped me to overcome the situation.

MANOEL

I remember the time when there were one or two funerals a week and you can imagine that I was wondering when my turn would come because I was really in the same boat. Then I'd say this must be AIDS that's killing people – as they would have it. So it left me feeling depressed but I got up again and carried on. I could see that nothing strange was happening to me. I was fine.

VO4

Our antibody profile can become raised for many reasons – autoimmune conditions, malnutrition, pathogenic assault from dirty water. Current medical orthodoxy accepts that there are over 70 medical conditions that can raise levels of the so-called “HIV” antibodies and cause positive results – conditions like TB, malaria, hepatitis, intravenous drug use and even pregnancy. So what does a positive test mean?

CAPTION: THE TEST

MANUEL

It means that when you take into account the documented conditions that can cause a positive result – among them vaccinations, exposure to infections like ‘flu, high cholesterol, autoimmune problems – then you can deduce that your immune system has become stressed by a series of factors that have made it produce antibodies of different sorts – and that’s what’s produced a positive test – nothing more than that.

MANOEL

Everyone was very hooked on their drugs. And all this time they went on testing people and giving them the AZT with Septrin Forte. It was like a time bomb and people began to drop like flies.

SUSO

And I think they take advantage of all that story about the test just to create ill people in order to sell antiretroviral drugs, full stop – it is all a business that is perfectly oiled and set up at world level and as for Africa – well it goes without saying.

VO5

Imagine being a young couple in love and being told you mustn’t have unprotected sex, you mustn’t have a child and if you did you mustn’t breastfeed? Well Pablo and Raquel were lucky enough to have a doctor who said – just get on with your lives. And this they did. They had a daughter who’s now grown up. And neither Pablo nor his daughter with Raquel have tested HIV-positive.

CAPTION: NO PROOF OF SEXUAL TRANSMISSION

RAQUEL

Pablo my husband was being followed up – it’s a long time now since he did this. He doesn’t go for

HIV tests any more but he did get tested for at least 15 years – a check-up every three years or two years – and the tests were always negative.

PABLO

We have had unprotected sexual relations and protected – one unprotected encounter led to the birth of my daughter – I have a daughter as a result of unprotected sex! Thanks to that unprotected encounter – and my daughter is healthy and beautiful – as only she can be.

RAQUEL

We have made love – or had ‘unsafe sex’ as the doctors describe it many times – many, many times – and he’s never been infected.

MANUEL

I have completely normal relations. My partner and I have been together nearly 20 years. She recently had a test, not because she wanted to but because it was required by an insurance company. She did the test and it was negative – and our sexual relations over the past nearly 20 years have been almost entirely without the use of condoms.

VO6

Resistance to the orthodox approach to AIDS and protests about the toxicity of anti-HIV drugs has been going on for decades but the scientists in the field have turned a deaf ear. What does it take to overturn and orthodoxy? Well, it took 350 years for Galileo’s heresy to be pardoned by the Pope.

CAPTION: MOTHERS, BABIES & AZT

MANUEL

AZT is included in the composition of many antiviral cocktails. Other than that, in seropositive mothers it is used at the moment of birth – intravenously – and it’s also used in the protocol of treatment for children that are born positive, HIV-positive – or that have tested positive at birth.

It’s slightly absurd because you have to bear in

mind that they may be positive on the test but in reality what they have inherited is their mother's antibodies. They become spontaneously seronegative after a year and a half – eighteen months – the majority do, about 90%. So there is absolutely no sense in using it.

SUSO

As a result of the birth of my daughter – the hospital advised us that we should have an HIV test because they had tested her and the newborn baby had tested positive – so then they tested my wife and me and both of us tested positive.

SUSO

You have to remember that we are talking about 1986. It's not the same as today – so, what happens is that they do the test on us and we come out positive – but the doctor himself told us we should take care of ourselves but that we needn't worry about the baby because it was highly likely that the baby would test negative in the coming months.

SUSO

A few months later they told us that she had become HIV-negative. Today she doesn't even know – she's now a lawyer and she doesn't even know that her mother had that problem – neither has her mother told her about it – we've been separated for some time and are no longer in touch.

RAQUEL

When my [first] daughter was born she was born HIV-positive but at that time they didn't offer me... in 1986 they didn't offer me any type of medication – not for her or for me. They said I had to attend a follow-up clinic for my daughter and for myself. Over 18 months – we followed her up. Then she became HIV-negative. She has never had any health problems. What's more she is 27 now and she has six children. She is very fertile. She's never had any health problems. I didn't take anything – I didn't take AZT – nothing. In my second pregnancy,

they mentioned – no, they said I had to take the medication because of risk to the foetus.

RAQUEL

I became aware of so many anomalies. If I didn't take any medicines in my first pregnancy why should I take them in my second?

VO7

The town was in festive mood in the week leading up to St James's Day. Many were inclined to take a flutter on the lottery. Would they be lucky?

For our group the decision as to whether or not to take antiviral drugs felt just like a lottery. Would they be lucky? Would they die if they took them? Would they live if they didn't take them?

CAPTION: DEFYING THE DOCTORS

MANUEL

I am a doctor and I've never taken antivirals and I've never found any justification for them from a medical point of view.

MANOEL

The consultant offered me a treatment involving 27 tablets a day. So I looked at him and said I wasn't going to take them. He was surprised. I said, if I'm going to die of AIDS then I'll die of AIDS but I'm not going to die poisoned by pills. So from that moment on I didn't go to the doctor any more, I forgot about the illness and got on with my life.

MANUEL

So far I've consulted with something in the region of 900 people. I keep notes on the instructions I've given them, the whole picture. People who have stopped taking their medicines – I can't put a number to them because I don't know – I don't know... But there are plenty – there are hundreds of people – hundreds of people – and probably

many I don't know about.

RAQUEL

I was taking AZT and Viramune during the nine months of my pregnancy because when my daughter was born then they put me onto intravenous AZT during the birth. I stopped taking it because I felt well so why was I going to go on taking it? Taking it made me feel I wasn't a person and I felt absolutely terrible. Taking the medicine made me feel very bad.

MANOEL

They convinced me and I accepted it. I don't know why, but I just accepted it. I took that therapy for 8 years – but as I was taking it, day by day I started to notice something very strange – my right hand wasn't working properly – I lost sensation in the hand. I had headaches, I couldn't read, I couldn't sleep properly at night – just a series of things that came on progressively that weren't right. They weren't right and this seemed odd to me because I was leading a healthy life. I was walking every day 12 – 14 kilometres, I was eating well and looking after my health.

SUSO

I had stopped keeping my doctor's appointments etc. etc. It was precisely at the time when they were starting to give people AZT. Now I see it all with absolute clarity – of those of us who said we didn't want to continue the treatment we are the only ones still alive and of all of us in the follow-up unit at the time who took the treatment there isn't one left alive. They all died.

VO 8

The years of living in fear of death have left their mark on our group. They not only feel angry about the way they've been duped, they feel a profound sense of disgust at the way they've been treated.

CAPTION: **DISGUST**

RAQUEL

When I started learning about all of this and reading the internet the extent of the lie involved in this – at first I felt very angry – because how can it be that we have been treated like...like... the most important thing seems to have been the money. But afterwards the truth is that I felt relieved. If I have spent all my life... If they've been telling from the age of 19 that I had a virus – that I'm going to die – and it turns out that I don't have a virus – well I began to laugh – and I started laughing a lot – and I thought at that moment how strange life is – such a long time believing I was going to die and suddenly I don't have a virus!

I feel sure that my immune system deteriorated because of the drugs, because of the stress, but here I am...

PABLO

Look, I live with a person who has been HIV-positive for many years. In my last test four or five years ago I was negative. I have unprotected sex with my partner and my life hasn't changed at all. I haven't become ill – I'm as healthy as any other person – my life is normal, my daughter is normal and my wife is normal – what I am sorry about is all the wrongs that have been done to my brother-in-law, to my sister-in-law, to a whole lot of friends who are no longer with us. They were well but they were completely destroyed by medicines that no one knew anything about but which had to be prescribed because that's what there was at the time.

MANOEL

Well people began to find out, because I live in a small town and everything gets around fast, rumours spread and some people stopped speaking to me – others were hesitant, waiting to see what happened – everybody was waiting to see when I was going to die.

VO 9

The future of our group has felt very insecure but

they've doggedly followed along the path of dissidence, giving each other strength just as Santiago's pilgrims have over the centuries.

CAPTION: AND NOW

MANOEL

Now I lead a really healthy life – I look after myself. I eat healthily – I sleep proper hours – I walk every day – 12 kilometres – I go on bicycle rides – I have a healthy lifestyle – I'm involved with ecological organisations – I participate on the Overcoming AIDS website. I'm doing things that I find fulfilling. I'm comfortable with myself. I live with my son who came to live with me at 16 and he's now 27, so he's been with me 11 years – I have good relationships with my friends and my family – so I feel well-adjusted with my life.

RAQUEL

...But then you realise that you don't die – you recover – then you say how can I have been ill all this time? – I've been dying for a long time. I've asked the doctor when does this show its face? None of them would say anything because I would say – it's now ten years since I was followed-up again and if this shows its face in 15 years then I've only got five years left. Because when someone tells you you are going to die you want to know how much time you have left to live, to do the things you have to do.

PABLO

I live with Raquel. I don't live with AIDS. It wouldn't have been... I couldn't have had the same relationship nor could I have the same relationship I have now if AIDS were present.

VO 10

It's been the relentless search for the truth that has given our group the strength to go on. They've proved the orthodox position wrong. Now it's their turn to be heard.

CAPTION: **END PIECE**

MANOEL

So I remember the conversation finished. I began to cry and I had an imaginary rucksack on my back that fell to the ground at that moment after so many years – it was a feeling of relief... of... freedom... I don't know how to describe it – a sensation of... after having that yoke there all the time. Because although I could bear it, it was there – so for me – I don't know how to explain it – it was like coming back to life.

CAPTION

Suso lived for 27 years after his HIV positive diagnosis. Sadly he died on 10th January 2014. He was 54.

His hospital discharge notes dated three days before his death mention chronic lung disease, anaemia and a gastric ulcer, causing severe malnutrition.

DR CHRISTIAN FIALA

If you look at the hospital records from Suso then it becomes obvious that he had many significant underlying health risks like heavy smoking for decades and intra-venous drug use for many, many years and he suffered from typical negative health consequence of these risk factors. In other words there's absolutely no indication that he died from anything attributable to "HIV".

People accumulate risk factors over their lives. some of which will cause diseases or even death. Now some of these diseases are claimed to be caused by "HIV" or they fulfill the official criteria of the current AIDS definition. What is happening on a global level for more than thirty years is that old diseases are just re-labeled with a new name.

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