

CHAPTER 19

Looking Back

Engaging Prostate Cancer as a Gay Man at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reflects my experience with prostate cancer as a gay man seeking help in the painfully heterosexist environment of 2000. The narrative looks back at my feelings, my reactions, my concerns, and my revelations and awakenings as I struggled with my own confusing search for help, compassion, and understanding in an environment that was quite unfriendly to gay men. I write of my wrestling with issues of helplessness, identity, anger, sex, shame, and loss, and how I went from being a participant in a support group for gay men to facilitator of that group of courageous men, all of whom found themselves in a similar situation.

KEY TERMS

gay men, heterosexism, HIV/AIDS, impotence, incontinence, prostate cancer, radiation, sex, side effects, support groups

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