



KAMARIA'S JOURNAL.

9.29.11

128 more days until I'm married. Ephesians 3:20 Who would have thought? No one could have prepared me, a year ago, that today I'd be getting married soon. That I'd actually find someone who'd accept me for me, love my daughter, go to church, accept my public positive status and still want to spend their life with me!

That's something to live for...I wish I could carry this joy in a bottle, sip on it on the days where I really don't get the point.

10.1.11

Doctor doctor. Why the sudden constant super-nausea and migraines? Saw the movie "Courageous" with fiancé and daughter. Life changing. What was I supposed to be doing? Laundry from past two weeks I've been sick. But the movie was worth it!

10.2.11

I'm feeling a little down these past few days. I haven't had a lot of energy – I have so much to do. Migraines drain me. I have the flu, tooth surgery and the migraines for the past two weeks. The little energy I have leftover, I've had to go into family activity, church, planning for speaking engagements...man! I have to be in Alabama NEXT Monday! I have no preparation so far. No money to do what I'd like to make my presentation spark. So many phone calls to return...I guess I'm a little overwhelmed. God help me, I know this is your will, your work – so Lord, Father have your way. All I'm looking for is some motivation, INSPIRATION! Mental rejuvenation. The complete opposite of what I feel now. HIV isn't glamorous and I need to get the word out. I need to get some positive energy flowing. Maybe I'll start with some pancakes.

10.3.11

You ever get so tired you can't wait to go to bed, but dread lying down because as soon as you get up, you have to do it all over again? Praying for: energy, guidance, wisdom, self-control, selflessness, patience...17 weeks left until "I do."

10.4.11

Just had campus rep conference call. I'm wondering what doors God has opened up with this organization that maybe I'm thinking are locked. Still praying for motivation, inspiration and true (not imitation chemical) energy, i.e., Mountain Dew. Found my faith and HIV bags today so that gave me some motivation to where I want to take this class at church for HIV education and compassion, but I still feel super-unprepared for Alabama.

I dreamt Jeremiah 29:11 this morning. It's 11:28 p.m. and I have not taken my meds. 8:00 p.m. has come and gone. Oops!

I hate being on a schedule!

10.5.11

Almost got put on ADAP today but I already got my meds through a program. Had to straighten things out with case manager. Stressful. Still have to figure out how getting married is going to affect my share of costs. Life of the HIV positive is not so glamorous! 17 more weeks until I am a married woman!

10.6.11

My mom and I went to Brandon to get our hair done at Ms. Tanya's so I feel prettier than I have in a while. My nails – that's a different story. It's sad how bad I need a pedicure. I shouldn't be able to use the roughness of the bottom of my feet to scratch the top of my feet. I try to manage it myself but it's nice to be pampered. I can't walk around with my beautiful engagement ring on and horrendous hands! LOL.

I get to go on the prayer retreat tomorrow with Good Hope. Women of Wisdom! Lord, I pray I come back different than how I arrived. My aunt Karen is going, but Mom isn't. Part of me is glad.

I hope I don't end up having to drive myself since I'm going to be on the road most of next week to Alabama and Georgia.

121 more days 'til I'm Mrs. Laffrey, LOL!

10.8.11

Prayer retreat was A.W.E.S.O.M.E.! Have faith or fear?

My aunt and I got along fine. I tried to prepare for Alabama. I kept coming up with half bits of material.

There wasn't enough time to really enjoy ourselves because we had to go out in two's and find "lost" women. Identify if they needed to be taught or trained and give them scripture references to help them through. I related well to the "lost" women – a lot of them had issues I understood and I felt empowered by offering teaching to someone in my shoes.

By the way, the women were gingerbread cutouts we had to find outside. This caused a lot of women to want to share and when we started opening up, it was time to go. Can't wait 'til next year. YEYUH!

But as I sit writing about this, I realize two things. Number one, my handwriting sucks because I type too much. Two, I want to incorporate this exercise into a compassion workshop! Praise God! Woot!

10.9.11

Busy! Gotta pack. Gonna miss my daughter so much. Church was good. I can't remember the sermon though! OMG!

Mom took us to dinner later. Manny's sucks. Or maybe it was the time of day? Who knows, but I've had better burgers.

I'm going to try to keep this journal the best I can while I'm gone but it will be like – very shorthand. I'm ready!

10.10.11

Tired – made it to Alabama. Totally forgot it was Columbus Day so I couldn't get my money from the bank – but God, he brought me all the way here safe and sound and worked out so many other blessings I will try to detail later.

I'm ready to be a mouthpiece for God and share my testimony to these teens tomorrow. It's hot shower and pizza eatin' time!

10.11.11

Morning. I have the best fiancé in the world! He's taking care of everything back home! Love him so much!

Gotta grab breakfast and head over to Troy University – nervous and excited. Ready for it to be over because I'm feeling a little intimidated.

Afternoon – Well, the keynote speaker was well-rehearsed and inspiring. My breakout sessions went well, a couple of young ladies approached me afterwards, shared some personal information, I prayed with one girl.

I could do this forever. Just talking to teens, showing them it's okay to be vulnerable and that you can overcome a “mess-up” and turn it into a message.

EMPOWERED.

Time to head back to my room, pig out, relax and get a WELL-deserved pedicure after all that driving.

10.12.11

Headed to Atlanta today but I must stop and have my tires checked because I cannot ride down 85 doing 55 miles per hour.

Talked to Brian today. OMG I cannot wait until we're married. I see every day the goodness, kindness and patience in his heart in how he treats my daughter, interacts with my mom. And through all of this, I feel I so immensely blessed that he wants to make me his wife.

STOP

(Packing, pedicure, and pizza!!)

I just met the nicest lady in the nail shop. She reminded me of my grandmother. Moments like this, I wonder how God designed them. Speaking of amazing – I just had an EPIC pedicure.

10.14.11

I'm back home, had a great time in Atlanta once I had the most delicious calzone and hot shower ever.

Well I'm glad to be back home, I wish I had my own place. 113 more days and technically I will. So much wedding planning to do! I'm hoping and praying my dad will be able to help out some. I'm not asking for a fairy tale, but I do want a beautiful memory.

I want my daddy to walk me down the aisle, I want the most powerful man of God I've ever met to stand before my fiancé and I while we say our vows in front of family and friends. I want a day of smiles, celebration, joy, and laughter. Great pictures is a plus.

All of this would be possible if I could know where my next dollar was coming from – but God will provide – He always does.

10.15.11

FLIP

Not feeling IT today.

Thankful but just wish I could be invisible and deaf for the day.

Or change my name.

Or take a vow of silence. Just not feeling it.

I want to just go dance.

Be somewhere LOUD.

Blend in, get lost in the beat.

Or just sleep.

10.16.11

Today is my favorite little cousin's birthday! I love her so much – she's like the little sister I wish I had. I haven't seen her since this summer because she's in Texas. God I miss her. So proud of her that she's graduated college and nursing school and is doing great in her life.

If she were here now we'd be laughing and talking, playing with my daughter and niece. I'd have her here and she'd understand my family frustrations, without me having to explain.

But she's not. So I'm headed to church, Sunday school with the women's class – pray for others instead of focusing on me. Spend some time with my fiancé. I wish he could wrap his arms around me all day. Wish someone would just hold me and say it's okay.

10.17.11

OMG! I'm so excited! I called this bed and breakfast place called Town Manor. OMG, I was looking at pictures of someone's wedding on Facebook and they were so pretty. So I have figured out who the photographer was, went to her site and there was the link to Town Manor. Can you say BEAUTIFUL?

So, I prayed, I called and they have my date available! My date is the LAST weekend before March 17, 2012. So praise God! AND I get to meet with the wedding coordinator tomorrow!

Happy dance, 110 more days!

10.18.11

Cannot wipe this smile off my face. I try to stay calm because I didn't want to get my hopes up about the venue. They do everything! The ceremony, reception, food, music, decorations are all included!

I called daddy and he agreed to help with the deposit so our date could be secured. I can't believe this is happening. Nandy, the coordinator gave us a tour, and it's so breathtaking.

Now, I just need to figure out the guest list. We only could afford the Gold Package, so our list is limited. I have to find a dress and figure out who's going to really be in my bridal party. Oh and wedding bands – and Lord help me. I cannot wait to start marriage counseling. Is that weird? LOL.

10.19.11

Yeah, I don't feel like writing today. But I guess...there's just so much on my mind – too much to write. Here's a breakdown: Want more opportunities to travel, advocate, speak, and educate about HIV. Want financial security. Don't understand what I'm misunderstanding in my family. Want more time with my fiancé. Scared about marriage. Fat, but scared to lose weight. Want HIV ministry at church to thrive. Want my daughter to be happy with her life. Want my own space and for laundry to do itself...okay I went too far, didn't I? * sigh *

10.20.11

Super frustrated with my mom. I am 29 years old right?

10.21.11

I. Uh. Totally forgot I get to go to Tampa next week for the interview portion of this journal. I'm excited, but super nervous. In all the opportunities I've received to be a part of innovative projects, this is one of few that is going to be on a statewide awareness level! That's big – and God's blessed me to be one of the many to do this. I hope to leave footprints my daughter, my future husband and (future children) can be proud of. I don't let HIV stop me, define me, or kill me! I may have my bad days but I push through and refused to be limited by HIV! So I'm off to google the directions and figure out what to wear.

Ugh, the wedding guest list has taken an awkward and unexpected turn. Trying to decide if this is a people pleasing moment or an it's an all-about-me moment?

10.22.11

My Life. ### \$\$\$\$\$**##** ### \$\$\$\$\$**##**

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10.23.11

Today was such an amazing day! God truly showed His presence! Church was great but Brian, Symone and I decided to attend the Southern Baptist Conference in support of our church. The worship service really blessed me. I recognized songs from Joy FM that were performed, our choir did a great job and I openly worshiped even when others chose to sit. That's epic for me because I usually wait until someone near me stands to praise out of being conscious of people watching me. But tonight I sang to the Lord with abandon to all insecurities. And Brian did too – and he NEVER sings. God is so good and I'm so thankful to have shared in this with him. I truly needed it. Thank you, Lord!

How great is our God? Bless the Lord oh my soul and all this within me, bless His holy name.

WHY? He has done great things. That is all.

10.24.11

OMG – update to yesterday. As Brian is driving me home last night, I'm on the phone with my friend Heaven sharing the message about DIVINE APPOINTMENTS (which are sometimes viewed by us as interruptions, inconveniences, etc). And how are times to demonstrate our life in the image of Christ can come at any time. Just as I'm saying these words Brian looks out the window across the street and asks me about a house being on fire. I tell him to pull up and see. And OMG – it was! Children were running around crying, Brian jumped out the car and ran into the house while I called 911 and calmed down some of the children moments later. Brian came out, was carrying a young man that we later found out had a mental condition and couldn't communicate. His siblings couldn't find him in the smoke – had we not got there when we did, there is no telling

what would have happened. We were supposed to have my aunt with us, but we didn't. Had we had to take her home after service, we wouldn't have been there in time. It was an experience like no other to watch someone you love put his life at risk, to see God work and use you to His glory, saving a life. To see a mother afraid she lost her children and to recognize how blessed you are... life changing.

Makes you want to conquer the world.

Dear Lord, Thank you for being the God you are. There is no other like you. You sent your Son to die for my sins. I've rejected your love countless times, but you love me anyway, you hear my cry. Then you love me enough to consider me worthy to bring your glory by sharing my testimony. You see worth in me to allow me to be a witness to your countless blessings. You are an amazing God and I thank you because of who you are.

Glorious.

Praiseworthy.

Omnipotent.

Merciful.

Amazing.

*I love this pen.

10.25.11

Yesterday was baby daddy birthday. I let my daughter call him, all she got was voice mail and no call back. Whateva.

My love and I have marriage counseling tonight. I'm so excited. I have no idea what to expect but with 102 days left until the day, it's all I can think about.

Eeek! Tomorrow is my turn to participate in the video/interview portion of this journal project. I hope the questions aren't worded to where I ramble when I answer. I'm a talker.

I'm really tired today – so this will be all I contribute.

Oh man, we have to turn these in tomorrow! I was kinda hoping to keep writing, but we'll see.

10.26.11

FACES OF HIV INTERVIEW

The interview was not in Tampa. It was in St. Pete. Crossed that bridge on 275 and was not happy. Got lost twice, but finally found the building and I love the studio. I could work in a place like that. Met Sarah, April, and Tom – crap! I don't think that's his name, but I will call him the mastermind behind the project. He explained the concept and I'm so excited for where this is going statewide. April Hogan is so nice. I think I met her or saw her at the 80s in 2007. Sarah calmed me down because I was nervous about being late, but it worked out. The interview questions were cool, but there were some in hindsight I wish I had answered differently. They are letting me keep the journal 'til the end of the month – yay.

Hope some cool things happen for me to record. No trauma!

11.1.11

I was supposed to mail this out last week, I will after my interview for NCBW's video – Faces of AIDS.

Today I'm helping to write an essay for the nomination of Donovan to be recognized as an HIV outreach organization (the RCP movement). I'm so excited and even if he doesn't win, to know that he will be in the same room as movers and shakers in the field, is exciting.

I'm a little annoyed today about the wedding. Daddy isn't returning my calls about helping. I wanted to put red ribbons on the invitations but everyone in my fiancé's family doesn't know because he doesn't think they can handle it. It's really frustrating to assume someone can't handle something when you don't give the chance. But I understand his hesitation. I guess.

11.2.11

Went to my church's ministry meeting tonight. I'm now the health awareness ministry leader. So I will take on the task of alerting members of motivational tools when faced with health scares, bring awareness to things they should be concerned about. My strength is HIV so I hope I can balance this all.

"I can do all things through Christ."

I'm so tired – gotta get some sleep.

11.11.11

Yeah, still have the journal. I'm mailing it today. I'm so ashamed of myself.

My dad backed out of the wedding financially. My best friend isn't being supportive, my mom's acting strange and really stressing me. I have no idea how we're going to pay for this. I still don't have a dress. Maybe that's where the silver lining is.

Ppbb+++++....

On a positive and constructive note, my interview went okay. Penni Tinsley wanted to follow-up with me and some others talking with kids, sharing our story. That went a lot better and I saw some familiar faces. I didn't feel like talking HIV today but when I feel that way and then it's over, I feel like I'm closer to something greater than me. I feel like I saved a life from being restricted to pills, blood work, stigma, and depression. I wonder was there ever someone in my life that tried to save me before I got in trouble?

Oh, and I've learned that weddings and funerals show you people's TRUE character.

11.15.11

Okay, seriously, I'm mailing it! Ugh. And I have my own journals, I don't know why I don't want to give this one up. I hope that those that read my ramblings, come away seeing a woman who loves the Lord, her family and her community before they see HIV.

That which may seem insignificant to the masses may be the focus point of the Master.



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