

▶ SCENARIO 1 – JORDAN

I've been living with HIV for 6 years now. When I got the test result back as positive, I was so upset. I hated myself at first, but I've now come to terms with my diagnosis and I have stopped feeling bad about myself because of it. It helps knowing that HIV isn't a death sentence any more – in fact, I have a normal life-expectancy and because I have an undetectable viral load I can't pass on HIV, even if I have sex without condoms.

My family are super supportive and I haven't felt the need to tell my employer because I'm really healthy and my HIV doesn't affect my work. One thing that is tough though is the way the media talks about HIV. The only time I ever see HIV in the news is either when there's a feature about an African country (you'd think that HIV doesn't exist in the UK!) or if someone living with HIV has done something criminal – I don't understand why, even when the story has nothing to do with HIV, the person is often identified as being HIV positive. It's depressing because there are so many people living with HIV in the UK who are just leading normal lives and our stories never get told.

Saying that, I try not to get too down about the lack of understanding about HIV. I go to a support group at my clinic every fortnight and I always leave feeling great about myself and ready to take on the world. I've also started volunteering with a charity to speak to young people about HIV – I think education is key to tackling the fear and ignorance that surrounds HIV.

THINK ABOUT: ▶▶

- ▶ Who (or what) in this story is making Jordan feel good?
- ▶ Who (or what) in this story is making Jordan feel bad?
- ▶ Why do you think Jordan has told some people about their HIV and not others?
- ▶ Why do you think how people living with HIV are talked about in the media is important to Jordan?
- ▶ What are your feelings towards Jordan after reading their story?

