

From 1991 to 2021

Episode 1

Transcript



Episode 1

1991

I was 15, and already had two years experience in gay sex. I will hasten to add it was TWO 13-year olds experimenting. Did I know what I was doing? Yes. Was it consensual? YES. Did I enjoy it? OH HELL YES! Partly because I was having sex. Mostly because it was a secret, it was 'naughty' and it was FUN. I'm not going to sugar coat it - it was fun. I will add though I thought it was a phase I was going through, as I always tried to fantasise about females, it always gravitated towards males. It was a losing situation. I tried thinking straight thoughts, it just never happened. I do remember going through this as a boy at night, and this was the thought process:

- I like men.
- Am I the only one?
- That's impossible I can't be?
- OK.
- So how do I meet others like me?

That was about a minutes worth taken up there - I knew nothing of gay bars, it was a taboo subject. And I had no peers - except for the other 13-year-old - which we kept it a secret - which I'm still doing now.

I was involved with an HIV/AIDS production at our towns youth centre, and we as a group thought it was an important subject to push. We learned EVERYTHING about how you caught AIDS. We learned that it was through mainly blood and sexual fluids and that it was more likely to affect promiscuous people, no matter their sexuality. I had leaflets galore. This was brilliant, as for part of our GCSE English we needed to do a talk on a subject. I was going to do magic. But as this production REALLY took over I went with the AIDS subject, I just went hell for leather with this. I was with a group of girls, so the only lad in the group. Not only did the group learn something, I vaguely remember our English tutor being impressed with the research (to be honest - I already had the stuff on me, it wasn't that difficult to regurgitate the facts!)

Now, it was also at this time I 'found' what I thought was the gay scene - I found that I could pick up men in the gents' loos. Again please remember, this was when the age of consent was 21, being gay was taboo at best and I had ZERO knowledge of anything else. I'm going to keep this as clean as possible - I don't want this to be porn material for anyone. I just want it to be frank, and as clean as possible.

There was a code in the loos, feet pointing towards the cubicle next meant you were interested. If you came with a pen, you could instant message each other using a pen and toilet paper, or if you were really prepared, a notepad! For those that now use apps, the 'messaging' followed the same to and fro:

- Age?
- Likes?
- Do you have a place?
- Do you know anywhere we can go?

Yes, the tech has changed - the gay man has not! Again - it was fun, it was exciting and of course VERY illegal! I have nearly been caught more than one occasion by the police - but because of my age, all I got, was 'There are some really bad men who would take advantage of you - you don't want that do you?' All I kept thinking was 'OH YES PLEASE!!!!'

This is what I used to do on a Saturday. As I was a regular 'user' I met up with quite a few of the same guys on a regular basis, if these guys lived alone - then it was possible to meet up in a private house, I did exchange phone numbers - but please remember mobile phones weren't as common... 10ps and phonecards on me were VERY common!

I had some good times, some, not so good times, and times where 'consent' was abused. I'm not saying 'rape' or 'sexual abuse' because there was a point in the act that consent was made -it was simply abused. I was told that if I didn't 'take it' then I am not being a 'good gay' by one encounter - stupid thing was, I kept going back - as he had a flat to go back to, rather than go elsewhere in a public loo.

For me, this was what I thought the gay scene was. It made sense, it was illegal, it was frowned upon by society, you were told that if you were gay, you were a dirty old man, you could also catch AIDS, and what better place to meet up with other dirty old men, was in a gent's public toilet... But I was HIV/AIDS awareness trained - I was a stickler for safe sex.

1992

Under current legislation - I'm now at a legal age. This is 1992, I was still 5 years too young. So a year older and still trolling around the public toilets. This was whether in my home town or in others. I was in the sixth form, the Youth Centre got funding from Public Health to do another AIDS awareness production, and I got myself my first job. My mum got me a job with her. I got shown around by the manager, who I was told was gay. So great, I now know a gay person outside a public toilet, this was new!

During this time, a friend's dad told me about the local gay bar. What? A pub full of gay men? You mean they meet in a proper building? WHOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!

So a week after I got paid, I went to the pub, yes I was 16, yes I was underage drinking, but what the heck, let's give it a go! So I went to my local gay bar, and I actually got served! This 16-year-old looked 18! Woo Hoo! I was sitting on my own and this guy called me over - which to this day, we are still friends - but more on that later on in the blog! I needed the loo, so I got up and turned around only to see my gay manager and another work colleague sitting behind us, my whole life (all 16 years) flashed before my eyes, I'm going to get caught out, I'm underage drinking (these guys know EXACTLY my age), I'm obviously there to pick up other guys, so underage sex too. OMG, my whole world is going to CRASH!!!!!!

The following week, my manager took me by his side, and basically said, 'look you tell your mum in your own time, I will make sure that you are the first to tell her, and not by work gossip' He was true to his word. Gossip about me and my sexuality was away from my mum, she NEVER got wind of it, until I told her. My reasoning was VERY simple. I will tell her my sexuality ONCE I have reached the age of consent. I did get members of staff asking me when I was going to tell her. But until I came out, my mum never knew. Big Big thanks to the staff for making it my choice and not make it work gossip.

Going back to THAT first night... my underage drinking stopped because I went back with one of the barmen and his boyfriend - my first threesome (YAY). He asked me about my age, so I told him the truth. I was in fact 17! (Sixth Form and Part-Time work enabled that lie!). The landlord was NOT happy I was underage drinking but felt it safer for me to drink coke in his bar, as it was a safer environment than public toilets. Of course, I was young and 16, I got a name for myself for being the young slut of the bar. What the hell I was enjoying it.

During this year the gay scene got its act together and started giving out free condoms and lube in its venues, to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Of course, I took some: I was HIV/AIDS awareness trained - I was a stickler for safe sex.

Earlier, I touched on the HIV/AIDS second production. The cast figured out my sexuality. I spoke to the director regarding this. He came out to me too. It was the first time I had a proper conversation about the gay scene and being gay out of a bar and outside of a public toilet. When we finished the production we were taken to the West End to see Five Guys Named Moe, but before then, we were taken back to his flat which he shared with his boyfriend. I knew but had to keep it quiet because he ran a Youth Theatre group and this couldn't come out, as it would have serious repercussions.

This was also the time I came out to the Youth Centre fully, thinking naively that if I came out, others might. I was wrong, I got punched/kicked again. Mostly because I answered honestly when one guy asked if I fancied him... not made that mistake since! The Youth leaders were sympathetic, they gave me the phone number for the gay switchboard, more than I got from school. It was more or less at this point I stopped going to the Youth Centre because I didn't fit in.

Now back at school. The school was performing Annie. It got out that I was frequenting the local gay bar. I was the sound engineer for that production. The cast kept bullying me, and I got to the point of, 'carry on, or I walk out'. I walked out. Albeit for about half an hour. At the end of the show party the youth leader of the school, kept saying to me, 'By the way, you're not', I said, 'I'm not what?' She couldn't bring herself to say the word 'GAY' so I basically said, 'You know nothing of my life so don't judge me'.

A few weeks later, still getting homophobic abuse from some pupils, I went to my head of year, thinking that she might help. NOPE. All I got was, 'If you continue this lifestyle at this school you will be expelled'. I said, 'But I take precautions, what's the issue', she replied, 'If you tell me more you WILL be expelled, if you carry on with this lifestyle, you will be dead' - I said, 'Fine, I'm leaving this school' - so I did. Just by me being there - meaning the school was breaking Section 28, my being there, 'promoted homosexuality'.

So I went into full-time employment - at a holiday camp in Bognor. Bognor is not that far from Brighton, I knew from my trips to the local gay bar that Brighton had a big gay scene. Let me tell you now... I must be the ONLY gay man to find NOT one gay bar in Brighton... Yes, I had the Gay Times on me, and that thing was out of date! I stayed there for two weeks and left. Got back to my home town and went into temping work. I stayed in temping until 1993 - But that's another year LOL.

This was also the year I came out to my friend from school - it took me AN HOUR for him to take in the fact that I was telling the truth - it was at that point I found out I was a straight acting homosexual!! Fantastic, I can blend into society, people not knowing my sexuality, and I can keep it hidden - even though I was not working with my mum - the staff still kept it a secret. AT least in 1993, I'm going to celebrate my 18th birthday (at the age of 17!)