

# **THE DENVER PRINCIPLES**

## **Statement from the Advisory Committee of People with AIDS**

We condemn attempts to label us as "victims," a term which implies defeat, and we are only occasionally "patients," a term which implies passivity, helplessness, and dependence upon the care of others. We are "People With AIDS."

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS**

1. Come out, especially to their patients who have AIDS.
2. Always clearly identify and discuss the theory they favor as to the cause of AIDS, since this bias affects the treatments and advice they give.
3. Get in touch with their feelings (*e.g.*, fears, anxieties, hopes, etc.) about AIDS and not simply deal with AIDS intellectually.
4. Take a thorough personal inventory and identify and examine their own agendas around AIDS.
5. Treat People with AIDS as whole people, and address psychosocial issues as well as biophysical ones.
6. Address the question of sexuality in people with AIDS specifically, sensitively and with information about gay male sexuality in general, and the sexuality of people with AIDS in particular.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL PEOPLE**

1. Support us in our struggle against those who would fire us from our jobs, evict us from our homes, refuse to touch us or separate us from our loved ones, our community or our peers, since available evidence does not support the view that AIDS can be spread by casual, social contact.
2. Not scapegoat people with AIDS, blame us for the epidemic or generalize about our lifestyles.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS**

1. Form caucuses to choose their own representatives, to deal with the media, to choose their own agenda and to plan their own strategies.
2. Be involved at every level of decision-making and specifically serve on the boards of directors of provider organizations.
3. Be included in all AIDS forums with equal credibility as other participants, to share their own experiences and knowledge.