Meet the Gay Men Behind POZ Magazine's "Meth Still Kills" Story

Four gay men discuss meth, sex, and HIV, and taking part in a POZ Magazine story on the topic, "Meth Still Kills."

May 31, 2022 By Mark S. King

No sooner had POZ Magazine editor Oriol Gutierrez accepted my pitch to do a feature story about meth, gay men and HIV than a stunning Facebook post came across my feed. Someone I knew, Mark Wingo, had died of a meth overdose, and his roommate, Chuck Parker, posted the news and plainly said that meth was the cause.

Chuck became my first interview for the story, only two days after he found the body of his roommate, Mark. I was astonished by his willingness and candidness.

Soon thereafter, addiction and sex therapist David Fawcett, PhD (Lust, Men and Meth: A Gay Man's Guide to Recovery) spoke to me for the article, as well as long-term survivor Doug Rose and more recently diagnosed Breaun Randle, both of whom have battled meth addiction.

The vulnerability shown to me by these gay men was beyond anything I had expected. You can read the POZ Magazine story, "Meth Still Kills," right here.

Meanwhile, I wanted to give the men who participated in the story a chance to speak for themselves. The video above is a frank conversation with the four of them about their lives, the intersection of meth and sex and HIV, and their response to the story and how it has been received by people they know.

We must be able to talk about this, folks, without judgment or shameful language. The truth is dangerous enough. We have all watched the swell of meth use among gay men over the last twenty years. What shocked me, though, was to learn that meth overdose deaths have tripled in recent years. Tripled!

That statistic felt so uncharacteristic of the drug as I once knew it. Typically, back in the day, you did a lot of meth and then you slept for three days. No one died. That simply isn't true anymore.

Thanks for reading, and please be well.

Mark

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