TURNING TINA: HARM REDUCTION & HIV+ MSM

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The Institute of Many (TIM) & Living Positive Victoria

Warning: the following material may trigger and/or illicit cravings if you have, or had an issue with substance use.
METH
The looming War on Ice
+ Divided experiences of former & current users in TIM
+ New wave of queer men curious/experimenting/concerned/afraid
Hi all, I’ll be presenting at the upcoming Living Positive Victoria forum, “Is Tina in Town?” about the ways in which Tina is used by members of the HIV+ community.

As part of that presentation, I’d love to speak with Tim members who have experience in this community, whether you are a former, current, regular, or casual user. All information will be de-identified (you remain anonymous). Interviewers can be done via email, online chat, face to face (in Sydney) or over the phone. Your information (anonymised) will be used in the following outcomes of the project: op-ed articles written by me, the creation of a research report, the presentation at the forum, and a potential resource for the community.

Tina is currently a hot-button issue in the community, with several articles appearing over the last few weeks, and research reports being issued (or commenting) from research centres. It’s important to me that positive voices are heard on this issue to get an accurate indication of how the community is responding to the issue, not just the opinion journals, doctors, or others.

Please feel free to contact me privately here on Facebook or at nohelas@outlook.com.

Mary Thelma, No Helas
(Image courtesy of Tina Bechler, the internet)

Is Tina in Town?

INTRODUCTION

Hello, thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. All your responses will be kept confidential, and we value your honest input into this survey, so it will inform the various industries we are working with, and ultimately a resource aimed at HIV+ men who use crystal methamphetamine (referred throughout as Tina).

The survey is broken up into multiple sections: first asking you to reflect on your initial impression of Tina, then how you experience it (daily or less frequently) and finally some statistical info about you.

If during this survey you are confronted with uncomfortable memories, or experiences difficult completing it, please reach out to me at any time.

We greatly appreciate you taking the time to honestly respond to this survey.

PART ONE: MY FIRST TIME WITH TINA

*5. How would you characterise this first experience? Who were you with, how did it work, how did it make you feel? Tell us the story:

PART TWO: ABOUT YOU AND TINA ONGOING

In this next section (the largest in the survey), we ask you to think about your relationship with Tina, if it has affected your life, and how you were able/unable to manage use.

*6. What is your current relationship with Tina?

- After my initial use, I never tried it again
- I went through a period of ongoing use, but no longer use it
- I still casually use it (a handful of times per year)
- I am a regular user (6 times or more a year)
Is Tina in Town?

8. Have you ever felt your use of Tina was getting out of hand?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ NA - I never did it again

9. If Yes, what were the signs that this was happening? E.g. have you ever missed a day of work because of Tina? Missed an appointment? Cancelled plans with friends/family to prioritise use? Did it affect your employment, relationship, health, finances?

I've always thought of myself as one of those ultra-strong people who was not susceptible to any form of addiction. Then you get near something like Tina and you realise actually, there are limits.

- HIV positive gay man, aged 25 - 34

I'm being destructive, and I know it.

- HIV positive gay man, aged 45 - 54

The high was incredible, and my brain sought this high every time I thought about it, I would have physical reactions just thinking about it, my heart starts to race and the adrenalin gets going, I still have these reactions if I start to fantasise about it again.

- HIV positive gay man, aged 25 - 34

I haven't really witnessed recreational use without some kind of negative repercussions.

- HIV positive gay man, aged 25 - 34
RISK

RISK
CHAPTER 1
WHAT IS TINA DOING TO YOU?

CHAPTER 2
WHEN DOES RECREATIONAL USE BECOME PROBLEMATIC USE?
CHAPTER 3
HOW CAN I USE TINA IN A SAFER WAY? PT.1

CHAPTER 4
HOW CAN I USE TINA IN A SAFER WAY? PT.2
THE FIRST TIME I SHAPED CRYSTAL WAS AT A GROUP THING. THE GUY DOING IT TO ME EXPLAINED THE WHOLE PROCESS, AND TOOK HIS TIME. MADE ME FEEL A LOT MORE COMFORTABLE ABOUT IT.

- HIV POSITIVE GAY MAN, AGED 25-34

I KNOW THAT IF I BLAST TINA ON AN EMPTY STOMACH, I AM GOING TO FEEL SICK RIGHT AWAY AND BE NO USE TO ANYONE. IF I'M GOING TO BLAST FOR A SECOND OR THIRD TIME IN A SESSION, I ALWAYS TAKE TIME TO EAT BEFORE I GO AGAIN.

- HIV POSITIVE GAY MAN, AGED 25 - 34
Get to the point:
+ Community voices
+ Partnerships
+ Risk
+ Design
+ Promotion
THANKS

TIM membership
Brent Allan & LPV staff
Jeremy Wiggins & VAC
Harm Reduction Victoria

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