'I was drawn into a secretive world of chemsex and it turned me into a zombie'

Ignacio Labayen De Inza says chemsex is a "trap"

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A man drawn into the world of having sex while high on illegal drugs has described how he became a "zombie" whose life was slowly deterioratingChris - whose name has been changed - told the started to take part in chemsex, short for chemical sex, which helped mask the "the shame and guilt" he said he felt growing up gay.The Londoner said after becoming addicted to chemsex - which typically involves men who have sex with men using the drugs crystal meth, methedrone and GHB/GBL to enhance their sexual experience - he faced a "wall of silence" from helplines and others within the community.

Campaigners say support is "patchy" due to gay sex stigma and has called for this to change. The government says it is aware of the harm caused by chemsex and has issued guidance to local authorities on managing the issue.Chris was initially offered drugs at a party, but it was not until a few months later that he then began to actively seek it out more and find people who were taking drugs.He said at first it took away "a lot of the shame and guilt you have about growing up being gay. It's kind of quite liberating".However, that quickly changed.

"No-one really speaks about it. Everyone is slightly ashamed about it. It's all behind closed doors. It doesn't really spill out into the real world. It's very secretive," he said.You can't do much until Wednesday. And then it all starts again on a Friday," he said.You have to eat, you have to sleep, you have to get on with your life but all you're really doing is looking forward to the next time you can take drugs," he added.Which is to escape the horror that is your life, the misery that is your life which you've created but, in a way, you don't seem to see that because all you want to do is take drugs."'I was drawn into a secretive world of NA man drawn into the world of having sex while high on illegal drugs has described how he became a "zombie" whose life was slowly deteriorating.

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"Slowly, your life starts to deteriorate because you are missing work on a Monday. And then your work is obviously not up to standard."You can't do much until Wednesday. And then it all starts again on a Friday," he said.

You have to eat, you have to sleep, you have to get on with your life but all you're really doing is looking forward to the next time you can take drugs," he added.Which is to escape the horror that is your life, the misery that is your life which you've created but, in a way, you don't seem to see that because all you want to do is take drugs."

Ignacio Labayen De Inza, a man with grey hair wearing a dark coloured coat over a dark coloured V-neck jumper and pink shirt, stood in front of pink and blue flowersIgnacio Labayen De Inza says chemsex is a "trap"Campaigners have said chemsex among some gay

men has a stigma attached that meant many were not seeking the help they needed.Ignacio Labayen De Inza, chief executive of the London-based charity Controlling Chemsex, is calling for people to start a conversation around chemsex to help change that stigma.
He said: "Chemsex is very available but not everyone has access to reliable information."Not just the government but no-one is doing very much. People think there is nothing we can do because it's going to carry on happening, but people could make sure that they set boundaries and to keep safe."
He said there was a stigma attached to it because "we are talking about sex, we are talking about gay sex, we are talking about drugs".

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