



BOOK CLUB KIT

HIGH ACHIEVER

THE INCREDIBLE
TRUE STORY
OF ONE ADDICT'S
DOUBLE LIFE

TIFFANY JENKINS

Dear Reader:

I know what you're thinking: could she be for real? Many of these events feel unbelievable, but the book you're discussing today is not an invention. I promise, I'm not that creative. The names may have changed but this all really happened. Between us, I'm surprised I made it out alive.

I am grateful to you for taking the time to read *High Achiever* and even consider sharing it with your book club. I never thought a bunch of people would sit around reading my life story and have anything to say about it. It's not like this is the literature they teach in schools. When I self-published this book a few years ago, I didn't know how many people would find it. But they did, in droves, and it sold more copies than I expected. Now I have an editor and a publisher. This is a long way of saying thank you to you, the lady next to you, the guy in the corner, and probably the dog sniffing the tray of cookies on the table. (Are you going to eat that last one, by the way?)

What I really want to share in this letter is that this story might sound crazy, but it happens to people every day. Addiction doesn't care about your name, age, gender, race, or sexuality. Addiction can happen to any of us, and not everyone is as lucky as I was to get out. Prison set me straight. With the help of rehab and recovery programs, I am now drug-free and enjoying a wonderful life with beautiful children and a husband that I love. I am thankful every day.

I spend a lot of time talking to people in my community about their struggles with drugs and alcohol. I want everyone to see that if I could sell my boyfriend's guns to pay my drug dealer and STILL go on to build an amazing life, that they can get the help they need, too. The mission of my book is to get people talking about the state of addiction in our country—just like your book club is doing right now. The more we talk about the opioid crisis, the better we can see a path forward. We can inspire others to take back their lives.

I hope you'll share your group's feedback with me. You can send me a message on Instagram or Facebook, @JugglingTheJenkins.

Thanks for reading *High Achiever*.

Love,
Tiffany

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the way Tiffany chooses to tell her story: the reader is immediately thrust into prison, and introduced to her as an inmate before they are introduced to her as a person. What do you think about the chronology of the book?
2. Tiffany weaves humor into the memoir's narrative. Which of her actions and thoughts were most surprising to you? How does her sense of humor impact your reaction to the scenes? Do you feel the humor or sarcasm take away from her experience, or do you think they make it more accessible?
3. Tiffany structures her story so that many of the chapters end in a shocking reveal. Did you find this to be an effective strategy for drawing readers in? What was the most shocking or surprising moment of her story for you?
4. In Chapter 18, Tiffany reveals her experience in solitary confinement. Based on what you have read or seen on television regarding solitary confinement, do you find her experience shocking? Are you surprised by the kindness the guard extends to her?
5. Many people consider addiction to be a family disease. Discuss how Tiffany's addiction—and recovery—impacts her closest relationships. How are different family members and loved ones affected?
6. Further to the above, discuss the differences between Tiffany's relationships while abusing drugs versus while sober in prison. She mentions that Sarah, who she met in prison, was one of her first true friends. Discuss her friendship with Kayla. What differences do you see between the women?
7. In Chapter 38, Dr. Peters questions the reality of Tiffany's story. Did you ever feel that she wasn't being completely honest? Or did you find her to be a reliable narrator? Discuss how your reactions to her story shifted over the course of the book.
8. If you were making a movie of this book, would you keep the same structure and the flashback technique? What moments would you highlight? What relationships would you focus on?

9. The book ends with Tiffany sharing her story with a group of recovering addicts, many whose stories are much like her own. What do you think about her second chance at life and how she has chosen to share her message? If you got the chance to ask Tiffany one question, what would it be?
10. Are there any parts of Tiffany's life, like her family or her relationship with Eliot, which you would have liked to hear more about? Why do you think she chose to focus specifically on her time in prison and the months leading up to her arrest?
11. Did you find the story impactful? How does Tiffany change the way you think about your own life story? Compare this book to other memoirs your group has read. Is it similar to any of them? Did you like it more or less than other books you've discussed?
12. Did Tiffany's story about the tumultuous nature of addiction change any preconceptions that you might have had about drug abuse or the opioid crisis in the U.S.? Do you feel more empathetic or more distanced from those in similar situations to Tiffany's after reading her story?

RECIPES INSPIRED BY HIGH ACHIEVER

CHICKEN QUESADILLA

“Okay honestly? I know it sounds stupid, but I craved Taco Bell like it was nobody’s business in there. Specifically, a chicken quesadilla. I would have killed for one.”

INGREDIENTS

2½ cups shredded cooked chicken	6 flour tortillas (8 inches)
⅔ cup salsa	¼ cup butter, melted
⅓ cup sliced green onions	2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
¾ to 1 teaspoon ground cumin	Sour cream and guacamole
½ teaspoon salt	
½ teaspoon dried oregano	

DIRECTIONS

In a large skillet, combine the first six ingredients. Cook uncovered over medium heat for 10 minutes or until heated through, stirring occasionally.

Brush one side of tortillas with butter; place buttered side down on a lightly greased baking sheet. Spoon ⅓ cup chicken mixture over half of each tortilla; sprinkle with ⅓ cup cheese.

Fold plain side of tortilla over cheese. Bake at 375°F for 9-11 minutes or until crisp and golden brown. Cut into wedges; serve with sour cream and guacamole.

Recipe via Taste of Home

MOCKARITA

“It is possible to have an amazing, fun, purposeful, life after addiction. Addiction is not the end. Addiction is not how my story is going to end.”

INGREDIENTS

Lime wedges, if desired	¼ cup powdered sugar
Coarse salt, if desired	3 cups crushed ice
1 can (6 oz) frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed (¾ cup)	2 cups club soda, chilled
1 can (6 oz) frozen limeade concentrate, thawed (¾ cup)	

DIRECTIONS

Rub rims of glasses with lime wedges; dip in salt to coat.

In blender, place lemonade and limeade concentrates, powdered sugar, and ice. Cover; blend until slushy. Add club soda; stir gently. Pour mixture carefully into glasses.

Garnish with lime wedges.

Recipe via Genius Kitchen

**PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES WITH
REESE'S PIECES**

(MADE FOR TIFFANY'S BIRTHDAY IN PRISON)

*"None of that sounded fun, at all. The cake maybe
(which was actually peanut butter cookies smushed and then
layered with Reese's Pieces."*

INGREDIENTS

½ cup butter or margarine (1 stick), softened	½ teaspoon vanilla extract
½ cup granulated sugar	1 cup all-purpose flour
½ cup packed light brown sugar	½ teaspoon baking soda
½ cup creamy peanut butter	¼ teaspoon salt
1 egg	1 cup Reese's Pieces

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 350°F.

Beat butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar, peanut butter, egg, and vanilla in large bowl until fluffy. Stir together flour, baking soda, and salt; gradually add to butter mixture, beating until well blended. Stir in candies. Drop by heaping teaspoons onto ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until edges are lightly browned; remove from oven. Cool slightly; remove from pan to wire rack. Cool completely. Makes about 30 cookies.

Recipe via Hershey's

BREAD PUDDING

“Four p.m.—Dinner. This is the last meal of the day, and by 8 o’clock p.m., I’m always starving again. The best nights were corndog nights. I noticed we got bread pudding and oranges every dinner, and often some kind of sloppy pasta.”

INGREDIENTS

10 slices Artesano Golden Wheat Bread	¼ cup brown sugar
½ cup raisins	¼ cup white sugar
3 eggs	1 teaspoon vanilla
1¾ cups light cream	1 teaspoon cinnamon
	2 tablespoons butter melted

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter an 8 inch baking dish.

Cut bread into 1” pieces and place on a baking sheet. Bake 4 minutes (or until slightly dried) and cool. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl whisk together eggs, cream, sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon.

Pour the egg mixture over the bread. Add raisins and toss lightly. (I recommend using your hands for this to avoid bread breaking up.)

Place the bread mixture in baking dish. Drizzle butter over the mixture.

Bake 35—40 minutes until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Serve warm or room temperature.

Recipe via Spend with Pennies

A SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST

IF YOU LOVED TIFFANY'S MEMOIR, YOU WILL FIND THESE OTHER
BOOKS JUST AS ENTHRALLING

1. *Orange is the New Black* by Piper Kerman
2. *Cherry* by Nico Walker
3. *Smashed* by Koren Zailckas
4. *Never Enough* by Judith Grisel
5. *The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins
6. *How to Grow Up* by Michelle Tea
7. *The Wolf Wants In* by Laura McHugh
8. *Wishful Drinking* by Carrie Fisher
9. *How to Change Your Mind* by Michael Pollan
10. *Strong in the Broken Places* by Quentin Vennie and Jon Sternfeld

10 ADDICTION FACTS THAT YOU MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN

1. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 19.7 million American adults (aged 12 and older) battled a substance use disorder in 2017.¹
2. Almost 74% of adults suffering from a substance use disorder in 2017 struggled with an alcohol use disorder.¹
3. About 38% of adults in 2017 battled an illicit drug use disorder.¹
4. That same year, 1 out of every 8 adults struggled with both alcohol and drug use disorders simultaneously.¹
5. In 2017, 8.5 million American adults suffered from both a mental health disorder and a substance use disorder, or co-occurring disorders.²
6. Drug abuse and addiction cost American society more than \$740 billion annually in lost workplace productivity, healthcare expenses, and crime-related costs.³
7. In 2017, there were more than 72,000 deaths due to drug overdoses.³
8. In the same year, the biggest increase in overdose deaths was related to fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, which accounted for approximately 30,000 of those deaths.²
9. Over 5 million emergency room visits in 2011 were drug related.⁴
10. Over 90% of those with an addiction began drinking, smoking, or using illicit drugs before the age of 18.⁴

¹ SAMSHA: <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2017-nsduh-annual-national-report>

² John Volken Academy: <https://www.volken.org/blog/alcohol-drug-recovery/10-facts-drugs-impact/>

³ American Addiction Centers: <https://www.americanaddictioncenters.org/co-occurring-disorders>

⁴ Project Know: <https://www.projectknow.com/resources/>

SUBSTANCE ABUSE RESOURCES: RECOMMENDED LINKS

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT HOTLINES

These organizations provide hotlines that offer a wealth of information to get you started:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) Hope Line.
- Partnership for Drug- Free Kids Helpline

SELF-HELP GROUPS/12-STEP RECOVERY GROUPS

- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) (aa.org)
- Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA) (adultchild.org)
- Cocaine Anonymous (CA) (ca.org)
- Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA) (crystalmeth.org)
- Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA) (foodaddicts.org)
- Food Compulsions Anonymous (FCA) (foodcompulsions.wordpress.com)
- Gamblers Anonymous (GA) (gamblersanonymous.org)
- LifeRing Secular Recovery (LSR) (lifering.org)
- Marijuana Anonymous (marijuana-anonymous.org)
- Narcotics Anonymous (NA) (na.org)

- Nicotine Anonymous (NicA)(nicotine-anonymous.org)
- Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) (sa.org)
- Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA) (slaafws.org)
- SMART Recovery (smartrecovery.org)
- Women for Sobriety (WFS) (womenforsobriety.org)
- XA-Speakers (xa-speakers.org) A collection of recordings from speaker meetings, conventions, and workshops of 12-step groups.

LINKS FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF PEOPLE WITH ADDICTION

- Adult Children of Alcoholics (adultchildren.org): For adult children of alcoholics and addicts
- Al-Anon.org (al-anon.org): For family members of alcoholics
- Coda.org (coda.org): For co-dependent individuals
- Gam-anon (gam-anon.org): For family members of gamblers
- Nar-anon (nar-anon.org): For family members of addicts
- S-Anon (sanon.org): For family & friends of sexaholics