



We All Fall Down: Living with Addiction

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In his bestselling memoir *Tweak*, Nic Sheff took readers on an emotionally gripping roller-coaster ride through his days as an addict. Now in this powerful follow-up about his continued efforts to stay clean, Nic writes candidly about eye-opening stays at rehab centers, devastating relapses, and hard-won realizations about what it means to be a young person living with addiction.

Tweak and *Beautiful Boy*, his father's memoir about him, are the basis of the upcoming film *Beautiful Boy*, starring Steve Carell and Timothée Chalamet.

We All Fall Down: Living with Addiction Details

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From Reader Review We All Fall Down: Living with Addiction for online ebook

Juliette says

This is Nic Sheff's second memoir about addiction. Basically, while riding the wave of success on a book tour for Tweak, Nic makes a series of selfish and predictable moves. He leaves rehab with a girl he meets in rehab, quits taking medication for bipolar disorder, lives off his girlfriend, starts drinking alcohol, smoking pot, and lying. Add a three month stint back to Los Angeles, two emotional affairs, and a lot of crying to the mix, and you pretty much have it. He still uses the word "whatever" too much, but has added a heavy dose of "for sure"s, "you know?"s, and "right on"s. Oh, and he seems to refuse to use the word "and". He writes the word as "'n'". As in, "So I just try 'n' stay high forever." I am starting to wonder if Nic Sheff is relapsing to have more material for books, 'cause I'm pretty sure he doesn't want to have a real job n' stuff, or whatever. Lest I sound like a totally insensitive jerk, his message of getting back up again is good ('cause we all fall down, you know?), especially since this book is marketed as 'Young Adult'. I am returning this book to the library, so it can be stolen and passed around teen rehab centers.

*Note, if you read Nic Sheff's blog "New Dawn Transmissions" a few years ago, you'll notice some of the writing made its way into this book.

Sarah says

Kudos for being an honest account of the manipulation involved with addiction and the constant struggle to figure out what is "normal." The moments when Nic struggles with whether or not he even wants to be sober if it means just existing rather than living are the most compelling and interesting parts of the book.

However, I'm not sure that the author has enough sober time to be able to honestly look at his own behavior. There's still quite a bit of ego in the writing which at times can make it hard to read, and the writing feels a bit like a dictated story rather than a fully edited memoir with lots of "And then"s and "Anyway"s.

Jen from Quebec :0) says

Where was the EDITOR on this one? Man, Sheff gets away with repeating entire paragraphs/thoughts/PAGES almost verbatim at points! Also, like most people (I'd imagine) I read this book because I loved his 1st memoir, TWEAK so much...well, this is no Tweak: Growing Up On Methamphetamines. For starters, there is simply LESS STORY and could have easily been trimmed down by 100 pages. Argh- there are so many reasons I am disappointed with this book, primarily that I spent \$\$ on a hard copy to add to my shelf next to his 1st (better) book...Maybe his *novel* will be more structured and tight. I gave it 2 stars as opposed to 1 because I AM interested in the subject matter of addiction/rehabs, and he DOES write with pretty brutal honesty at times, which is good. It's not the story idea/memoir format I dislike- in this case, it was simply the lack of proper editing + poor structure. I feel like, due to his prior success, he had free reign to publish a bunch of unedited journal entries.

ALSO-- Did he fall in love with EVERY 'pixie like' girl his age in the book? I think he did.

ALSO-- He stopped using the word AND in favor of 'n' throughout this entire book. Ex: "I simply had to get

up 'n' get out of bed". This made him seem like his writing had REGRESSED, even.

OK- rant over, sorry. -Jen from Quebec :0)

Gabrielle says

I absolutely loved Beautiful Boy: A Father's Journey Through His Son's Addiction and Tweak: Growing Up On Methamphetamines. This book was a little disappointing. I still love Nic Sheff's first-person, brutally honest storytelling. This time around, though, I really wish his editor(s) had worked harder to get rid of the "uh's" (just because he says it doesn't mean it should be written down) and some of the profanity. It was distracting. That being said, this is an interesting followup to Tweak and is clear about the struggles faced by a recovering addict. I am a little obsessive about following Nic's recovery and I wish him the best. I would love to see him branch out into fiction...

Leah Campbell says

This book, We All Fall Down: Living with Addiction, by Nic Sheff with a genre of autobiography. Nic was drunk at the age of eleven for the first time, at age nine Nic was high for the first time. It'll be okay, right? He said. I can't get addicted, it's just marijuana what's the worst that could happen? At age 23 years old, Nic had been in several different rehab treatment centers. His journeys through rehab treatment centers, homeless on the streets, living with his family and his girlfriend. He described his emotions and his feelings so well. Nic had been sober for 6 months, soon becoming to relapse and be stuck in another treatment center, Nic soon after getting kicked out of the treatment center, went to go live with his girlfriend all the way across the country of where he'd never been before. Nic began to relapse yet again not knowing it could lead to heartache and depression.

What I enjoyed about this book, was the fact that it just made you want to keep reading it and not put it down, it was such an inspirational book. I really liked everything about it, at some parts I would get confused a little, but I would always catch on quick, I really have nothing bad to say about the book. Being addicted too drugs or alcohol could be a very hard thing, people can really struggle and I think Sheffs story could really help some people that are struggling with their addictions out there. I think it could make those people really realize the hardships that they can begin to struggle with even if they may not think so. I was very inspired by Nic Sheffs book and I would very much read it again. I really enjoyed how he traveled with his father and told his story to thousands of people around the country that was very impressive from a guy that was living on the street with a dream to write a book too fulfilling that dream. What I really think the theme of this book is, is "follow your dreams no matter how many people will tell you that you can't do it, you can."

jv poore says

I began to adore Nic Sheff when I read Beautiful Boy, written by his father. From that, I went straight to Nic's first book Tweak. I loved Nic even more. The courage that it must have taken for him to take such a stark look at his life, then put it on paper for all to see, simply astounding. Oh yeah, and at the age of 23.

We All Fall Down took us a bit further into Nic's life. Where Tweak made me feel sad and sympathetic. We All Fall Down made me furious and empathetic. In this book, Nic seems to be a bit more harsh when looking

at his life. He seems more disappointed and hopeless.

By all accounts (reading his books, listening to interviews, reading articles) Nic seems like such a good person. He doesn't seem to believe this. He appears to be down on himself, shouldering all of the blame.

This is where I get angry. Nic is clinically depressed. It never seems as if that part of his persona is addressed. Having a very clear understanding of what it truly means to be clinically depressed, I feel let down that Nic didn't have better help. It seems that all of the "help" focused on his drug addiction and consequences thereof. My feeling is that if the depression was properly treated and managed, Nic wouldn't have the addiction problem. If that could happen, then maybe Nic could see himself the way his readers do: as an extremely brave, honest, kind and generous soul. I truly believe that if he had only the shirt on his back, he'd take it off to warm someone that needed it more.

Naomi says

I read 'Tweak' some time ago, and enjoyed it a lot, despite how difficult it was to read because of the subject matter. I was excited to pick up this book, Sheff's second, because I expected it to be like 'Tweak.' I was, unfortunately, wrong.

My main issue with 'We All Fall Down,' is Sheff's insistence of including 'um' and 'I mean' and 'like' throughout the memoir. Not just a couple of times, or even a handful of times, but on every page. The 'um' inclusion especially aggravated me. I get that he's trying to make it sound like a stream of consciousness in parts or to write it exactly how he speaks, but it becomes so annoying to read. I had a hard time finishing it, because of it.

The subject matter, once again, was not easy to stomach, but it was interesting to see how he's been doing since the publication of 'Tweak.' I wish him the best, but if he writes another memoir, I'll be sure to flip through and skim the pages before committing to reading it. If there are too many annoying phrases, I will probably have to pass.

I'd So Rather Be Reading {Nat} says

I've wanted to read one of Nic Sheff's memoirs since I saw him on Oprah with his dad. It was right around the time Tweak came out, because his dad was there talking about his own memoir called Beautiful Boy.

This book is not for the easily offended. It is an honest account of an addict's life: complete with relapses, bad language (mostly the f-word) and sexual situations. Nic tells it like it is, which is what makes this book so powerful and moving. You are right there with him as he's going through different situations: rehab, relapsing, family drama, relationship troubles, getting clean, and finding balance.

I found We All Fall Down hard to read at times, just because the things Nic goes through are so sad. There's no way I would have given up on the book though. It was too good and I had to keep reading to find out what happens to Nic. If you've ever wondered what an addict is thinking, or what drives them to use, you should

read *We All Fall Down*. Parents could use the book as a cautionary tale for teens as well. Drug use is in no way romanticized, but parents should read the book first before letting their children read it. I'm not a huge fan of non-fiction, and I really enjoyed this book so I think that says a lot about the quality of the writing and the poignancy of the story.

Just One Gripe:

Some of the writing is conversational. It makes the book feel more real but I found myself slowing down at times to really get the full meaning and tone of what Nic was conveying.

The Best Thing About This Book:

The honesty.

Appropriate for a younger audience:

Hmm. Parents should most definitely read it first.

Kelly says

Nic Sheff is an addict. Though his drug of choice is meth, he also abuses alcohol, marijuana, painkillers, and heroin. In his previous memoir, *Tweak*, you can read about the worst of his addiction. Here he writes about the hard work of trying to stay clean and as the title implies, it's not always easy to stay straight and sober, even when the alternative is a life destroyed.

Though his writing, at times, felt a little mannered to me (aping Holden Caulfield), it didn't really matter. I forgive Sheff all of that because he's so utterly honest about his emotional pain. He gives true insight into the mind of an addict and shows how easy it is for someone to slip away from sobriety.

The best part of the book is that it is, ultimately, uplifting. After reading *Tweak* I thought about Nic a lot hoping that he managed to stay sober. The reality is so much more complex than being high or being sober. Life isn't binary. Instead it's about making mistakes, faltering, falling down and making sure to pick yourself up again. The more you fall, the more you learn and, hopefully, the faster you pick yourself back up.

This should be required reading for family members who struggle with loved ones with a substance abuse problem.

Bfg1971 says

["*We All Fall Down: Living with Addiction*"] reveals that he doesn't stay sober. I'm not exactly surprised by that. One powerful impression that *WAFD* left me with is that there is no clear cut path to a healthy life a

Brandon Sothan says

Again, another from Nic Sheff. He never ceases to amaze me. This book was written with such perfection that I didn't want to put it down, but so much realism I had to set it down at points. He doesn't cut away any parts of his life, no matter how tough they were. He truly gave us a diary of his life and his perspective, and

that's something like I've never read before. I truly enjoyed this book because in some ways, not his lifestyle, but his perspective seemed similar to my own. He digs into your insecurities and throws his painful experiences in your heart. You can truly feel his pain. I enjoy Nic Sheff's line of work because he truly sets aside the fact that millions will be reading his books. He tells his experience regardless, he tells the cold truth, his cold perspective, even if he was wrong. He tells it, and I think that's something that everyone could get accustomed to. Telling our feelings as we feel them. I truly respect him, and his books are always going to capture his audience.

Kristin says

In this honest, raw account of dealing with drug addiction, Nic Sheff uncovers the many manipulations, lies and tricks an addict will use to justify their need for a fix to themselves, to their friends and to their frightened families. After all, how much fun can life be if you are truly sober? Unfortunately, for Sheff, his road to recovery is numbed by alcohol and marijuana use even while touring the country speaking on the hazards of drug abuse. This painful memoir reinforces the fact, no matter how hard we try, at times, *We All Fall Down*. Hopefully, there is someone left to pick us back up.

Cider and Red Rot says

Former meth (and everything else he can lay his hands on) addict goes to rehab for the 400th time, makes terrible life choices, starts abusing booze, pot and relationships, writes a memoir about his supposed sobriety that becomes a hit, lies and manipulates everyone around him...jeez, why did I even bother reading this book? If you'd asked me three-quarters of the way through, I would have said that Nic was an irredeemable jerk, a narcissistic douchebag with an overinflated ego who hates himself. How could this book have been written by the same person as the guy who wrote *Tweak*? For a start, his editor must have had a fairly heavy hand back then, since this book is peppered with annoying vocal tics. Cut out the numerous 'uh's, play a drinking game (or rather, don't) for the times these words are used: stutter, serpentine.

Follow Nic as he basically chooses the worst choice in any decision-making scenario. Drop out of rehab to shack up with a girl he just met? Check! Decide you are too good for your minimal wage coffee shop gig and so start necking vodka before and during shifts? Check! Your junkie ex who you are still madly in unhealthy love with wants to meet up, should you go? *Hells*, yes!

And yet, and yet. At first, I thought the guy was an arrogant asshole...actually, I kind of still do. He bitches about his father placing all his trust in the rehab counsellors - who are obviously only in it for their own paycheck agenda - and leaving him with no money in his pockets, and rehab or the streets as his only option. (Don't worry Nic, I'm sure you'll find a vulnerable woman to manipulate!) He moans that things like 'having a job' get in the way of his loafing movies-books-weed-hiking lifestyle. And he's basically horrendous about any woman who crosses his path, be they girlfriend, therapist, co-worker, or mother. Plus there's the cringe-worthy descriptions of his great love Zelda (aka Lala Slootman)...I mean, she's old and all, but he'd still totally hit it. (Also, the circular sex anecdote left me equal parts confused and bemused. I mean, *really*.)

And yet. For all my bitching, the guy can write. For all my mockery, his story obviously got under my skin. And for all the evidence thus far as to his ace manipulation, I did feel that Nic had - forgive the cheesiness - grown as a person by the end of the memoir. Dude's young, and there has to be some sense of self-awareness

to basically write a memoir that paints you as a prime dickhead for many of the pages. I kind of hope that Nic chooses to write a further memoir. I hope it's all about hiking with his dogs and loafing. Damn him.

Alexis says

I was a big fan of Tweak and Beautiful Boy. Tweak is Nic Sheff's story about his addiction to meth, and Beautiful Boy is his dad's book about what it is like to have an addicted son. Both of those books are hard core, disturbing and graphic. I cried while reading Beautiful Boy.

"We all fall down" is Nic's story about what happened after the events described in Tweak. He goes to a bunch of treatment centres, and relapses. He ends up drinking heavily and smoking pot every day. He struggles with despair, bad relationships, depression, manic depression and suicidal thoughts.

At times, Nic isn't very likeable. He's hugely judgemental and snobby and doesn't seem to want to help himself. He is INCREDIBLY manipulative and lies a lot. But for some reason, I find his writing compelling. He's honest and he doesn't hold back from sharing his feelings of hopelessness and self hatred.

There were some passages in here that caused reactions from me. In one scene, Nic goes to a treatment centre where he isn't allowed to have any books, writing materials, a computer or a guitar for an entire year. I was appalled by this. Not being able to write or read would torture ME and I don't even have a drug problem. I understand short periods of deprivation so that one can focus on oneself, BUT A YEAR. Even I wanted Nic to get on the bus and run away.

I also felt sorry for Nic since he has to go on tour and promote the new book, while he is relapsing. The first time that someone offers him cocaine after his relapse, I actually yelled, "Oh, hell no!" out of concern and frustration.

By the end of the book, Nic has made incredibly brave strides towards a drug-free, happy and productive life. This is a good, fast follow up to Tweaked. Nic Sheff, I hope you stay clean. I'm rooting for you.

Heather says

Once I started reading We All Fall Down, I couldn't stop. I was immediately drawn into Nic's world.

And it's definitely a tough, scary world. You feel like you're right there with him, going through everything with him. This makes parts of it tough to read, because at times it feels like there's no hope for Nic, or any other addict. It was definitely interesting to get inside of the head of an addict, to see the world as he saw it.

I'd definitely recommend this book for an older YA reader. It deals with some pretty heavy duty topics. Nic doesn't hold back talking about the realities of being an addict - it's not pretty.

While the writing wasn't amazing, one thing that I did really enjoy about it was that Nic's voice really came through loud and clear. Some parts almost felt like a conversation between him and I. It felt very genuine and real.

Although I haven't read his previous memoir, *Tweak*, also about addiction, or his father's book about Nic's journey, *Beautiful Boy*, I really did enjoy reading *We All Fall Down*. So if you're wondering if you need to read either of those ones first, I would say no (cause I didn't, and I felt like I understood what was happening). But now that I've read *We All Fall Down*, I'm kind of interested in the first part of Nic's story.

If you're looking for a book about addiction, from an addict's perspective, I would definitely recommend *We All Fall Down*.
