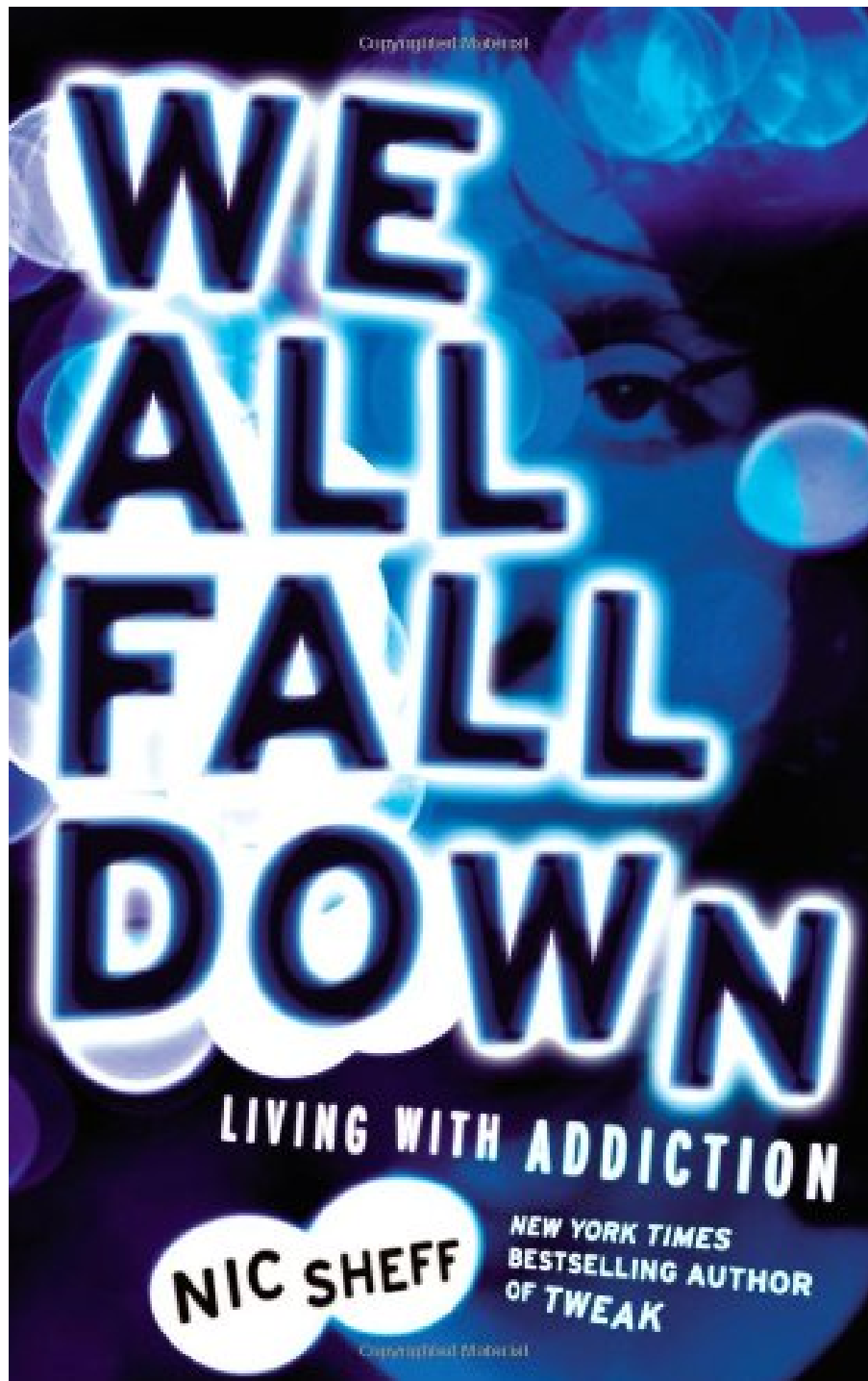


# WE ALL FALL DOWN: LIVING WITH ADDICTION BY NIC SHEFF



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## From Booklist

**\*Starred Review\*** Haven't we read this before? In fact, yes. Sheff's first memoir of addiction, *Tweak* (2008), figures in this follow-up?if only he could finish writing it, the publisher would give him the cash he needs to jump-start a better life, pay back IOUs, and, you know, score some booze and weed. Yes, the drugs are less scary this time (no needles), but the ride is just as terrifying, as the 23-year-old Sheff bounces from two detox centers into a dangerously abrupt relationship living with a girl in Charleston. Good intentions and bad decisions follow: Sheff's frustrations at a dead-end job lead him to virtually nonstop drinking and smoking, once more testing the patience of everyone he loves. Sheff intelligently portrays himself as the most delusional of unreliable narrators. Prone to rambling, wheedling, and sobbing, he resets his goals with each page and rationalizes the hell out of every impulsive action. Flaws abound here?like, there's not much of a plot?but Sheff is blessed with off-the-charts readability, and his sex- and profanity-laced first-person narration makes him lovable and hateable in equal measure. The book ends in wobbly stasis, with Sheff celebrating whatever he can: "I have a pretty awesome dog." Let's hope, for his sake, there's not a volume 3. Grades 10-12. --Daniel Kraus

## Review

"Nic Sheff captures the insidious, almost vampiric mind-set of an addict who shrinks from any form of light. This book has more in common with Kafka than any recovery memoir I've read."--Mary Karr, "New York Times" bestselling author of "Lit" and "The Liars' Club"

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## About the Author

Nic Sheff and his father David Sheff captured a nation of readers with their bestselling memoirs, *Tweak* and *Beautiful Boy*. These books explore teen drug addiction from two different point-of-views: a father's and a son's.

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In his bestselling memoir *Tweak*, Sheff shared a heartbreakingly honest account of his days as a crystal meth addict. In this powerful follow-up, Sheff writes candidly about stints at in-patient rehab facilities, devastating relapses, and hard-won realizations about what it means to be a young person living with addiction.

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Most helpful customer reviews

57 of 58 people found the following review helpful.

Thank you for letting us into your life Nic

By Suzyq221

I read Tweak after reading Beautiful Boy, by Nic's father, twice. I am the mother of an addict. When I saw Nic had written another book, I instantly read the reviews and kindled it immediately, honestly not expecting to be as moved by it as I was by Tweak. That is not the case. Nic, thank you for writing this book, it was amazing.

It may sound odd to call a book about the tortures of someones life amazing, but, this book is. Nic lets us see every twisted, terrible downward spiral by being honest with how he feels and what he thinks, no matter how dirty it sounds. His braveness is unbelievable, letting us see the worst of him. Then, we also get a glimpse of the greatness in him and the hope that lies within. And that hope gives me hope, for him, for my son, for every addict out there.

Nic DOES NOT whine about 12 step programs nor does he bash them. He simply doesn't think they are his way. They may work for most, but perhaps not for him, or they are not the be all end all. He does participate in treatment that is not 12 step based, although he said he goes to a meeting once in a while. Since when does one thing make sense for ALL, every single person? That thinking is so off track. There is always a percentage of people that the common cure does not work for. All Nic is saying is that 12 step isn't for him, let's not crucify him for it. If he had cancer, maybe chemo would work for most, but maybe not for him, are we gonna fry him for that? I applaud how he figured out what he is comfortable with, and stayed true to himself. He doesn't say don't do treatment, he says find the treatment that feels right to you.

This book is just as good as Tweak, and I sincerely hope Nic keeps writing, because I, for one, will be buying his next one.

Be well Nic and thank you, thank you, thank you.

21 of 21 people found the following review helpful.

This book is a good study of what goes through addicts heads when they relapse!

By Barbara S. Reeves

When we left off with Nic Sheff in Tweak, he was in rehab, and it sounded as if it was working this time. The thing with rehab is we never know how many times it's going to take. A lot of addicts give up after a couple of tries, and everyone else gives up on them also. But you got to keep trying. You can't stop trying after four attempts if the fifth time is the one that's going to work.

Anyway, I thought Nic was going to make it this time, but in his follow-up memoir, We All Fall Down, we find out that he's just faking it, he's playing the "therapy game." He says what he knows they want to hear, and they believe him...until he gets kicked out for making out with a female client.

What I liked about Nic in Tweak was his humbleness, his honesty, and his insightfulness. But this is a different Nic Sheff in We All Fall Down. He's grandiose, he's an egomaniac with an inferiority complex, and he's got a severe case of terminal uniqueness. He thinks he's better than everyone - hipper, smarter, cooler, but, paradoxically, he thinks he's nothing. I didn't like this Nic Sheff at all. I was thinking, what a low-down,

spineless wimp, know-it-all.

Then I realized these are things I don't like about myself. I remembered that this is exactly how I was when I was in my twenties. It's ugly.

Well, of course he relapses, though he doesn't sink as low as before - no hard drugs, mostly pot and alcohol. This book is a good study of what goes through an addict's head as he relapses. There's all the rationalizations, minimizations, and justifications - the twisted logic.

And it all proves that it's not the drug that's the problem. It's our inability to live life on life's terms that the problem. Of course it's a cliché now, but it's true that the drug use is just a symptom of the real problem.

We All Fall Down ends with Nic getting clean again, getting another eighteen months of sobriety. But after using for several years, it's really hard to stop using when you're in your twenties. As Nic says, "Having to be sober was like being a forty-year-old trapped in a young adult's body." We all do fall down, but the important thing is to pick ourselves back up.

David Allan Reeves

Author of "Running Away From Me"

31 of 33 people found the following review helpful.

Thank you for this book

By Sarah K

As someone who has struggled with drugs, and who has a father who has, this book was wonderful to read, consoling and inspiring. I cried a lot, but ended up feeling hopeful. I've relapsed a bunch of times, but I've been sober for 9 months, and feel hopeful for Nic and others who suffer with addiction.

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