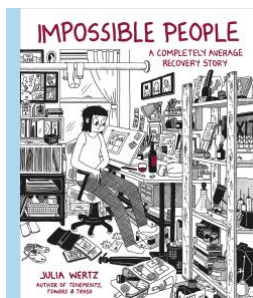


Discussion Guide



Impossible People: A Completely Average Recovery Story
Julia Wertz

Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers
2023
320 pages
ISBN: 978-0762468256

Alcohol Use Disorder

Summary

Opening at the culmination of a disastrous trip to Puerto Rico, the first page of *Impossible People* finds Julia standing stupefied in the middle of the jungle beside a rental jeep she's just crashed. From this moment, the story flashes back to the beginning of her five-year journey towards sobriety that includes group therapy sessions, relapses, an ill-fated relationship, terrible dates, and an unceremonious eviction from her New York City apartment. Far from the typical addiction narrative that follows an upward trajectory from rock bottom to rehab to recovery, *Impossible People* portrays the lesser told but more common story: That the road to recovery is not always linear. With unflinching honesty and a healthy dose of humor, Wertz details the arduous, frustrating, and hilarious story of trying and failing and trying again. (from the [publisher](#))

Questions

1. Julia Wertz was a functioning alcoholic, but she tended to isolate herself from others. How did this affect her addiction and recovery?
2. Wertz tried several different methods to stop drinking, such as individual therapy, group therapy, Alcoholics Anonymous, and the support of friends and family. Do you think there was one thing that worked best for her? Why or why not?
3. Think of a favorite (or a difficult) scene from *Impossible People*. Why did it resonate with you?
4. Wertz is candid about some of her missteps, such as entering a relationship when she was newly sober. What did she learn from this experience? What could others learn from the experiences in her memoir?
5. Near the end of the book, Wertz states: "It had taken me years to understand why having people in my life on a deeper level was the key to staying out of trouble. It wasn't because it filled up my social calendar, but because it gave me accountability. Not just for my own actions, but also to show up for others." Do you think Wertz will be successful going forward? Explain your answer.
6. Would you recommend *Impossible People* to a friend? Why or why not?