



JONATHAN TEPPER

AUTHOR, SPEAKER

Jonathan Teppner serves as the Chief Investment Officer at Prevatt Capital and is also the founder of Variant Perception. He previously worked as an analyst at SAC Capital and held the position of Vice President on the proprietary trading desk at Bank of America. An accomplished author, Jonathan has penned several financial bestsellers, is a Rhodes Scholar and graduated with highest honors in History and honors in Economics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He also holds an MLitt from the University of Oxford. In reflecting on his childhood and upcoming book, he says, "I grew up as a missionary kid in Madrid, Spain, where my parents founded a drug rehabilitation program for heroin addicts. Tragically, most addicts shared needles, contracted HIV and many succumbed to AIDS. They were my brothers and sisters. My new book, *'Shooting Up'* not only serves as a firsthand account of the heroin and AIDS crisis during those years, but as a tale of love and compassion and loss. It's a love letter to friends and family ... and even learning."

CREDENTIALS

- Rhodes scholar; MLitt from Oxford University; Graduated with highest honors in History and honors in Economics from University of North Carolina.
- Author of multiple bestsellers
- Jonathan grew up watching grace at work — not in pews, but in the streets of Madrid. As the son of missionaries who founded a heroin rehabilitation ministry during the AIDS crisis, he witnessed firsthand the redemptive power of love, service, and forgiveness in the face of loss.
- Jonathan's ability to talk about compassion, forgiveness and service doesn't come from theory or theology — it comes from proximity to pain. He literally grew up in ministry, in the midst of addiction, suffering and grace. His parents' work wasn't metaphorical; they were tending to the wounded — heroin addicts dying of AIDS. That means:
 - He saw Christian love in action, not in abstraction
 - His understanding of forgiveness was shaped by watching people repent, relapse, and return — the most human picture of redemption there is
 - He learned service as a lifestyle, not a sermon
 - In media terms: Jonathan's faith experience wasn't formed in comfort, but in crisis — and that makes his voice resonate deeply with authenticity and humility

AVAILABILITY

- Flexible, Monday through Friday and even on weekends. Available for travel/in studio opportunities.
- Blackout dates: Unavailable from February 23-26
- Travel: London, February 9-13 / New York, February 16-20
- Time zone: EST
- Closest major city: Miami, FL

DOWNLOADABLES

- [Headshot](#)
- [Book covers, digital library](#)
- [PDF of the manuscript](#)

ONLINE (CLICK TO VISIT)



LISTEN



[Click here to listen](#) to Jonathan talks to host Ted Seides about his childhood. Segment begins at 9:30:00.



[Click to listen](#) as Jonathan talks about his formative years on the Know Your Risk podcast. Segment begins at 1:00:00.

"...An astonishing work that opens your eyes—and your heart—to a whole new world, one that is as beautiful and inspiring as it is gritty and harrowing. Jonathan is an extraordinarily gifted writer who has somehow managed to write a memoir that is at once heartbreaking, gut-wrenching and joyous."

TO BOOK AN INTERVIEW, CONTACT:

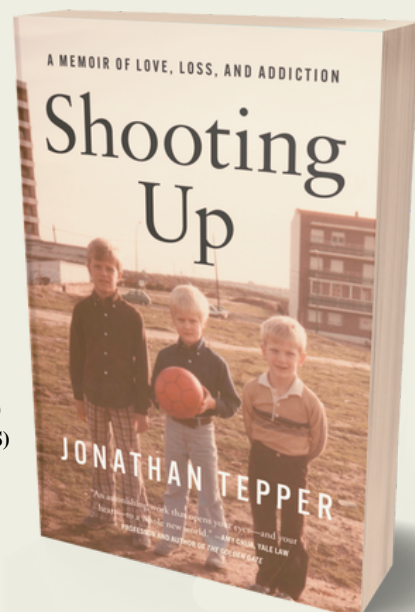
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ABOUT THE BOOK

Publishers:
Little Brown (UK)
Infinite Books (US)
[Additional info](#)



Shooting Up chronicles Tepper's childhood growing up in Madrid's San Blas neighborhood, where his missionary parents founded a groundbreaking drug rehabilitation center during the height of Spain's heroin epidemic, showing addiction, recovery and loss through the eyes of an American boy navigating between his family's dedication to helping others and the harsh realities of AIDS during a time of needle sharing. With lyrical prose and sharp-eyed honesty, he delivers a quietly devastating coming-of-age memoir that is as unsettling as it is unforgettable—a haunting exploration of belief, belonging, and the costs of sacrifice. A story of love and loss, it is also a love letter to friends, family and even learning.

WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

- It paints a picture of **Christian love**, born of a lived reality and real loss, rather than through preaching or dogma
- **Readers from vastly different backgrounds** — fund managers, scientists, missionaries, artists — connect the book to their own experiences love and loss
- The book provides insights into the meaning and **response to suffering**. I.e., “the answer to suffering is always more love.”
- This beautiful, profoundly moving story will inspire readers by illustrating the importance of **friends and family**
- All in all, it's an exceptionally powerful story of Christian love and compassion that will touch readers' hearts and inspire them

IDEAL AUDIENCE

Anyone who believes in redemption, wrestles with loss or wants to rediscover grace in the hardest places. Those who ...

- ...have been wounded by **addiction**, whether personally or through a loved one, and are searching for healing without **shame**.
- ...want to understand how **compassion** and truth coexist — that real love doesn't excuse sin, but meets people in it.
- ...long for a faith that feels real — raw, gritty, and lived out among the broken rather than behind church walls.
- ...work or serve in **ministry, recovery or healthcare**, and need encouragement to keep showing up for hurting people.
- ...wrestle with how to love those who can't love themselves, and wonder where God is in **suffering**.
- ...carry grief or **survivor's guilt**, and need a redemptive frame for pain that still lingers.
- ...believe that faith, love, and service aren't abstract ideas, but the work of ordinary people in impossible places.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- Some have criticized your parents for putting you in danger at such a young age. How do you respond to that? Would you do the same to your kids?
- What was it like growing up as a kid among much older heroin addicts?
- Were you ever afraid of getting HIV or wish you hadn't been in the middle of the AIDS epidemic?
- How do you cope with grief and loss? Does it make you softer? Or harden you?
- What lessons can one draw from your parents' lives of service?
- What do characters in the story think of the book, like your family or Raul's?

Early Life and Formation

- You grew up in Madrid during the heroin and AIDS epidemic. What are some of your earliest memories and how did those experiences shape your faith?
- Your parents built a ministry for addicts. What did Christian love look like in that environment?
- Many of us learn about compassion from sermons or books, but you saw it lived out. How did that change your understanding of grace?

Love, Loss and Learning

- You've described the book as a “love letter.” What does that mean to you?
- How did losing people you loved so early affect your view of God and suffering?
- For your parents, love seemed to have no limits. What did you learn from that kind of unconditional compassion?

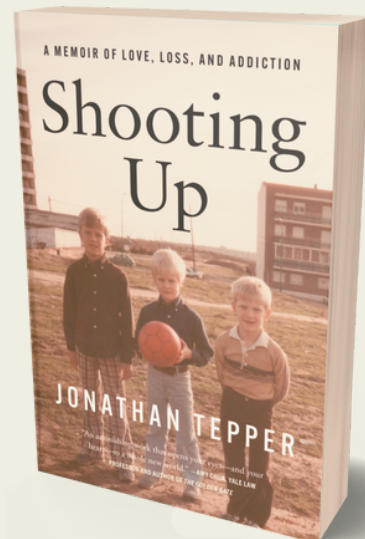
Faith and Compassion

- You've spent most of your career in finance. How have those early lessons about humility and compassion shaped your understanding of success?
- What does living with compassion look like now, in a world defined by divisive and identity politics, self-interest and success?
- How do you keep faith from becoming something you talk about rather than live?

Broader Reflections

- You've lived between two worlds — ministry and markets, faith and finance. How do you stay centered?
- We live in an age of noise and distraction. What have you learned about listening — to God, to others, to yourself?
- What would you say to someone who feels burned out or disillusioned with faith?
- When you think back on your younger self in Madrid, what do you think he would say to you now?

ENDORSEMENTS



"I too grew up as a home-schooled 'missionary kid' so I 'get' Jonathan Tepper's brilliant memoir *Shooting Up*. Tepper's story about addiction, AIDS and his parents' work with addicts in Spain in the 1990s is a one-off insanely entertaining and wild account. In fact it's the most riveting memoir I've ever read. Who else recalls his childhood with lines like these?"

— *'As a graduation gift, my father took me to see drug rehabs. It was what we did as a family.'*

— **Frank Schaeffer, author of *Crazy for God***

"*Shooting Up* is an astonishing work that opens your eyes—and your heart—to a whole new world, one that is as beautiful and inspiring as it is gritty and harrowing. Jonathan Tepper is an extraordinarily gifted writer who has somehow managed to write a memoir that is at once heartbreaking, gut-wrenching, and joyous."

--**Amy Chua, Yale Law professor and author of *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* and *The Golden Gate***

"*Shooting Up* recounts a young man's coming of age in the unlikelyst of places, and finds joy, wisdom, and humour in the darkest of moments. Reading this book made me think anew about grace, and gratitude, and the hard roads that take us there. "

— **Daniel Swift, author of *Bomber County* and *The Bughouse: The Poetry, Politics, and Madness of Ezra Pound***

"In stark, often heart-rending prose, Jonathan tells the story of growing up with his three brothers and missionary parents in San Blas a drug overrun neighborhood of Madrid. It is a tale of tragedy and triumph in the midst of loss and death. Ultimately, *Shooting Up* is a powerful testament to the redemptive power of faith, friendship, and love. I couldn't recommend it more highly; I cried, I laughed, I was changed."

– **Thomas Webber, author of *Flying Over 96th Street: Memoir of an East Harlem White Boy***

"Jonathan Tepper's gut-wrenching, inspiring memoir *Shooting Up* immerses you so deeply in its characters that you feel as if you're living—and suffering—alongside them. Set amid the ravages of the AIDS epidemic in Madrid, this gorgeously crafted coming-of-age story is both luminous and profoundly humane. An unforgettable read that's impossible to put down."

— **Joseph Luzzi, author of *My Two Italies* and *In a Dark Wood: What Dante Taught Me About Grief, Healing, and the Mysteries of Love***

"Jonathan Tepper's story is remarkable. From his father's dramatic conversion to the years pioneering Betel, this is the story of no ordinary family. I am so glad that Jonathan is sharing his extraordinary experience through this account."

— **Nicky Gumbel, pioneer of the Alpha course and former vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB), London**

"This is a fascinating story, brilliantly told. It recounts the work of two little-known but remarkable American missionaries in the drug-saturated streets of San Blas, Madrid, in an age of AIDS and addiction, told through the eyes of one of their sons. It is gripping, harrowing and tragic - yet somehow also a story of faith, courage and hope."

—**The Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlin | Director of the Centre for Cultural Witness**

"It has been one of the privileges of my life to know the Tepper family and witness first-hand the marvel that is Betel, where countless people have found hope, healing, community and new beginnings. Here in his memoir *Shooting Up*, Jonathan Tepper with great skill, eloquence, humour and provocation, tells us the extraordinary story of Betel. This is not just another read, it's an event."

— **Simon Ponsonby, priest, author, teacher, St Aldate's, Oxford**