

RRP 111 — Tiffany D.

Rejection Is Redirection: One Year Sober and Just Getting Started

Presenters: Julie P. Lewis & Peter B. Dowell

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Episode Length: 1 hour 11 minutes

Episode Summary

In this deeply personal episode, Julie and Peter welcome Tiffany D. — a woman one year into her sobriety journey whose story is raw, honest, and full of hard-won wisdom. Tiffany shares how alcohol shifted from a social habit to an all-consuming dependency driven by depression, overwhelming responsibilities, and years of never learning to cope with feelings. After multiple DUIs and 46 days in jail awaiting sentencing, she found herself at a crossroads — and chose to lay a spiritual foundation she had never had before. Released to treatment at NARA in Portland, she moved through recovery with a quiet determination that surprised even the people around her. Today, just one year sober, she is living with her kids, working in recovery services, and building a life one intentional step at a time. Her philosophy is simple and powerful: rejection is redirection, and investing in yourself is the only way forward.

Key Points

00:02 — Julie introduces Tiffany, who she met through the nighttime Extended Family AA group. Julie celebrates Tiffany's one-year sobriety milestone.

00:07 — Tiffany describes how her drinking started as partying and gradually became her vice over many years, with the last five marked by full-blown dependency. She hid wine bottles and skipped her kids' activities to drink alone.

00:11 — Drinking escalated to first thing every morning, through the night, and waking mid-night to drink. Physical dependency set in — she needed alcohol just to avoid getting sick.

00:14 — Root causes: depression, a divorce at age 25, and taking guardianship of her younger brother and sister from her father's side while he was in prison — all while being a single mom. Her brother was in seventh grade; her sister was a freshman. Capable of juggling everything outwardly; deteriorating inside.

00:26 — Legal history: multiple DUIs, reckless driving, driving while suspended. Her most serious DUI occurred on a highway in Klamath County driving back from Arizona — she does

not remember passing Las Vegas. She reflects soberly on what could have happened to others on that road.

00:31 — Tiffany sat in jail 46 days before sentencing, facing two simultaneous convictions with a detainer from Klamath Falls preventing her release. She attended church services, requested pastor visits, read the Bible, and began seriously learning about surrender and faith.

00:35 — The judge sentenced Tiffany to six months and released her to treatment — something she had never considered. She had never known anyone who went to rehab. She then waited an additional 48 days for a bed at NARA and for the Klamath detainer to clear.

00:41 — Tiffany was picked up from jail by a peer mentor she now works alongside, and driven from the Oregon coast to NARA in Portland. Her coworker recently reflected that Tiffany was already “ready to conquer recovery” on that drive, fresh out of jail.

00:56 — Tiffany shares her philosophy: she is sober for herself — not her kids or anyone else. When she is alone, she must stay accountable to herself. Recovery has to be her first job.

01:02 — Tiffany chaired her one-year anniversary meeting on “trusting the process.” After treatment she had no home, no job, and her kids weren’t with her yet. Within about a month she was in housing; her kids joined her right after. Two weeks after that, she got her job at the same outpatient program where she received treatment.

01:06 — “Rejection is redirection” — a phrase shared in the Extended Family meeting — becomes the episode’s defining idea. Tiffany connects it to a job rejection at a front-office desk job she believes was tied to disclosing her recovery. That rejection redirected her into working in recovery services.

01:10 — Closing words of wisdom: take your time healing. Do what you need to do to get where you want to be. Invest in yourself mentally, physically, and spiritually. Feed your soul and your mind. You are not defined by where you’ve been.

Guest Quote

“People can’t say anything about me that I don’t already know, already heard — because I know my story and I am not ashamed of it. I own up to it. I take accountability because of the fact that that’s not me anymore.” — Tiffany D.

Websites Discussed

- NARA — Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest: <https://www.naranorthwest.org>
 - Wellbriety Meetings: <https://wellbriety.com/meetings/>
 - Real Recovery Podcast: <https://www.realrecoverypodcast.com>
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