Predators at the Table Book Club Preview

A memoir by Terri Thorne

Terri Thorne | iThrive Collective LLC

Predators at the Table begins with the joyful adult life Terri Thorne built, then returns to the unsafe homes, relationships and family systems of her childhood. Through candid storytelling, the memoir examines what a child learns to survive, how love and harm can coexist in a child's understanding, how moments of care can widen a future and how an adult can build a life no longer defined by the family into which she was born.

Why book clubs choose this memoir

This is more than an account of childhood abuse. It gives groups substantial questions to explore about family, poverty, secrecy, loyalty, responsibility, mentorship, survival and the deliberate building of joy. Survivors, allies, educators, helping professionals, community leaders and general readers can participate without identifying themselves as survivors or sharing personal trauma.

Best suited for	Memoir clubs, women's groups, libraries, professional networks, community organizations, educator and helping-professional groups and readers interested in family, resilience and social responsibility.
Suggested format	One 60 to 90 minute discussion. Groups may add a separate virtual author conversation when approved and available.
Reading experience	Emotionally serious and candid, but not written with graphic sexual detail. The story holds harm, complexity, human connection and the possibility of a joyful adulthood together.

Conversation themes

- The family table as a symbol of belonging and betrayed safety
- How children learn to treat instability, poverty, secrecy and danger as normal
- The complicated reality of loving or depending on someone who causes harm
- The difference one consistent adult, mentor or act of care can make
- What childhood survival strategies can carry into adult relationships
- Memory, dissociation, identity and the work of making meaning
- Honoring a child's resilience without suggesting that suffering was necessary
- Joy as something deliberately built rather than passively found

Content considerations

The memoir addresses childhood sexual abuse, incest, family violence, neglect, addiction, instability and other traumatic experiences. These experiences are described candidly but without graphic sexual detail. Some passages may still be emotionally difficult for readers. Organizers should inform participants about the subject matter in advance, allow anyone to pause or step away and never ask participants to identify themselves as survivors or disclose personal experiences.

Sample discussion questions

1. The memoir opens with Terri's present-day life before returning to childhood. How does that choice affect the way we read what follows?
2. What does the table symbolize at different points in the story?
3. How does the memoir portray the complicated reality of loving or depending on someone who is also a source of harm?
4. What do the mentors and "angels" in Terri's life suggest about the lasting power of consistent care?
5. How does the memoir honor resilience without making the harm appear necessary or worthwhile?

Continue with Set Your Own Table

Predators at the Table provides the lived story behind many of the patterns explored in Set Your Own Table. Groups may read either book independently or continue from the memoir into a second conversation about safety, boundaries, relationships, support, self-trust and building a different adult life.

For confirmed reading groups

- Complete Official Reader Discussion Guide with facilitator guidance
- Selected virtual author conversations with Terri Thorne
- Optional pathway connecting both Terri Thorne books
- Links to iThrive Collective and the Place Cards podcast

Book club inquiries

Visit ithrivecollective.com/book-clubs to tell us about your group, proposed reading date, expected number of readers and interest in an author conversation. Terri Thorne does not pay organizations to select, feature, review or discuss her books.