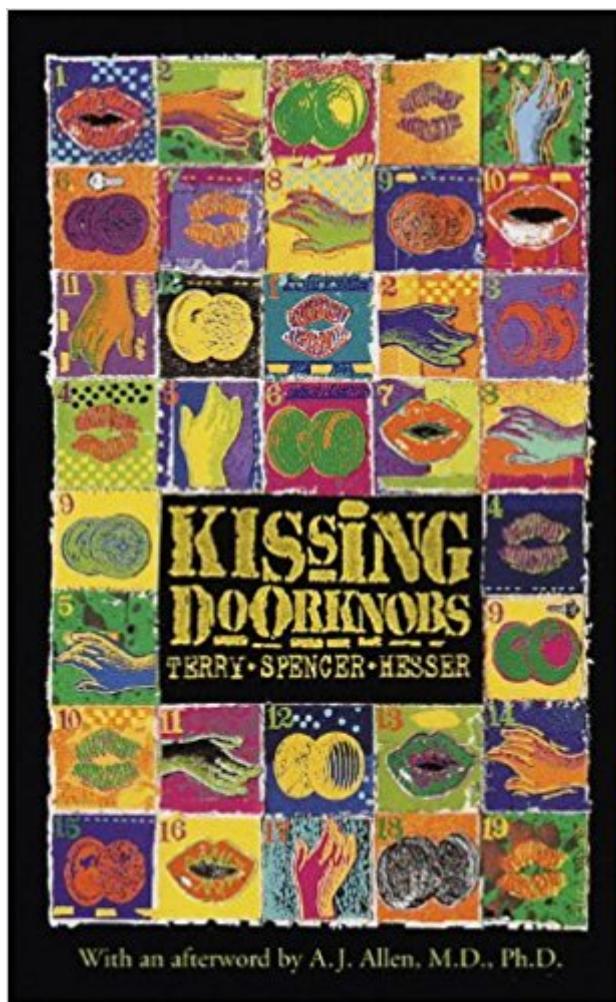


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# Kissing Doorknobs (Laurel-Leaf Books)



## **Synopsis**

During her preschool years, Tara Sullivan lived in terror that something bad would happen to her mother while they were apart. In grade school, she panicked during the practice fire drills. Practice for what?, Tara asked. For the upcoming disaster that was bound to happen?Then, at the age of 11, it happened. Tara heard the phrase that changed her life: Step on a crack, break your mother's back. Before Tara knew it, she was counting every crack in the sidewalk. Over time, Tara's "quirks" grew and developed: arranging her meals on plates, nonstop prayer rituals, until she developed a new ritual wherin she kissed her fingers and touched doorknobs....

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 620 (What's this?)

Mass Market Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Laurel Leaf (November 9, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0440413141

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Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.4 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 117 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #155,439 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Special Needs #109 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Depression & Mental Illness #142 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Prejudice & Racism

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Despite recent media attention, obsessive-compulsive disorder remains perplexing to those who haven't experienced the illness firsthand. In her compassionate debut novel, Terry Spencer Hesser skillfully and credibly explains exactly what OCD feels like, as well as the effects it has on surrounding friends and family. Tara Sullivan first encounters her compulsive behavior at age 11, when she hears of the sidewalk game "Step on a crack, break your mother's back." Most people have had the experience of toying with this rhyme, but for Tara, it becomes something worse: "I couldn't not think the thoughts. And I couldn't not count the cracks." In one of several compulsive

rituals, she must count every sidewalk crack between her house and school. If she is ever interrupted or loses her place, she must run back to the beginning and start over, or her mother's spinal health will be endangered. She recognizes this as absurd behavior, and gets absolutely no pleasure from the exercise, yet nonetheless feels inexplicably compelled to perform it. Hesser traces the arc of Tara's illness through several misdiagnoses, the expansion of her compulsive behaviors (obsessive prayer rituals and the need to touch the doorknob then kiss her fingers 33 times before leaving the house), and the reactions of her loved ones. Tara's sister responds by beating up anyone who makes fun of the compulsions, her anguished mother's answer is increasing violence toward her daughter, and friends alternate between acceptance and frustration. Deftly illustrating the depth of Tara's strained relationships, Hesser also addresses anorexia, shoplifting, drug use, and unsafe sex, subtly reinforcing the idea that these behaviors--though perhaps compulsions as well--are different from OCD in that they inspire some measure of enjoyment for the participant. Nominated by the Young Adult Library Services Association as one of 1998's Best Books for Young Adults, *Kissing Doorknobs* addresses a cutting-edge issue with grace, humor, and insight. While the novel refuses to make false promises, it provides an inspiring message of hope. (Ages 12 and older) --Brangien Davis --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A first-time author portrays the thoughts and behaviors of an 11-year-old girl suffering from obsessive-compulsive disorder with "a singularly compassionate wit," said PW in a starred review. Ages 12-up. (Nov.)n Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I didn't really understand OCD, but I thought I did. I found the book to be disturbing and asked my granddaughter how much she identified with the subject of the book. Her answer was 90%!This book has helped me to understand, to provide support, and to eliminate impatience. I'm extremely glad that she asked me to read this.This should be mandatory reading for anyone with a friend or relative fighting OCD, which is probably all of us even if we aren't aware of who these individuals might be. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your authorship.

I read this book in middle school and had great memories about it. I'm really happy to revisit this story and think that it is a great introduction to young people about OCD.

*Kissing Doorknobs* is an amazing book about a young girl's struggles against OCD. Tara Sullivan

has been fighting against what was then known as 'quirks' since she was a little girl, but they have grown and grown until her family and friends were sick of them and her. They didn't understand that she HAD to do it, and they did everything in their power to stop them, except listen. Kissing Doorknobs is one to make you cry in sadness, anger and frustration. It is also one to make you laugh and smile in happiness. Read this book, and it will change your perspective of people. Read this book, and you will have gained knowledge that will last a lifetime.

When I started reading this I had no idea I would like it. I hastily read cuz I had to for school but I ended up glued to it and reading it in one evening. Tara starts out going thru hard time with no one understanding not even her parents until she meets someone who is almost cured of the same thing she has then has to help him when his problem comes back. The only thing I don't like was that I wish it could have been longer and continued instead of ending.

I would recommend this book to anyone with OCD and the family and friends that're affected by this disorder. I myself suffer from the scrupulistic form of OCD and this book gives an accurate yet entertaining look into the life and struggles of people with OCD. It also provides resources to allow sufferers of this disorder to get help in the back of the book.

A wonderful book that gives much needed insight to the world of OCD. It's not cloying, it simply gives the trials of dealing with OCD everyday.

I've lived with smaller versions of this as have others I know but to see it put so succinctly is so helpful even if only to show you are not alone.

I am 11 years old and had to read a book that included a health issue for class. This was so good. I had to do research after for a book analysis. The information on the internet clearly aligned with what Tara in the book was dealing with. You really care about these characters. Kissing Doorknobs was vivid, heart-breaking, and empowering.

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