



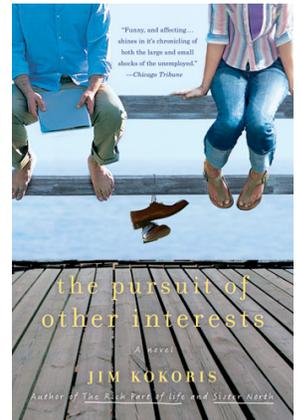
## The Pursuit of Other Interests

By Jim Kokoris

St. Martin's Griffin

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Charlie Baker is a neurotic but charming 50-year-old workaholic CEO of a major Chicago company. He has everything he needs to have it all: an impressive house in an upscale suburb, an equally impressive salary, the requisite pretty wife and accomplished son. All of this comes crashing down when Charlie is unceremoniously fired. In an instant, his life is transformed from corporate titan to just another out of work American.

For Charlie—an admitted workaholic—a world without a job is a strange world indeed. Rather than tell his family, every morning Charlie leaves home to spend his days at an outplacement firm, where he meets a cast of equally desperate corporate misfits. As Charlie reluctantly embarks on a journey of self-discovery, he finds out what happens when his work life is lost and his real life begins.

Humorous, poignant, and honest, *The Pursuit of Other Interests* offers a glimpse into the lives, hearts, and minds of the 21st-century American family.

### Reading Group Guide Questions:

1. Why do you think Charlie is a workaholic? Why do you think *anyone* is a workaholic?
2. Do you think Charlie would have come to the same conclusions about his life and his family if he hadn't been fired?
3. At one time, Charlie seemed to have had a more balanced life. What do you think happened? Can success change people that dramatically?
4. Do you think Donna really wanted to divorce Charlie at one point? Do you think she would have if he hadn't started changing?
5. If Charlie had gone to the interview and been offered the job at Xanon, do you think he would have accepted it?
6. Do you think people like Charlie can really change? Or do you think he might eventually return to his workaholic ways?
7. What do you think happens to the Bakers?