

# Depths of Addiction

By Lee Yates



Addiction often starts with avoidance and then sucks people deeper and deeper into depths of despair. Much like Jonah's struggles, addiction makes us ask questions about who we are, where we are going, and where God is on the journey.

## For

Young Adults

## Season

Winter

## Needed

Jonah's Downward Journey worksheet (see last page), Bible or Bible app, pen



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## Prepare in Advance

Print a copy of the Jonah's Downward Journey worksheet.

## Activity Plan

1. Begin with prayer. Here are some words if you need them.

*God, help me to see past pain and brokenness, so I might better understand myself and others.  
Amen.*

2. Find a quiet place to read and reflect. Try to eliminate distractions.
3. Read the book of Jonah from your Bible or online at: Jonah 1:1--4:11. Read it from beginning to end—it's not a very long book. Jot down any questions you have about Jonah and his decision-making. Reflect on Jonah's admission to God that he was afraid God would forgive Nineveh. Why would Jonah not want God to forgive people? What information do you think readers are missing here?
4. Take some time to look at the *Jonah's Downward Journey* worksheet. Begin by thinking about Jonah's story as you think about each step. What was he running from? What hurts did he cause? What emotions did he face? Where was God on his journey?
5. Those dealing with addiction experience a similar process. Look over the worksheet again and think about someone you know who faces addiction. This can be alcohol, drugs, sex, food, nicotine, or something else. It may be your own issue or the struggle of a friend or family member. Make notes about the different parts of the journey. There is no conclusion or solution to this activity. It is merely a reflection on feelings and behaviors.
6. Look at the bottom of the worksheet and pray the Serenity Prayer. Think about how you or those you know struggle with control. What things do you try to control that are not your responsibility or beyond your control?
7. Keep this worksheet in a place where you can pray about the issues and ask God to help you and others deal with the dark journey of addiction.



## Jonah's Downward Journey



Running away from \_\_\_\_\_

Thoughts:



Hurting others by \_\_\_\_\_

Thoughts:



Reaching a low point by \_\_\_\_\_

Thoughts:



God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.

-- Reinhold Niebuhr



Jonah had no control over the plant but could have made a difference in Nineveh.

What do you need to let go of or take responsibility for?

