

**Youth Culture Lesson**  
**Finding Teachable Moments in Culture**  
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**Harry Problem**

Daniel Radcliffe Admits Struggle with Alcohol

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**What Happened:**

On July 15, Harry Potter will have his final cinematic showdown with Voldemort in the highly anticipated film, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*, while star Daniel Radcliffe has revealed that he's been in the midst of an altogether different battle.

According to an interview with *GQ* magazine, Radcliffe has struggled with alcohol since his early teens.

"I became so reliant on alcohol to enjoy stuff," he said. "There were a few years there when I was just so enamored with the idea of living some sort of famous person's lifestyle that really isn't suited to me."

Radcliffe, now 22, says he hasn't had a sip of alcohol for two years—meaning he stopped drinking before most Americans legally can start; but he's hardly alone.

According to a recent study, drug and alcohol abuse among teens is at epidemic levels.

According to the report, released by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, about 75 percent of high school students have used alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or cocaine. Of those teens, nearly one in five are already addicted to the stuff.

That's pretty critical because, as Radcliffe found out, those who use these substances at an early age are far more likely to be addicted to them as adults. The CASA report found that 90 percent of American adult addicts began smoking, drinking or using drugs before age 18. About a quarter of those who use these addictive substances as teens develop addictions as adults. If someone waits until after age 21 to start using, there's only a one in 25 shot of becoming an addict.

As Radcliffe might tell you, once you're addicted, it can be really tricky to stop. Radcliffe knows he can't just drink in moderation. "As much as I would love to be a person [who] goes to parties and has a couple of drinks and has a nice time, that doesn't work for me."

**Talk About It:**

There's a good chance you or someone you know drinks, smokes or uses drugs. How many of your friends or classmates use? Do you think some of them are addicts already? Are some on the road to addiction?

Why do you think people drink, smoke or use drugs? Is it something they do to be social with their friends? Is it an escape? Do they do it just for fun? Do you know folks who use this stuff simply because they believe they have to in order to feel normal?

Some might think Christians are better at avoiding these addictions, but that's not always true. Probably there are folks in your youth group who have a drinking problem or

use drugs. Do you think being a Christian can help keep people away from bad habits? Can it help people break addictions?

As a Christian, how can you help people who are addicts? Do you think you have a responsibility to help keep your friends away from addictive substances? As a Christian, do you feel you need to be more responsible or be a good role model? If one of your friends was just beginning to drink or smoke pot, would you talk with him or her about it? How?

**What the Bible Says:**

“Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise” (Prov. 20:1).

“They will be entangled among thorns and drunk from their wine; they will be consumed like dry stubble” (Nah. 1:10).

“They are dogs with mighty appetites; they never have enough. They are shepherds who lack understanding; they all turn to their own way, each seeks his own gain. ‘Come,’ each one cries, ‘let me get wine! Let us drink our fill of beer! And tomorrow will be like today, or even far better’” (Isa. 56:11-12).

“Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall” (Rom. 14:20-21).