

**Workshop: Writing your story**

White-knuckle storytelling gives the gift of connection. In this three-hour memoir-writing workshop, journalist Jenny Valentish will provide exercises designed to spelunk the trickiest of topics and come out of the darkest recesses of the mind unscathed. This workshop will be suitable for professionals who want to explore their own stories, or to facilitate clients in doing so, whether that be for therapeutic use or for publication. Valentish will discuss the clichés of addiction stories (and how to avoid them), and advise how to examine the complexities, through questions to ask of yourself or your clients. If you plan to use a personal story to look at a bigger picture around AOD, this workshop will equip you with research techniques. If you would rather examine the minutiae of your own life, it can offer self-care advice and media guidance. A canon of addiction memoirs and other writing will also be examined. Jenny Valentish is the author of the memoir *Woman of Substances*. She has run writing workshops and courses for *The Monthly* magazine, Writers Victoria and Express Media, and has guest lectured at various Australian universities.