

Am I an Alcoholic?

(From the A.A. pamphlet, *Is A.A. for you?*)

Only you can decide whether you want to give A.A. a try — whether you think it can help you. We who are in A.A. came because we finally gave up trying to control our drinking. We still hated to admit that we could never drink safely. Then we heard from other A.A. members that we were sick. (We thought so for years!) We found out that many people suffered from the same feelings of guilt and loneliness and hopelessness that we did. We found out that we had these feelings because we had the disease of alcoholism. We decided to try to face up to what alcohol had done to us.

Here are some of the questions we tried to answer honestly.

- 1. Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week or so, but only lasted for a couple of days?** Most of us in A.A. made all kinds of promises to ourselves and to our families. We could not keep them.
- 2. Do you wish people would mind their own business about your drinking — stop telling you what to do?**
- 3. Have you ever switched from one kind of drink to another in the hope that this would keep you from getting drunk?** We tried all kinds of ways. We made our drinks weak. Or just drank beer. Or we did not drink cocktails. Or only drank on weekends. You name it, we tried it. But if we drank anything with alcohol in it, we usually got drunk eventually.
- 4. Have you had to have an eye-opener upon awakening during the past year? Do you need a drink to get started, or to stop shaking?**
- 5. Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?** At one time or another, most of us have wondered why we were not like most people, who really can take it or leave it.
- 6. Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year?**
- 7. Has your drinking caused trouble at home?** Before we came into A. A., most of us said that it was the people or problems at home that made us drink. We could not see that our drinking just made everything worse.
- 8. Do you ever try to get "extra" drinks at a party because you do not get enough?** Most of us used to have a "few" before we started out if we thought it was going to be that kind of party. And if drinks were not served fast enough, we would go some place else to get more.

9. **Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, even though you keep getting drunk when you don't mean to?** Many of us kidded ourselves into thinking that we drank because we wanted to. After we came into A. A., we found out that once we started to drink, we couldn't stop.
10. **Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking?** Many of us admit now that we "called in sick" lots of times when the truth was that we were hungover or on a drunk.
11. **Do you have "blackouts"?** A "blackout" is when we have been drinking hours or days which we cannot remember.
12. **Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drink?** Many of us started to drink because drinking made life seem better, at least for a while. By the time we got into A.A., we felt trapped. We were drinking to live and living to drink. We were sick and tired of being sick and tired.

What's your score?

If we answered YES to four or more questions, we were in deep trouble with our drinking. We also found there is no disgrace in facing up to the fact that we had a problem.

Did you answer YES four or more times? If so, you are probably in trouble with alcohol. Why do we say this? Because thousands of people in A.A. have said so for many years. They found out the truth about themselves — the hard way.

But again, only you can decide whether you think A.A. is for you. Try to keep an open mind on the subject. If the answer is YES, we will be glad to show you how we stopped drinking ourselves.