

Are You an Alcoholic?
By PATTY JACOBS
Las Vegas Correspondent

One of the ways the Alcoholics Anonymous program encourages people to seek help is by offering a short 20-question self-test. If a person answers yes to three or more questions, he or she may have a drinking problem. The questionnaire can be modified to address any addiction problem.

1. Do you drink (use drugs, overeat, gamble) because you have problems or to face up to stressful situations?
2. Do you have blackouts — periods you remember nothing about?
3. Do you often prefer to drink alone, rather than with others?
4. Do you drink in the morning, before work or school?
5. Do you ever get in trouble when you are drinking?
6. Do you often get drunk when you drink, even when you do not mean to?
7. Do you gulp your drinks as if to satisfy a great thirst?
8. Do you avoid leveling with others about your drinking?
9. Is your job performance or are your grades slipping because of drinking?
10. Do you feel panicky when faced with non-drinking days, such as when you visit relatives?
11. Do you feel wittier or more charming when you are drinking?
12. Do you ever carry alcohol in your car, purse or pockets, or stash it in your desk at work or school?
13. Do you drive after you have been drinking, but feel certain you are in complete control of yourself?
14. Do you drink when you get angry with people, including your friends, spouse or parents?
15. Do you hide empty bottles and dispose of them secretly?
16. Do you invent social occasions for drinking, such as inviting friends for lunch, cocktails or dinner?
17. Do you become defensive when someone mentions your drinking?
18. Do you take an extra drink or two before leaving for a party even though you know alcohol will be served there?
19. Do you buy liquor at different places so no one will know how much you buy?
20. Do you think you could not possibly have a problem with drinking because you only drink wine and/or beer?

The various 12-Step Programs all have similar questions that deal with specific addictions. For instance, in the Overeaters Anonymous questionnaire, the question is asked, “Are you obsessed with food, diets, calories and weight?” The Alanon program, which is a 12-Step Program for relatives and friends of alcoholics, poses these questions, among others: “Do you tell lies to cover up for someone else’s drinking?” “Have you been hurt or embarrassed by a drinker’s behavior?”

WT