

How can I tell if I am really an alcoholic?

Only you can make that decision. Many who are now in A.A. have previously been told that they were not alcoholics, that all they needed was more willpower, a change of scenery, more rest, or a few new hobbies in order to straighten out. These same people finally turned to A.A. because they felt, deep down inside, that alcohol had them licked and that they were ready to try anything that would free them from the compulsion to drink. Some of these men and women went through terrifying experiences with alcohol before they were ready to admit that alcohol was not for them. They became derelicts, stole, lied, cheated, and even killed while they were drinking. They took advantage of their employers and abused their families. They were completely unreliable in their relations with others. They wasted their material, mental, and spiritual assets. Many others with far less tragic records have turned to A.A., too. They have never been jailed or hospitalized. Their too-heavy drinking may not have been noticed by their closest relatives and friends. But they knew enough about alcoholism as a progressive illness to scare them. They joined A.A. before they had paid too heavy a price. There is a saying in A.A. that there is no such thing as being a little bit alcoholic. Either you are, or you are not. And only the individual involved can say whether or not alcohol has become an unmanageable problem.