

A couple sayings in AA circles are: “If a horse thief gets only sober, then he’s still just a sober horse thief,” and “You can take the rum out of the fruit cake, but you’ve still got a fruit cake!”

Sure, we all have times when we need to walk through challenges to get to the other side. But, overall: Are YOU just another sober drinker hanging out in A.A.?

You Might Be a Dry Drunk if...

1. ...you consider yourself an AA success story just because you didn’t take a drink today.
2. ...you still believe that drinking is your problem (instead of a symptom). So if you can stop drinking, then things will work out.
3. ...you still indulge in other addictions with the rationalization that because you’re not drinking, it’s okay to do these other things.
4. ...you gulp down sex, food, work, chaos, gambling, gossip, romance, shopping, and whatever else comes your way.
5. ...when you can’t get your hands on anything solid, you start “drinking” your own emotional turmoil, such as worry, anger, lust, fear, resentments, and self-pity.
6. ...you work on “your program” rather than “The 12-Step Program of AA.”
7. ...you feel hopelessly stuck in negative/destructive thoughts or behaviors, but refuse to seek outside, professional help because someone might think you’re “crazy.” (hey, you’re not unique; it’s a healthy step to seek help.)
8. ...you keep dumping “your mess” instead of carrying “the message” and how the Steps worked for you.
9. ...you prefer the “easier, softer way” method. Oh, yeah—that’s the basic definition of being a Dry Drunk!!
- 10...you resent “book thumpers” because you don’t study the Big Book and don’t really know or care what it says.
- 11...after your first go-through with the 12 Steps, you continue to depend on a sponsor to direct your thinking and actions—instead of relying on infinite God, with daily conscience contact.
- 12...after years in the AA Program, you still consider yourself as a “sick” alcoholic, rather a grateful recovered alcoholic.
- 13...you settle into being a “Two-Stepping Wonder.” You do the First Step and that part of the Twelfth where we “carry the message.” (What message? Forget that you can’t transmit what you don’t have?)
- 14...you are offended, or even vocally object when someone in a meeting shares what God, as they understand God, has helped them accomplish.
- 15...your “walk” outside the meetings does not match your “talk” in meetings.
- 16...you don’t consider it necessary to get a spiritual awakening as the result of these 12 Steps.
- 17...you consider “daily spiritual maintenance” as attending another dry, spirit-less, social-hour meeting.
- 18...you hit a crisis in your life but don’t bother with writing a fourth step on it because you were thorough enough when you did your first one.
- 19...you talk about the principles of the program, but you don’t need to actually practice them in ALL areas of YOUR life. After all, some of them are WAY too spiritual.
- 20...you regularly reminisce with your sponsees about “the good old days.”

- 21...you want to hear every juicy detail of your sponsees' "life history" instead of walking them through a fourth step "by the book."
- 22...your "support system" is a hierarchy of sponsors and sponsees who "meeting hop" to recruit, make announcements, drop names, and flatter each other.
- 23...you don't go to meetings to hear what anyone with over 20 years has to say—after all, you know it all already. You're there to collect newcomers.
- 24...you avoid smaller meetings where people actually get honest about how they're using the Steps in their daily lives and share the whole, spiritual message of recovery.
- 25...you praise speakers who go on for 45 minutes with "funny" raunchy stories and end with 5 minutes of Big Book quotes, as "great speakers."
- 26...you are an "oldtimer" but when asked to speak at a meeting, you still open up your cherished, memorized bag of "glory days" to share what a grand time you used to have.
- 27...you don't talk to your sponsees about A.A. history; you just feed them non-AA rhetoric.
- 28...you feel smug and complacent in your record of success with sponsees and with the AA service positions you've had.
- 29...you assign your sponsees service positions but then tell them "oh, you know what to do."
- 30...you continue trying to live life on life's terms (self and others' terms) rather than on God's terms.
- 31...you're married, but you collect opposite-gender newcomers and bring them around to meetings to show off.
32. Last, but not least: ...you expect sexual, and other favors from newcomers—for being such an awesome guru. (a.k.a., 13-stepping)

Did a few of these push your buttons? Mine too!
There is a way out: Serenity and contentment come with the spiritual solution that the full program of Alcoholics Anonymous offers.