

AA Taxonomy

1. The Whine-ohs. These people are like Jewish American Princesses in the basement...a whine cellar. They complain all the time about how fucked up they were and how they screwed people over and how hard it was and is. They could be called the “I hate the one-day-at-a-time”-rs.” I have a very hard time being sympathetic. After a session of droning on and on about this personal defect and that excruciating happening, my eyes start to glaze over.
2. The Belligerents: They basically dare anyone to dispute their worthlessness. They attack the discussions involving the “steps” as if they are in a race in the high hurdles event in track and field. “I was way worse than you and I’ll kick your ass if you don’t agree” is the most common theme. They play one of the most interesting of the games people play. It might be called “one worst-manship.” I am and was and will always be more fucked up than anyone in this room and don’t you forget it.
3. The Romantics: They loooove their alcoholic past. They pay lip service to “moving on” but only get animated when telling about a certain bender they were on, a person’s life they messed up. They often tell jokes about it, but you can tell that they are proud of the fact that they were drunks. I suppose the alcoholic from Hell would be a belligerent, romantic whiner AA member. They define themselves primarily by their past. They will never move on.
4. The Sincere-aholics: Pained facial expressions mark this category. I sympathize with them because the body language is so...well, sincere. They writhe on their seat while they tell their story. They feel that they are really inhabited by demons, and I think they might be. I don’t make fun of these people. They really have benefited from the program. They used to have other alcoholics as their best friends. Now they only have ex-alcoholics as their friends. They search out new meetings even when on business trips so that they can tell their story again and avoid being a whiner. They are never funny. I am very sympathetic towards these members. They are completely captured by the system and could not survive without it.
5. The Higher Poweritis Disease: These differ from the Working the Steps-ologists in one way: they are the believers without any doubts and without a shred of thought. Some of them I call the Francis of Assisi AA members because they are nuts but have very strong feelings for the divine. If AA was based on sacrificing chickens, there would be feathers and blood all over the damn room after each meeting.

6. The Sit-Down Comics: I guess this is what I aspire to become, but not in this group. This group thinks that funny is some anecdote involving fondling small animals as a teenager but that was because they drank a quart of Drano each day. The really funny ones are pretty secure people. They know they were fucked up, but probably not as fucked up as some and more fucked up than others....but they look at life as a series of amusing incidents. They probably use this strategy so that they will never stray into the arena of the Sincere-aholics. They don't give a shit about the steps usually. In some ways they come to meetings because this is their audience. It's kind of hard to get a standing ovation at a wedding party, for example, when you tell the story of how you passed out cold at a High Mass just as you were about to receive Holy Communion from the visiting Cardinal himself.
7. The Divorce Mongers: There are a few of these in the group I have attended. One had six wives and is proud of the fact he has made amends to all of them. His favorite amended wife told him to fuck off. Another guy had three but brags about how bitchy they were. He called his first wife "Jaws" and he refuses to put her on his list of people he needs to make amends to. He has been soundly worked over in private by the head Working Steps-ologist of the group.
8. The Good Booze-rs: I am surprised I have not met more of these. I probably have this affliction. These people would not be caught dead drinking Mogen David. They gassed themselves with vast quantities of Courvoisier Napoleon at \$75 a fifth. Often the Good Booze-ers came to AA when the bank foreclosed on their house and sold their eldest child into slavery in Iran. Most of the time they tell stories about what high class drunks they were. If this were the olden times in early Biblical history, they would be stoned to death by all the other members who liked Mogen David just fine.
9. The Know-it-all Sponsor: I am not experienced enough to know what the sponsors are like, and there are probably some really good ones...much like the population of psychiatrists. I have met two Know-it-All Sponsors, though, and I can tell you that they probably have a track record of exactly zero successes with sponsees. Two weeks with one of these guys and I would run, not walk, to Green's Liquor Store and get a gallon of Courvoisier Napoleon. I would drink as much as my body would hold and when I woke up in a few days, I would pour the rest on his house and light a match. These people could be called the Sponsor-holics. Their only motive in coming to meetings is in the desperate hope that they can sponsor the shit out of someone. All alcoholics view this person in much the same way they approach Ebola.

10. The Repeat Offender: This person can be found in all categories and their stories always involve soul crushing shame. They come infrequently and always ask for a white poker chip.....24 hours of sobriety. They are truly possessed and are worth the utmost concern of any caring human being. Many are so wasted in appearance that one suspects that they will not be around much longer.
11. The Preachers: Being an ex-smoker, I know this type better than most. They differ from the Working the Steps-ologists in that they corner anyone and everyone at all places and give stirring sermons on the evils of alcohol. They are insane and dangerous. They always have a wild look to them as if they are walking around with a concealed weapon in case you don't listen to them. One Preacher I've met spent a lot of time in virtually every drunk tank in Georgia and some time in jail for stealing. Probably stealing a bottle of Mogen David wine.
12. The Sanctimonians: These are probably the most obnoxious people on the planet and are personally responsible for most wars. They carry the second, third, eleventh and twelfth steps, intimate involvement with a "higher power" on their backs like an anvil. Their faces turn to the heavens with pious looks on their cherubic faces as they discuss their alcoholic deliverance with soulful platitudes. Fundamentally they believe that if you hang out with pregnant people you will eventually become pregnant.

So far these are the categories I've noticed. I'm sure it is just sheer coincidence that there are exactly 12 of them.