

Lesson 9

INVENTORY

Principle 4: Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust.

“Happy are the pure in heart.” (Matthew 5:8)

Step 4: We made searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

*“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD.”
(Lamentations 3:40)*

Introduction

Tonight we are going to look at how to start your inventory, so get ready to write. Yes, that's right. Your inventory needs to be on paper. Writing: (or typing) will help you organize your thoughts and focus on recalling events that you may have repressed. Remember you are not going through this alone. You are developing your support team to guide you; but even more importantly - you are growing in your relationship with Jesus Christ!

Inventory

Ephesians 4:31 tells us, “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.”

The five-column inventory sheets in Participant's Guide 2 were developed to help you with this task. Let's take a look at each of the columns.

If your inventory is anything like mine, it will take you more than one page to write it out. You have permission to copy the “Celebrate Recovery Principle 4 Inventory Worksheets” on pages 30 and 31, from the Celebrate Recovery Participant's Guide 2, *Taking an Honest and Spiritual Inventory*.

Column 1: “The Person”

In this column, you list the person or object you resent or fear. Go as far back as you can. Remember that resentment is mostly unexpressed anger and fear.

The good news is that as you work completely through Principle 4, you will see that your resentments fade as the light of your faith in Jesus Christ is allowed to shine on them!

Remember to list *all* the people and things that you are holding resentment against.

Column 2: “The Cause”

It has been said that “hurt people hurt people.” In this column you are going to list the specific actions that someone did to hurt you. What did the person do to cause you resentment and/or fear? An example would be the alcoholic father who was emotionally unavailable for you as you were growing up. Another example would be the parent who attempted to control and dominate your life. This reflective look can be very painful, but that's why having a sponsor or an accountability team is essential. These people will be there to walk with you through the pain. Of course, Jesus will be with you too. God promises in Isaiah 41:10 (TLB): “Fear not, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed. I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.”

Column 3: “The Effect”

In this column write down how that specific hurtful action affected your life both in the past and in the present.

Column 4: “The Damage”

Which of your basic instincts were injured?

- Social — Have you suffered from broken relationships, slander, or gossip?
- Security — Has your physical safety been threatened? Have you faced financial loss?
- Sexual — Have you been a victim in abusive relationships? Has intimacy or trust been damaged or broken?

No matter how you have been hurt, no matter how lost you may feel, God wants to comfort you and restore you. Remember Ezekiel 34:16 (GNT): “I will

look for those that are lost, bring back those that wander off, bandage those that are hurt, and heal those that are sick.”

Column 5: “My Part”

Lamentations 3:40 states: “Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD.” It doesn't say, let us examine their ways. You did that already in the first four columns. Now you need to honestly determine the part of the resentment (or any other sin or injury) that *you* are responsible for. Ask God to show you *your* part in a broken or damaged marriage or relationship, a distant child or parent, or maybe a job loss. In addition, in this column list all the people whom you have hurt and how you hurt them.

(You will use column 5 later in Principle 6 when you work on becoming willing to make your amends.)

Psalms 139:23-24 (GNT) tells us: “Examine, me, O God, and know my mind; test me, and discover my thoughts. Find out if there is any evil in me and guide me in the everlasting way.”

Please note: If you have been in an abusive relationship, especially as a small child, you can find great freedom in this part of the inventory. You see that you had **NO** part, **NO** responsibility for the cause of the resentment. By simply writing the words “**NONE**” or **NOT GUILTY**” in column 5, you can begin to be free from the misplaced shame and guilt you have carried with you.

Celebrate Recovery has rewritten Step 4 for those who have been sexually or physically abused:

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves, realizing all wrongs can be forgiven. Renounce the lie that the abuse was our fault.

Wrap-Up

There are five tools to help you prepare your inventory:

1. Memorize Isaiah 1:18 (TLB): “Come, let's talk this over!” says the Lord; “no matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you white as wool”
2. Read the “balancing the scale verses” on page 29 of Participant's Guide 2!
3. Keep your inventory balanced. List both the good and the bad! This is very important As God reveals the good things that you have done in the past, or

are doing in the present, list them on the reverse side of your copies of the “Celebrate Recovery Principle 4 Inventory Worksheet.”

4. Continue to develop your support team.
5. Pray continuously.

Don't wait to start your inventory. Don't let any obstacle stand in your way. If you don't have a sponsor or accountability partner yet, talk to someone tonight! If you need a participant's guide, pick one up at the information table. Set a time and place and get busy! You *can* do it!