

# 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 a 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.)

Psalm 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.”

1. Continue to develop your support team.
2. 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!

### How to Keep a Recovery Inventory Balanced

Posted on [April 6, 2015](#) by [crontheplateau](#) — [1 Comment](#)

#### The 5 step chart is here

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

There is lots of talk in recovery about keeping our inventories balanced. It is somewhat confusing. The [CR Inventory Worksheet](#), like the one in the image above, was designed to guide CR participants through the process.

How do we include the good in our inventory process when it is all about unearthing and writing down the bad—the ugly things we've done or what's been done to us? On the surface there is nothing good about that. The good comes from the results of writing it down (Step 4), sharing it with our sponsors (Step 5), and then when possible, making amends (Step 9).

So how is our inventory balanced? A balanced inventory does not mean that we add columns to our inventory worksheet for the good, although that can be done. A balanced inventory means that we are to take in the good that we have done in our lives as well. We are not to dwell on the negative. We are not the sum of the bad things that are included on our inventory. We have our identity in Christ who has wiped our sins clean. He sees us as unblemished—spotless and clean.

*“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.” (Isaiah 1:18, NIV)*

The problem is that we don't see ourselves as that because we carry around our past mistakes and often let them define us.

Keeping our inventory balanced actually starts the minute we actively enter recovery (or join a [Step Study](#)). It is when we start to create relationship with others in recovery. It is through building accountability teams and having regular meetings with our sponsor.

These relationships start to pour positive things into us. They provide encouragement, wisdom, support, and prayer. They are helping us to see that we are worthy of love and accepted for who we are, not what we've done.

Our inventories are also balanced by memorizing scripture, like Isaiah 1:18 above, by regularly attending Celebrate Recovery meetings, by listening to or reading others' testimonies of hope (shared at meetings or one on one), and by filling our minds with any of the over 7,000 promises of God found in the Bible.

We are renewing our minds—replacing the not-so-good with the good, with the better, and the best of what God has to offer us.

*“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”* (Romans 12:2, NIV)

Also, as you write about the negative things that happened in your past, look for any good that may have come out of it. Keep track of those things. They help to turn our negative attitude into an attitude of gratefulness. Review them as you work on your inventory and maybe share them with your sponsor too.

*“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”* (Isaiah 43:18-19, NIV)

As you take in the good from those around you in recovery and from God’s Word, let God make you into something new—where your life is filled with greater purpose. Taking out the garbage, so to speak, by writing out our personal inventories, frees us to receive the good.

Like a circus performer walking on a tightrope above the crowds, finding the right balance can be a challenge while working on our inventories. Once you find it, with the help and support of your recovery relationships and God’s Word, you will find it easier to balance life later on.

*“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”* (Philippians 4:8, NIV)

*Contributed by a leader at Celebrate Recovery on the Plateau.*

©2015 CelebrateRecoveryOnThePlateau.org