

MORAL INVENTORY Lesson 8

Principle 4 and Step 4



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).

An important word of caution: Do not begin this principle **without a sponsor or a strong accountability partner**. You need someone you trust to help keep you balanced during this step, not to do the work for you. Nobody can do that except you. But you need encouragement from someone who will support your progress and hold you accountable. That’s what this program is all about.

MORAL INVENTORY In this principle, you need to list (inventory) all the significant events—good and bad—in your life. You need to be as honest as you can be to allow God to show you your part in each event and how that affected you and others.

MAKE time Set aside a special time to begin your inventory. Schedule an appointment with yourself. Set aside a day or a weekend and get alone with God! Clear your mind of the present hassles of daily life.

“Then listen to me. Keep silence and I will teach you wisdom!” (Job 33:33, TLB).

OPEN your heart and mind to allow the feelings that the pain of the past has blocked or caused you to deny. Try to “wake up” your feelings! Ask yourself, “What do I feel guilty about? What do I resent? What do I fear? Am I trapped in self-pity, alibis, and dishonest thinking?”

“Let me express my anguish. Let me be free to speak out of the bitterness of my soul” (Job 7:11, TLB).

RELY on Jesus, your Higher Power, to give you the courage and strength this exercise requires.

“Love the Lord, all of you who are his people; for the Lord protects those who are loyal to him...So cheer up! Take courage if you are depending on the Lord” (Psalm 31:23-24, TLB).

ANALYZE your past honestly. To do a “searching and fearless moral inventory”, you must step out of your denial! That’s all the word moral means – honest! This step requires looking through your denial of the past into the truth!

“The Lord gave us mind and conscience; we cannot hide from ourselves” (Proverbs 20:27, GNB).

LIST both the good and the bad. Keep your inventory balanced! If you just look at all the bad things of your past, you will distort your inventory and open yourself to unnecessary pain.

***“Let us examine our ways and test them”
(Lamentations 3:40).***

The verse doesn't say, "Examine only your bad, negative ways". You need to honestly focus on the "pros" and the "cons" of your past! As you compile your inventory, you will find that you have done some harmful things to yourself and others. No one's inventory (life) is flawless. We have all "missed the mark" in some area of our lives. In recovery we are not to dwell on the past, but we need to understand it so we can begin to allow God to change us.

Jesus told us, “My purpose is to give life in all its fullness” (John 10:10, GNB).

Think/write/discuss

1. What date have you set aside to start? What time?

2. What are your fears as you begin your inventory?
Why?

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3. How do you attempt to turn over your will to God's care on a daily basis?

4. List the things you have used to block the pain of your past.

5. What have you done to step out of your denial?

6. Why is it important to do a written inventory?

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7. What are some of the good things you have done in the past?

8. What are some of the negative things you have done in the past?