
IMPLOSION INVENTORY

18

QUESTIONS

FOR

SELF-EVALUATION

IMPLOSION INVENTORY:
18 QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EVALUATION

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So that new buildings can be constructed in cities, large buildings often need to be removed. And there is more than one way to take down a large structure. Instead of attaching large wrecking balls to cranes and destroying a building from the outside, demolition experts often take down the building from the inside. They place explosive devices at critical structural points in the building and set them off in sequence so that the building topples from the inside. It implodes, and people come from all over to watch it fall. People love to see a good implosion.

Before the implosion happens, everything seems normal to the casual onlooker. There is not a crane, a wrecking ball, or construction workers in hardhats announcing the looming destruction. Except for the caution tape, everything looks normal. But beneath the surface, the implosion is being meticulously planned, and the building does not stand a chance.

Leaders implode too. While attacks from the outside can harm leaders, implosion from the inside is what takes many leaders down.

When David, the king of Israel, imploded and traded his integrity for a night with a woman who was married to one of his soldiers, there were several explosives at work on the foundation of his life (see 2 Samuel 11:1-5). He was isolated, as he sent men away who would have held him accountable. He was bored, as he walked on the roof of the palace looking for something else instead of thinking on the Lord, as he would later do, through the watches of the night. He was filled with pride, as he insisted people bring Bathsheba to him even though they pointed out that she was married.

Isolation. Boredom. Pride. When these three reside in a leader's life, the leader is headed toward implosion.

Here are 18 questions to help you evaluate your own heart.

** For more on rooting isolation, boredom, and pride out of your life and leadership, get a copy of Eric's book How to Ruin Your Life. Available April 1, 2018*

ISOLATION INVENTORY

1 | Others confront me for actions or attitudes that are inconsistent with my faith.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

2 | Others remind me of God's grace and forgiveness.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

3 | I am in community with people who are different than me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

4 | I am told "No."

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

5 | I serve and give to others in Christian community.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

6 | I weep internally for others whom I am in relationship with.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

THOUGHTS ON ISOLATION ITEMS

1 | If you are never confronted, you are really in isolation.

You have only surrounded yourself with people who are afraid of you, and thus, you are never challenged on your blind spots or sin. And we all have blind spots and sin. A life without confrontation is a life without growth. To live without ever being challenged is to live recklessly toward self-destruction.

2 | If God's grace is never offered to you, you are really in isolation.

Just as we all need to be confronted, we all need God's grace. His grace is greater than our sin, and it is His grace that will melt our hearts and motivate us to live for Him. If people are not reminding you that God's grace is offered to you in Christ, you are living in isolation.

3 | If you are never with people who are different than you, you are really in isolation.

You have surrounded yourself only with people who are just like you, and you are missing the uncomfortable yet beautiful benefits of community that matures. Christian community is community that is built on Christ and not lesser commonalities. Thus, Christian community pulls in people who are different than one another and are united by His grace. Those differences will cause discomfort, and the discomfort will cause growth.

4 | If you never hear the word "No," you are really in isolation.

No one should only and always hear "Yes," because no one is perfect. If you have built a life for yourself where you only hear affirmations and only hear "Yes," you have chosen shallow community and are surrounded with people who will passively watch you ruin your life.

5 | If you don't give yourself to the community, you are really in isolation.

Christian community is an incredible privilege and an incredible responsibility. If you don't give yourself to the community, you are playing on the fringes and grabbing the illusion of community while really remaining in isolation. If you aren't encouraging, serving, forgiving, and praying for others, you are in the darkness of isolation.

6 | If you never weep for others, you are really in isolation.

When you are in community, you love those you are in community with. As the trials of this world plagues others, you weep. You weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. If you never weep, you are going through the motions and really living in isolation.

BOREDOM INVENTORY

1 | I tell people I am struggling with boredom.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

2 | I look to experiences to provide some new excitement.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

3 | I purchase things because I am bored and need something new.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

4 | On my phone, I am more likely to pull up social media than my Bible.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

5 | My job is boring to me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

6 | My most important relationships are boring to me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

THOUGHTS ON BOREDOM ITEMS

Unlike the other sections in the inventory, answers marked “very frequently” are obviously answers that show us we have a problem.

Blaise Pascal, the famous mathematician and theologian, wrote, “All of humanity’s problems stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone.” We are perpetually bored and naturally restless unless we look to the One who never bores. Augustine wrote, “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.” If our hearts rest in Him, we can sit in a room and rest. If our hearts do not rest in Him, we won’t rest anywhere and will be plagued with boredom.

Our experiences, our possessions, our social media likes and favorites, our careers, and our relationships will not ultimately remove our boredom. They always fail us as the newness quickly fades.

When our hearts are not filled with wonder for Him, we wander from Him. If we are bored, we are looking for something other than God because God never bores. Boredom is proof our hearts have wandered from Him and are not looking at the only One who can fully quench us and give us rest.

All of these inventory items lead to the same result. If you are bored by your career, stop looking at your career. If you are bored in your relationships, stop looking at your relationships. If you are bored with your possessions, stop looking at them. Instead:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.*

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus
By Helen H. Lemmel

PRIDE INVENTORY

1 | I see myself as more sinful the longer I follow Christ.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

2 | I am grateful.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

3 | I root out entitlement in my own life.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

4 | I am filled with awe and wonder for God.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

5 | I hold God’s commands in high regard. They apply to me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

6 | I long for accountability in my life.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

THOUGHTS ON PRIDE ITEMS

1 | **The longer you are a Christian, the more sinful you should see yourself.**

Humility increases as we step closer to the Lord, and it decreases as we step away from Him. The more we look at God, the more we understand His holiness, thus realizing more fully how sinful we really are, which increases our gratitude for His grace. Because of Jesus, our joy does not diminish when we see ourselves as more sinful because we understand that His love and grace are even bigger and better than we first understood.

2 | **Gratitude is connected to humility.**

Pride fuels ingratitude; humility destroys it. When we remember we were slaves and prisoners to our own sin, we are deeply thankful for liberation because we know that we were only owed death because of our sin. When we humbly start the day with that perspective, we are grateful for all He provides.

3 | **Entitlement always rises as pride rises.**

It is impossible to be filled with humility and a sense of entitlement at the same time. Whenever we feel we are owed something, it is because we have forgotten that God is the One who gives all good things.

4 | **Awe for God means you are small and He is big in your life.**

If our awe for God decreases, our apathy toward Him increases. If we don't hold wonder for Jesus and what He has done for us, He is small in our lives and we are big. The more we think of ourselves, the less we think of Him.

5 | **Pride manifests itself in a disregard for His commands.**

Our tendency to negotiate with His commands and to contemplate if they actually apply to us reveals that we often believe our way is better. In our pride, we think we know what is best for "our lives," forgetting that our lives are not ours anymore. If we are His, our lives are His.

6 | **The proud shun accountability.**

A clear sign of pride is the belief that we can help and teach others but that we have moved beyond needing help and instruction. If we stop learning from others, pride has deceived us into thinking we are above instruction and counsel. The more we are filled with pride, the fewer the people we feel can offer encouragement and help to us.

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