



There is motivation for everything we do. There are also consequences. Often, when we have a big decision, and especially when we’re stressed and our decision-making power isn’t as sharp as usual, taking time to weigh out the costs and benefits of our options is important. This helps move us toward less impulsive action and more thoughtful and planful actions.

The objective when using this skill is for you to realize that accepting reality and tolerating distress leads to better outcomes, versus rejecting reality and refusing to tolerate distress. This skill can be very helpful when you need to make a decision between two or more options. We examine the advantages & disadvantages (or pros and cons) for each of the viable options. We all use pros and cons to make decisions.

Practice

What do you consider some of the benefits of your past unsuccessful behaviors?

What do you consider some of the negative consequences of your past unsuccessful behaviors?

What have been some of the benefits of participating in treatment and learning about skills to tolerate your emotions?

What have been some of the negative consequences of treatment and learning about skills to tolerate your emotions?

Identify the Pros (positive results) of your continued work in therapy:

Identify the Cons (negative consequences) of your continued work in therapy:

How motivated are you to continue participating in treatment on a scale of 0 to 10?

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Instructions: Over the next few days, practice the Pros and Cons Skill to change your thinking and your actions. Please document your experiences below.

What event occurred to trigger your emotion?

What emotion did you experience?

What negative thoughts occurred?

What are the options you have in response to the trigger event? Think of at least 3 options:

1:

2:

3:

What are the pros and cons for option 1?

What are the pros and cons for option 2?

What are the pros and cons for option 3?

Which of the options did you choose, and why did you choose it?

How helpful did you find this skill in reducing the uncomfortable emotions on a scale of 0 to 10?
