

Recovery Cost-Benefit Analysis

Weigh recovery decisions honestly

Printable worksheet · 4 parts

Name _____ Date _____

Weighing the Pros and Cons of Recovery Decisions in Early Recovery

The Recovery Files

www.TheRecoveryFiles.com

Embrace, Empower & Evolve

This Cost-Benefit Analysis is a self-reflection tool to support your recovery decision-making. Share your results with your sponsor, counselor, or treatment team for additional insight.

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PART 1 OF 4

Learn

What is a Cost-Benefit Analysis?

A Cost-Benefit Analysis is a decision-making tool that helps you systematically weigh the benefits (pros) against the costs (cons) of a particular choice. In recovery, this helps you make informed decisions by honestly examining what you gain and what you give up.

Benefits (Pros)

What you gain from making this choice. The positive outcomes, rewards, and advantages.

- • What will improve?
- • What will I gain?
- • What problems will be solved?
- • What opportunities open up?

Costs (Cons)

What you give up or face by making this choice. The losses, challenges, and trade-offs.

- • What will be harder?
- • What will I lose or give up?
- • What challenges will I face?
- • What discomfort will I experience?

Why Use CBA in Recovery?

Surfaces Hidden Beliefs

Reveals unconscious reasons you might resist recovery activities or secretly see benefits in using.

Builds Genuine Motivation

When you've honestly weighed the options, your commitment is based on clear reasoning, not just "should."

Prepares for Challenges

Acknowledging real costs helps you prepare for them rather than being blindsided or discouraged.

Understanding Weighted Analysis

Not all costs and benefits are equal. A weighted analysis lets you assign importance to each factor on a scale of 1-10. This creates a more accurate picture of your actual decision.

How to Assign Weights (1-10):

1-3: Low Impact

Minor factor, would not significantly influence decision

4-6: Moderate Impact

Meaningful factor that matters to the decision

7-10: High Impact

Major factor, very important to you personally

Key Principles for Honest Analysis

1. Be Brutally Honest

Include the "benefits" of using or avoiding recovery, even if embarrassing. These beliefs exist whether you acknowledge them or not.

2. Think Short and Long Term

Addiction often prioritizes short-term relief over long-term consequences. Include both timeframes.

3. Include All Life Areas

Consider health, relationships, finances, career, legal, emotional, spiritual, and personal growth impacts.

4. Share With Support

Discuss your analysis with a sponsor or counselor. They may see blind spots or help clarify weights.

○ Begin Your Analysis

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PART 2 OF 4

Analyze Decisions

Select a Decision to Analyze

- ☐ Staying Sober vs. Returning to Use
- ☐ Regular Meeting Attendance
- ☐ Getting and Using a Sponsor
- ☐ Practicing Rigorous Honesty
- ☐ Major Lifestyle Changes
- ☐ Feeling Feelings Without Substances
- ☐ Asking for Help
- ☐ Making Amends

Select a decision above to begin your analysis

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PART 3 OF 4

Summary

Analysis Summary

Staying Sober vs. Returning to Use

Not yet analyzed

Regular Meeting Attendance

Not yet analyzed

Getting and Using a Sponsor

Not yet analyzed

Practicing Rigorous Honesty

Not yet analyzed

Major Lifestyle Changes

Not yet analyzed

Feeling Feelings Without Substances

Not yet analyzed

Asking for Help

Not yet analyzed

Making Amends

Not yet analyzed

Visual Comparison

Key Insights

Which decisions show the clearest benefits outweighing costs?

These are areas where commitment should feel more natural...

Where do costs feel heaviest? What does that tell you?

These areas may need more support, preparation, or gradual approach...

What patterns do you notice across all your analyses?

Common themes in costs? Recurring benefits? Consistent fears?

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PART 4 OF 4

Action Plan

Action Planning

Turn your analysis into concrete action. Use what you've learned about costs and benefits to make decisions and prepare for challenges.

Decisions I'm Committing To

Based on your analysis, which recovery decisions are you committing to? What will you DO?

I commit to: • Attending meetings 3x per week • Getting a sponsor within 2 weeks • Being honest with my partner about my recovery needs • ...

How I'll Handle the Costs

The costs are real, but they can be managed. What strategies will you use to handle the difficult parts?

To handle the costs, I will: • Talk to my sponsor when meetings feel like a burden • Remind myself that discomfort is temporary • Ask for support during difficult emotional moments • ...

Support I Need

Who or what do you need to make these decisions work? What resources would reduce the costs?

I need: • A sponsor who understands my schedule • Family support for meeting time • Therapy to work through difficult emotions • ...

Warning Signs to Watch For

What signs would indicate you're overweighting costs and underweighting benefits? What thinking patterns should concern you?

Warning signs include: • Thinking 'meetings aren't worth the time' • Believing I can do this without help • Romanticizing how things were before • ...

Accountability

Who will you share this analysis with?

Sponsor, counselor, trusted friend...

When will you review this analysis again?

My Recovery Commitment

Having honestly examined the costs and benefits, I make this commitment to my recovery:

Date:

Signature (type name):

Your name

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