

DECISION BALANCE WORKSHEET

Visualize your options

When we think about making changes, most of us don't really consider all "sides" in a complete way. Instead, we often do what we think we "should" do, avoid doing things we don't feel like doing, or just feel confused or overwhelmed and give up thinking about it at all. Thinking through the pros and cons of both changing and not making a change is one way to help us make sure we have fully considered various aspects of our decision.

Instructions:

Below, first identify the change you are considering making. Then, write in the reasons that you can think of in each of the boxes. Next, look at your overall picture. Talk it through with someone and ask for feedback. Finally, use this information in making the best and healthiest choice.

The Change I am considering making:

	Benefits/Pro	Costs/Cons
Making a Change		
Not Changing		

HALT

The very definition of halt means to stop. This halt acronym is often to serve as a reminder to stop, take a minute and evaluate what you are feeling that could be triggering a craving or urge to use substances.

Understanding your thoughts and emotions will help you to counteract an urge when it arises. Ask yourself: are you hungry, angry, lonely, or tired (H.A.L.T)?

H - Hungry

It's easy to skip meals with the bustle of daily life. But not eating properly leads to hunger and can wreak havoc on your mood. When you continually deprive your body of proper nutrients it affects your ability to make decisions and may lead you to slip back into past behaviors.

A - Angry

Many people report using substances to help them deal with feelings of stress, depression, and anger. Substances act as a band-aid, they do not solve your problems but oftentimes make them worse.

Anger is a normal reaction. It is our body's way of telling us we do not like a situation, it helps us to recognize our boundaries. Acknowledging when you are angry will help you identify ways to overcome it. Holding onto and carrying anger instead of expressing it or overcoming it can often be a hurdle to feeling better.

L - Loneliness

Loneliness can occur at any time. You do not have to be alone to feel lonely. When you start a new life in recovery it is easy to feel alone and isolated. Perhaps your old friends were also the friends you used with and now you are avoiding putting yourself in a situation where substances are present.

Often family members and loved ones do not understand what you are going through, and although they may be supportive it's hard for them to relate.

It is human nature to seek out like-minded individuals in order to feel connected. Building a strong, sober [social support network](#) will discourage your feelings of loneliness.

Acknowledge your feelings of loneliness and make sure you are not isolating. Make plans, participate in activities that you enjoy, seek out friends and family that encourage and empower you.

T - Tired

When you are physically and mentally exhausted it makes it very difficult to think properly. Proper rest is a necessity to think clearly, feel energized, and utilize coping skills to overcome your triggers. Finding a little time to relax your mind such as meditation, listening to music, or taking a short nap are great ways to increase energy.

Triggers

Warning Signs

Triggers	Warning Signs