

Weigh the pros and cons

Sometimes, people feel they have good reason to be angry, anxious, or sad. They don't want to let those feelings go. However, these negative thoughts and feelings may be getting in the way of moving on in your life. Finding the pros and cons to keeping a negative thought can make you more open to adjusting your thought, which could make you feel better.

Step 1: Identify a negative thought

In the space below, write a negative thought that you'd like to change:

If you're having trouble, try thinking of a recurring thought or idea that makes you feel bad, afraid, or angry when you think it. For example, "Most people are out to hurt me" or "If I ride in a car, I will get into an accident."

Step 2: List the pros of keeping the thought

In what ways does holding onto your thought or belief make your life easier?
Write all the pros (or positive results) of keeping the thought in the space below:

Step 3: List the cons of keeping the thought

In what ways does holding onto your thought or belief make your life more difficult?
Write all the cons (or negative results) of keeping the thought in the space below:

Step 4: Weigh the pros against the cons

Now that you've listed the pros and cons of holding onto your negative thought, think carefully about whether it really is worth keeping.

Do the cons outweigh the pros?

Is holding onto the thought getting in the way of acting in line with your values and goals?

