

Decisional Balance Worksheet – for use in Action/Care/Change Planning

It can be quite difficult for clients to weigh up the “pro’s” and “con’s” of making a change in their drug or alcohol use without using some method to focus their thoughts. Thinking through the pros and cons of both changing and not making a change is one way that can help. It can also be used to surface client ambivalence (not really being too sure) about needing to change, in a non-threatening manner. Ask the client to think about the issue/s they are dealing with at present (ask them to pick the most important one at the moment i.e. drugs/alcohol) and use the questions in the boxes below to help them to think about the benefits and costs of making the change and the benefits and costs of staying the same. Go from 1 to 4 with the questions and ask them to just answer as best they can. Avoid getting too bogged down in detail at this stage. Then, with your help, ask them to rate themselves on the Willingness Scale. Use your Motivational Interviewing skills to facilitate this exercise.

Not Making Any Change	<p style="text-align: center;">1st Question</p> <p><i>What would be some of the good things about leaving things as they are? In other words what would be good for you if you didn't have to change?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2nd Question</p> <p><i>What would be some of the bad things about leaving things as they are? In other words what would be bad for you if you didn't change?</i></p>
Making a Change	<p style="text-align: center;">4th Question</p> <p><i>What would be some of the good things about changing? In other words what would I gain, what would be the benefits of making a change.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3rd Question</p> <p><i>What would be some of the bad things about having to change? In other words what would I lose, what are my fears?</i></p>

Willingness to Change Scale									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not willing to change at all at the moment					Totally willing to change				