

Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) - Pros & Cons Exercise

Posted by MenachemGYE - 24 Jan 2020 01:03

Do you feel ambivalent about porn? Do you both love it and despise it? Ambivalence is not the same as indifference. Ambivalence means that you have contradictory feelings towards porn at the same time. Do you feel like you really need it, but also feel that you need to stop? Do you feel that would like to stop, but aren't ready yet?

“Celebrate *Yetzias Mitzrayim* in Shanghai, combined with a Far East cruise. The 18-day trip will take you to China, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, The Philippines & Hong Kong, with an experienced tour guide, Kosher for Passover mehadrin meals and luxury accommodations.”

The ad looks interesting. China always intrigued you. You might even find some business opportunities there. But 18 days? That's a lot of time. Is it normal to go the Far East for 18 days? On the other hand, it could be very relaxing and refreshing. You'll have an amazing time and come back with with lot of energy.

Another factor is the price. Is this the best way to spend your money? Why the Far East? Will the atmosphere be appropriate? Will the kashrus standards be up to par? Maybe a summer trip to Europe makes more sense.

This state of ambivalence (mixed feelings about your options) is called *contemplation*. It's natural to spend some time in this stage before any big decision, whether it's deciding who to marry, where to travel or whether to change a habit.

It will take a few days or weeks to decide whether to go to the Far East. You need to carefully weigh the pros and cons so that you can make an informed decision. You know that if you impulsively decide to go, you are asking for buyers remorse.

The **Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)**, also known as **Decisional Balance Exercise** outside of SMART, can help us reach clarity when you have mixed feelings about something.

The best strategy to resolving our ambivalence and finally making a decision, is to put *all* your considerations for change on *one piece of paper*, so that you can see them at once and compare the factors to each other.

Here are some sample worksheets:

- [CBA worksheet](#)

- [Decisional Balance Exercise](#)

Usually, we either think about the pros of the behavior (e.g. it's enjoyable), or about the cons (e.g. this goes against my values and I really need to stop). This causes us to feel stuck and ambivalent about change.

With the CBA, we can review both the pros and cons at once, compare them to each other, **and then reach a decision about how to proceed.**

Some tips:

- If you are struggling with both porn and masturbation, do a separate CBA for each.
- Try to fill out the CBA worksheet as thoroughly as possible, don't rush it. It's OK to work on this for a few hours or even a few days.
- Once satisfied with what you wrote, you can write "short term" or "long term" near each item.

Hopefully, this exercise will show you that the pros of change outweigh the cons. In the future, if you ever have doubts or second thoughts about what you really want, you'll be able to remind yourself, that when you thought about it with a clear mind, you've come to a solid decision about what is best for you.

If you find it hard to come up with the pros of quitting, try doing the [Roles & Values exercises](#).

Feel free to post your pros and cons in this thread, it can give inspiration to other members when doing their own CBA.

I've put some of my examples in the spoiler below. But it works best if you come up with **your own reasons**, instead of copying some else's.

Warning: Spoiler!

Another great exercise to increase motivation is to explore your values in life and think about your current behavior interferes with them. See [here](#) for more info.

For more options to increase motivation [click here](#).

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Re: Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) - Pros & Cons Exercise
Posted by DavidT - 24 Jan 2020 02:05

The Torah teaches that a truly wise approach to life is to “*Roeh et HaNolad*” which simply means; one who thinks of the outcome of something before getting involved in it (Avot 2:9). When a person approaches life like this, they won’t let any rash impulse drive a decision. Rather, they will carefully weigh up the options, always thinking of the ramifications in the future.

The Mishna teaches that one should therefore always “ *Mechashev Hefsed Mitzvah keneged Scharah VeSchar Aveira Keneged Hefsedah*” - **“Weigh up the ‘loss’ of a mitzvah (the effort involved) against its reward (eternal), and the gain of a sin (temporary and fleeting) against its loss (years of regret, and eternal spiritual ramifications)”** (Avot, Chp. 2).

With this calculation as a prelude to a decision, one is sure not to make rash, regrettable mistakes.

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