



# DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 5

(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 3, 3a; pp. 374–375)

## Pros and Cons

Use pros and cons any time you have to decide between two courses of action.

- An urge is a crisis when it is very strong and when acting on the urge will make things *worse* in the long term.
- Make a list of the pros *and* cons of acting on your crisis urges. These might be to engage in dangerous, addictive, or harmful behaviors, or they might be to give in, give up, or avoid doing what is necessary to build a life you want to live.
- Make another list of the pros and cons of resisting crisis urges—that is, tolerating the distress and not giving in to the urges.
- Use the grid below to evaluate both sets of pros and cons (this type of grid is also used in Distress Tolerance Worksheet 3). Or you can use the type of grid seen in Distress Tolerance Worksheet 3a and in the pros-and-cons worksheets for other modules.

	PROS	CONS
<b>Acting on crisis urges</b>	<p>Pros of acting on impulsive urges, giving in, giving up, or avoiding what needs to be done.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Cons of acting on impulsive urges, giving in, giving up, or avoiding what needs to be done.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Resisting crisis urges</b>	<p>Pros of resisting impulsive urges, doing what needs to be done, and not giving up.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Cons of resisting impulsive urges, doing what needs to be done, and not giving up.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

### Before an overwhelming crisis urge hits:

Write out your pros and cons; carry them with you.  
Rehearse your pros and cons over and over.

### When an overwhelming crisis urge hits:

- Review your pros and cons. Get out your list and read it over again.
- Imagine the positive consequences of resisting the urge.
  - Think of the negative consequences of giving in to crisis behaviors.
  - Remember past consequences when you have acted on crisis urges.

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy or download and print this handout is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use or for use with clients.

## Pros and Cons Chart for DBT

What is causing the distress? \_\_\_\_\_

<p>Pros of _____ (Tolerating the Distress)</p>	<p>Cons of _____ (Tolerating the Distress)</p>
<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>
<p>Pros of _____ (OF NOT tolerating the distress)</p>	<p>Cons of _____ (OF NOT tolerating the Distress)</p>
<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>