

Cost Benefit Analysis Technique

This is a motivational technique that will help you pinpoint the forces that keep you stuck. You list all the advantages and disadvantages of a thought, feeling or habit that's causing problems for you. Then you balance the advantages against the disadvantages to you can make a more enlightened decision about whether you want to change or not.

List of CBA's

Use, both blanks and completed. Try the blank one first and then read the completed ones to see if there are any advantages and disadvantages that might ring true for you.

- 1. Relationships Pages & Blaming the Other Person 3, 4**
- 2. Perceived Perfectionism Pages 5, 6**
- 3. Entitlement/Blame Pages 7, 8**
- 4. Love Addiction Pages 9, 10**
- 5. Perfectionism Pages 11, 12**
- 6. Other Approval. 13 & 14**

How to Use the Dr Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis for Relationships

Think of someone you are having difficulties getting along with: it might be your spouse, a family member, your boss or a friend. Would you like to get along better with that person? If the answer is yes, then think of a specific upsetting interaction you had with him or her. Visualize the interaction in your mind's eye. What was the other person saying to you? Maybe he or she was complaining and ignoring your good advice. Maybe he or she was being critical, stubborn or argumentative.

Now ask yourself who was primarily to blame for the conflict. Who was being the most unreasonable? Who was the most responsible for the problem? Most of us blame the other person. In your heart of hearts, you probably believe that it's mainly the other person's fault. After all, they **were** being quite difficult, weren't they? And they could have been a whole lot more reasonable! Right?

The first step in solving any personal relationship problem is to list the advantages and disadvantages of blaming the other person. Ask yourself, 'how it will help me to blame them. And how will it hurt me? What are the benefits of this mind-set? And what are the costs?'

There are many advantages to blaming someone: you'll feel innocent; you'll feel righteous; you'll feel superior; you'll feel convinced that you are "right"; you won't have to change; you can harbor resentment; you won't have to feel guilty; you can feel sorry for yourself; you can complain about that person to friends, etc. List all these advantages in the left-hand column of the Relationship Cost-Benefit Analysis.

Now ask yourself if there are any disadvantages of blaming the other person. How will this mind-set hurt me? Is there a down-side to this attitude? List the disadvantages in the right-hand column.

Finally, balance the advantages against the disadvantages on a 100 point scale and put your estimates in the two rectangles at the bottom. Are the advantages or disadvantages greater? If the advantages of blaming the other person outweigh the disadvantages you might put 70-30 or 60-40 in the two columns at the bottom. If the disadvantages outweigh the advantages you might put 45-55 or 35-65 in the two circles.

Dr. Burns CBA or Cost Benefit Analysis can be used to examine whatever area you'd like to look at.

Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Blaming the Other Person: *It is all the other person's fault in the relationship.*

Advantages	Disadvantages

BOTH COLUMNS TOGETHER MUST ADD UP TO 100% SUCH AS:

50% + 50% = 100%

OR 70% + 30% = 100%

OR 20% + 80% = 100%

DISADVANTAGES TOTAL WEIGHT _____%

ADVANTAGES TOTAL WEIGHT _____%

Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Blaming the Other Person: *It is all the other person's fault in the relationship.*

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I won't have to feel guilty or ashamed. 2. I won't have to feel vulnerable. I'll feel like I'm protecting myself. 3. Truth will be on my side. I'll feel convinced that I'm right and the other person is wrong. 4. I can feel self-righteous and morally superior. 5. I can feel like a victim and a martyr. 6. I can feel sorry for myself. 7. Blaming the other person will protect my self-esteem and my pride. 8. I can hide my faults. 9. I won't have to experience the pain and humiliation of self-examination. 10. I won't have to be honest with myself. 11. It is familiar and easy. No hard work will be necessary. 12. Everything will be predictable. 13. I'll feel powerful and in control. 14. I'll show that I can't be pushed around or taken advantage of. 15. I can fantasize about getting revenge on the other person. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I may feel guilty and ashamed anyway. 2. I may feel anxious anyway because I'll be at war with the other person. 3. The other person won't accept the blame and will insist that I'm wrong and that everything is my fault. 4. I won't experience any spiritual or emotional growth. 5. The role of victim can get pretty tiresome. 6. I may be addicted to self-pity. 7. I'll be depriving myself of love, joy and happiness. 8. I'll be blind to my role in the problem. 9. I won't experience the joy of intimacy. 10. I'll deny my flaws and have an overly positive view of myself. 11. I'll become rigid and lose the capacity for flexible thinking. 12. Nothing will change. 13. I'll be powerless to resolve the conflict. 14. The other person can control me and push my buttons. 15. The other person may fantasize about getting revenge on me!

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Perceived Perfectionism: Other people won't love or respect me if they see that I'm a flawed human being.

Advantages	Disadvantages

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Perceived Perfectionism: Other people won't love or respect me if they see that I'm a flawed human being.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'll work hard to impress other people. 2. People like winners, so when I do a good job, people will respect and admire me. 3. I won't have to share my feeling or tell people how I really feel inside. 4. I won't have to risk rejection. 5. I can hide my weaknesses and present a polished image to the world. 6. I can feel like a victim and secretly resent people for being so judgmental and not accepting me the way I really am. 7. I'll always appear calm and in control. 8. I'll feel like I'm being honest and facing the truth about life because people can be very rejecting when someone screws up. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'll feel like I have to be perfect to be loved. 2. I won't be open with other people. 3. I may get defensive whenever someone criticizes me, because I'll feel like I always have to be right. This may trigger more conflict because the other person will get frustrated and feel like I never listen. 4. People won't get to know the real me. 5. I'll feel anxious whenever I'm around other people. 6. I'll keep people at a distance. 7. I won't achieve the kind of intimacy that I want. 8. I may sell people short and make assumptions about them that aren't really true. They may be more accepting than I think. 9. It takes an awful lot of time and energy trying to be so perfect all the time. It's draining. 10. People seem to like me better when I'm more spontaneous and not trying so hard. 11. I may secretly resent the fact that people seem to be judgmental and demanding.

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Cost-Benefit Analysis

Entitlement/Blame: People should be the way I expect them to be.

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Entitlement/Blame: People should be the way I expect them to be.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'll feel morally superior. 2. I can keep people at a distance. I won't have to get close to them. 3. I can blame people for the problem in my relationships with them. 4. I won't have to examine my own role in the problem. 5. This belief protects me from feeling vulnerable. I can fly into a rage instead of feeling hurt or disappointed when things don't go my way. 6. I'll feel convinced that I'm right and other people are wrong. 7. I can have fantasies of revenge and justify aggressive behaviour 8. Anger is empowering and exciting. It gives me a sense of whom I am and what I stand for. 9. I can tell my friends what a jerk and a loser the other person is. 10. I'll stick up for myself I won't let other people push me around. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'll feel angry frustrated, and stressed out most of the time. 2. It will be hard to resolve conflicts and disagreements because I'll always have to be right. This will put the other person on the defensive. 3. My friends may get turned off by my negative attitude and my constant complaints about other people. 4. I'll be in a sour, cynical mood most of the time. 5. I won't feel very joyous or creative. 6. Anger can be draining and exhausting. 7. I'll be frustrated because other people will get stubborn when I start blaming them. They'll insist everything was my fault. 8. I'll have lots of enemies. 9. I may develop health problems like high blood pressure or a heart attack. 10. The fact is the world won't be the way I expect it to be, no matter how angry or demanding I get.

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Love Addiction: I can't feel truly happy or fulfilled without love. If I'm rejected or alone, I'm bound to feel worthless and miserable.

Advantages	Disadvantages

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Love Addiction: *I can't feel truly happy or fulfilled without love. If I'm rejected or alone, I'm bound to feel worthless and miserable.*

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When I feel loved, I'll feel great. 2. If I believe that true happiness and self-esteem can come only from someone else's love, I won't have to assume responsibility for my own happiness. 3. Most people agree that you can't feel truly happy or fulfilled without being loved, so my beliefs will be similar to lots of other people's. 4. This belief seems true, so I feel like I'm being honest. 5. I'll be a 'people person' and work hard to get other people to like me. 6. I can blame other people for my unhappiness. 7. I can feel like a victim and pity myself when someone rejects me. 8. This belief will keep me motivated to date and socialize. 9. The fantasy of a prince or princess who will sweep me off my feet and make all my dreams come true feels romantic and exciting. <p style="margin-top: 20px;"><i>Can you add to this list</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'll feel depressed whenever I'm alone. 2. I may seem needy and push people away. 3. Rejection will be devastating. 4. I'll be overly sensitive to conflicts and disagreements. I'll get defensive, because I'll feel so threatened. My sense of self-esteem will always be on the line. 5. If I believe that self-esteem is based on snagging a partner, I may be trying to get someone else to give me something that I can only give myself. 6. Other people will control my moods and self-esteem. 7. I'll always be in a one-down position, having to chase the other person. This will give them too much power over me, and they lose respect for me. <p style="margin-top: 20px;"><i>Can you add to this list?</i></p>

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Perfectionism: I should always try to be perfect

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Perfectionism: I should always try to be perfect.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'll work hard. 2. When I do great work, I'll feel terrific. 3. I won't settle for mediocrity and end up with a second-rate career. 4. My exceptionally high standards will show that I'm a very special and extremely talented person and that I'm a cut above other people. After all, we wouldn't expect someone who's just average to be perfect! 5. My perfectionism gives me an easy way to measure my self-esteem. 6. Other people will admire me because I'm so hardworking and conscientious. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My perfectionism may create lots of stress and worry. 2. When I fail or make a mistake, it will feel devastating. 3. My perfectionism may prevent me from being creative and taking risks, since I'll be afraid of failure. 4. It will be hard to learn from criticism because I'll feel threatened and defensive. My self-esteem will always be on the line. 5. I often do my best work when I'm relaxed and not trying so hard. 6. I may lose sight of the bigger picture because I'll focus too much on all the small details. 7. I don't get along very well with other people when I get perfectionistic and demanding. 8. People seem to like me more when I express an interest in them, not when I'm trying to impress them with my own accomplishments. 9. I may procrastinate because every task will seem overwhelming. 10. I'll never feel as if I've succeeded because I'll never really be perfect at anything. There will always be room for improvement.

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Other Approval: I need other people to tell me I am okay and what I do is okay.

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Dr. Burns' Cost-Benefit Analysis

Other Approval: I need other people to tell me I am okay and what I do is okay.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'll be able to meet people's expectations. I can feel in control. This feels good. 2. When I please people, will feel secure and safe. 3. I don't have to think things out since all I have to do is what others want me to. 4. I don't have to worry about people being upset with me or looking down on me. 5. I can avoid conflict and I don't have to be assertive and speak up for myself. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I sometimes compromise and end up doing things that are not in my best interest that I don't really want to do. 2. I never know if I could be accepted just for me. Thus, I always have to earn love and the right to be close to people by doing what people want me to do. I become like a slave. 3. It gives people too much power over me – they can coerce me with the threat of disapproval. 4. It makes it hard for me to know what I really want. I'm not used to setting priorities for myself and making independent decisions. 5. When people disapprove of me as is inevitable at times, then I conclude I've done something to displease them, and I experience severe guilt and depression. This puts my mood under the control of other people instead of myself. 6. What other people want me to do may not always be what's best for me, since they often have their own interests at heart. Their expectations for me may not always be realistic and valid. 7. I end up seeing other people as so weak and fragile that they are dependent on me and would be hurt and miserable if I let them down. 8. Because I fear taking risks and having someone upset with me, my life becomes static. I don't feel motivated to change, to grow or to do things differently so as to enhance my range of experiences.

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