

organising your ideas

During mania and hypomania, there is often a flood of new ideas and interests. People with hypomanic symptoms frequently overestimate how much can be accomplished in a given day. They underestimate the time it takes to complete tasks and underestimate the costs involved in implementing certain ideas. Coupled with the optimism and increase in self-confidence, patients in an elevated mood may take on too many (and perhaps, risky) projects, thus making it more likely that projects are not completed or are not successful. In addition, they run the risk of becoming exhausted from doing too many things.



When you begin to realise that your mood is becoming elevated and you begin to have many creative ideas, it is important that you begin organising and evaluating these ideas. The purpose of this exercise is to help you take a step back and to slow down a little. It also helps you keep a record of your creative ideas and to set yourself up to succeed in doing some of these projects (be they small or large) because you will have thought through some of the important details before you start doing anything. The mini-worksheet provided on the right side of this page is an example of how you can record your ideas and work through this exercise.

First, write down all the ideas for activities or projects that you have. Then, evaluate **ALL** your ideas, projects, or actions by asking yourself:

- ✍ What are the **costs** and **benefits** of trying out this idea, or embarking on this project, taking on this new responsibility, or carrying out this action?
- ✍ What **resources** do I need?
- ✍ What are the **steps** I must take to carry out this idea/project successfully?

It is important that you do this for every idea, project, new responsibility or action that you have in mind. After you have evaluated your ideas, list them in order of priority. Also, for each idea or project, you might want to set a deadline for yourself as to when the project should be completed. Then, carry out the idea or project that you placed as the TOP priority. **Remember, before you begin carrying out a new idea or project, you must have completed the previous one.** In this way, you can ensure that you limit your activity levels, while focusing your energy and resources on one important project at a time, thereby increasing your chances of success. This will also help you prevent a full blown episode of mania, likely hospitalisation, and total exhaustion.

By doing this exercise, you will not only slow yourself down, you will also have a record of all your creative and interesting ideas, and ensure that some, if not all, of these ideas will be carried out successfully.

List of Ideas or Projects

Idea or Project: _____

Costs	Benefits
Resources	Specific Steps

Idea or Project: _____

Costs	Benefits
Resources	Specific Steps

Ideas or Projects in order of PRIORITY

Deadline for Completion

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____