

## Organizing Your Ideas

During Mania and hypomania, there is often a flood of new ideas. People with hypomanic symptoms frequently overestimate how much can be accomplished in a single day. They underestimate the time it takes to complete tasks and underestimate the costs involved in those tasks. Couples with the optimism and increase in self-confidence, patients in an elevated mood may take on too many (and possibly, 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. This exhaustion may trigger the next stage, depression.

When you begin to realize that your mood is becoming elevated and you begin to have an abundance of creative ideas, it is important that you begin organizing 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 because you will have thought through some of the important details before starting. The worksheet provided on the next 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 place 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 prevent a full-blown manic episode.

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

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Idea or Project \_\_\_\_\_

Costs	Benefits
Resources	Specific Steps

Idea or Project \_\_\_\_\_

Costs	Benefits
Resources	Specific Steps

Ideas or Projects in order of Priority

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Deadline for Completion

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