A Guide to Critical Thinking

* Critical thinking involves asking questions, defining a problem, examining evidence, analyzing assumptions and biases, avoiding emotional reasoning, avoiding oversimplification, considering other interpretations, and tolerating ambiguity.
* Metacongition is thinking about one's own thinking. More specifically, metacognition is being aware of one's thinking as one performs specific tasks and then using this awareness to control what one is doing.
* Critical thinkers are skeptical, open-minded, value fair-mindedness, respect evidence and reasoning, respect clarity and precision, look at different points of view, and will change positions when reason leads them to do so.
* To think critically, we must apply criteria. Conditions that must be met for

something to be judged as believable. Although the argument can be made that each subject area has different criteria, some standards apply to all subjects. an assertion must be based on relevant, accurate facts; based on credible sources; precise; unbiased; free from logical fallacies; logically consistent; and strongly reasoned.

* Critical thinkers ask questions. Does a statement or proposition have supporting evidence? Critical thinking involves identifying, evaluating, and constructing arguments.
* Reasoning is the ability to infer a conclusion from one or multiple premises. To do so requires examining logical relationships among statements or data.
* Point of View is the way one views the world, which shapes one's construction of meaning. In a search for understanding, critical thinkers view phenomena from many different points of view.
* Critical thinking makes use of many procedures. These procedures include asking questions, making judgments, and identifying assumptions.
* We must be able to think critically to succeed academically and at work, and also in order to make sound decisions about personal and civic affairs. If we learn to think critically, then we can use good thinking as the guide by which we live our lives.

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