**CRITICAL THINKING ASSIGNMENT**

**LESSON 1: BASES AND EXPONENTS**

**ASSIGNMENT: What is Critical Thinking? How Can We Apply Critical Thinking to Our Lives?**

**What is Critical Thinking?**

Critical thinking as a concept is not a new subject in any field of study or practice. Its development is over 2,500 years.

“Critical thinking is a widely accepted educational goal. Its definition is contested, but the competing definitions can be understood as differing conceptions of the same basic concept: careful thinking directed to a goal. Conceptions differ with respect to the scope of such thinking, the type of goal, the criteria and norms for thinking carefully, and the thinking components on which they focus. Its adoption as an educational goal has been recommended on the basis of respect for students’ autonomy and preparing students for success in life and for democratic citizenship”. “Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy” [www.plato.stanford.edu](http://www.plato.stanford.edu)

**My Definition of Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is the practical and vigorous engagement of the faculty of the human mind in an unrestrained reasoning to recognize intelligent connections between objectives and intentions, to identify and assess judgment, to relate the purpose and consequence of ideas and to contemplate on the rationale of one’s own beliefs and values of what to believe and what to do at any given point in time.

**How Can We Apply Critical Thinking?**

Critical thinking is a skill needed for daily life activities, events and occurrences especially in the time and age we are living, of perverted and distorted truth, inequality and injustice. Consciously or unconsciously, whether we know it or not our minds are actively involved in every activity of our daily lives, in the home, at school, at the workplace, at the marketplace, and at our places of worship and entertainment. As a child you listen to the advice of your parents, you make a decision to accept or neglect, as a student in the classroom you solve mathematical problems, write poems for literature and you prepare for exams. As parents we are concerned about the wellbeing, security, prosperity and happiness of our family and home. In every decision, solution, and conclusion that we reach in life, whether as a child, parents, professionals, or politician, our minds are actively involved.

**Health: Healthy Lifestyle, Healthy Food and Healthy Eating.**

When we tend to think about the importance and benefits of our personal health then we engage our minds into reasoning critically and logically in ways to make it real in our lives. We are conscious of anything or any lifestyle that is hazardous or deter our health. We are aware of health risks that are related to our illness and we tend to listen to the advice of our doctors and medical experts.

**Healthy Lifestyle**

critical thinking is needed for sound mental and physical fitness. What are the kinds of thoughts we entertain about ourselves and others? How do we reason about our dreams, spouses, family, work and career? How do we get involved and engage in physical exercise? What are the materials needed to build your mental alertness and what can keep us physically active? To a larger extent, critical thinking informs us of how well and how much sleep we need to keep us healthy and how to manage stress.We choose carefully our clothing and style of dressing in every setting, occasions and events as we engage our minds in critical thinking.

**Healthy Food and Eating**

Critical thinking makes us conscious of our eating and drinking habits. From the kinds of food we eat and what we drink. Eating healthy foods and balanced diets. If drinking alcohol at all we drink responsibly and not abuse drugs. Critical thinking directs and cautions us on how we spend or invest in food and drinks.

**Life’s Interest and Choices**

We are constantly faced in life with people, places and things that interest us in every phase and at different times of our lives. The decision to make, if not the good, but the best choice will be the only option left for us when we are faced with the people, places and things that interest us.

**Choosing a Spouse**

Critical thinking gives you the time to think about who you want to get married to and why you want to get married to that person. Choosing a spouse is one of the toughest decisions a person will ever make in his or her life and critical thinking comes into play in making such choices.

**Choosing a Career Path**

The options we have in choosing a career path are uncountable, but nevertheless one needs the time and focus to choose that path. From the time we are in college, the lights and the signals are on, giving us awareness and at the same time giving us an uneasy feeling of what lies ahead of us. There is so much time involved in choosing a career, but we still need to compose in our minds a justification for each possible alternative. Critical thinking brings us to the point of asking ourselves, why is this career path the best and right option for me?

**Choosing Information:**

Information is an integral part of every human society. We need authentic and reliable information virtually about everything in life, education, government, entertainment, culture, politics, economy, current affairs, e.t.c, the list goes on. There is no end to the things we receive information about. One of the reasons we need reliable information is to keep us in tune with the cultural, educational, economical, political, and social life of the society we belong to. Critical thinking skills help us to define, determine and scrutinize the source of our information. The internet and the media are now the two biggest sources of information. **“NEW YORK (Reuters) - The Internet is by far the most popular source of information and the preferred choice for news ahead of television, newspapers and radio, according to a new poll in the United States.” [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com)** Critical thinking is at work when we reflect and sort out the news and advertisement on the internet and in the media.

**Choice of Value**

Peace, freedom, unity, justice, safety, dignity, truth, equal rights are just some of the many core values people crave for in our societies. Critical thinking skill is an imperative for people to chose truth instead of error, freedom instead of slavery, peace instead of chaos, safety instead of destruction, unity instead of division, justice instead of injustice, dignity instead of degradation and equal rights instead of segregation.

**Choice of Belief and Action**

There are so many factors that inform our belief systems, which includes family, culture, religion, philosophy, educational and governmental institutions, e.t.c. Everyday, we are faced with the challenge to examine the presumptions and repercussions of our belief and our actions. Critical thinking plays a great role in this process of examining the presumptions and repercussions of our beliefs and actions about any subject matter or focus of attention.

**Lesson 2: WHAT IS CRITICAL THINKING?**

**ASSIGNMENT: What is Psychological Thought? How Can You Apply it to Benefit Your Learning?**

**What is Psychological Thought?**

New students of psychology are not exposed to critical thinking skills. Many are confined to the world that their mind of reasoning has framed, coupled up with the people, places and things that are involved in the experiences of their lives. In these early years of their lives they have unconsciously but successfully developed their own theories about basic principles of life. They are comfortable and feel good about their daily activities and relationship with people in life especially when it is in accordance with their own theory of life. These new students of psychology are challenged for the first time in their mind of reasoning when they are introduced to the study of psychology and discover that psychology is a science that deals with precise psychological research.

The process of exposure of students of psychology to critical thinking skill development takes time, effort and understanding by teachers. By experience, teachers of psychology have discovered and reached a conclusion that in order to introduce students to critical thinking skills right from the preparatory classes, they need to teach critical thinking skills from the three domains of psychology: practical domain, theoretical domain and methodological domain.

**Practical Domain**

This is the domain where much time is not given to academic work, but requires a long-term, absolute objective of teachers to convey critical thinking skills to students in exposing them to acquiring and examining knowledge and information, discerning good and bad characters, managing their daily activities, reaching personal goals and meeting social obligations. Helping students to appreciate admirable behaviour is an integral part of the practical domain. The student’s ability to be independent in their speculation and conclusion is a quick and sure path to critical thinking skills.

**Theoretical Domain**

Critical thinking is a fundamental objective in education so therefore, the learning process must not be centred only on memorizing, but also on theorizing. Theoretical critical thinking therefore requires the teacher helping the student develop an appreciation for scientific explanations of behaviour. Theorizing must be the goal for teachers in teaching psychology in lessening the weariness of infusion that students often face in the learning process, learning not just the content of psychology, but the objectives, (how and why) of psychology. Students must be taught the structure of psychology, concepts, principles, laws and theories. Developing theoretical skills begins in the preparatory classes where unadulterated theories are introduced and recognised in applying concepts and principles appropriately. Teachers of psychology must always have feedback from their students at any time principles are introduced. Teachers should ask their students to seek ought paradigms of the principles from any activity or undertaken, or construct a narrative that instantiates the principles.

**Methodological Domain**

The predominance of teachers in the field of psychology gives students the convenience and freedom to develop their methodological critical thinking skills to explore a wide range of approaches to give answers to research questions in psychology. Psychologists have advanced a wide range of research methods, because each method has its own advantages and disadvantages and do not have answers to all types of research questions. The first step for beginning students is to be familiar with scientific experiments, because this method permits students to decide whether incentive or an experience is the cause of an event. The second step is for students to correlate the results of their scientific experiments by classifying the framework of research methods and techniques they have chosen. This framework of research helps students to be precise in their research methods that are appropriate for the research question and their strategy for result.

“Methodical procedure produces the observations that count as scientific, but at the same time it is the repository of explicit and implicit theoretical assumptions. The relationship between observation and theory is mediated in practice by methodological prescriptions.” “The Methodological Imperative in Psychology” Kurt Danziger [www.kurtdanzinger.com](http://www.kurtdanzinger.com)

**How can You Apply it to Benefit Your Learning?**

**Mind Therapy**

The subject of psychological thought in psychology helps you acquire the skills and gain control over negative thoughts and unhealthy fears. Also, the subject of psychological thought gives students the skills in replacing negative thoughts and actions with positive thoughts and habits. I will commit to self development and improvement of my thought process to live a healthy and successful life.

**Interpersonal Skills**

The exposure to the study of psychology gives students the advantage in their interaction with the various relationships in their lives; family, friends and colleagues. This will help to boost the basic values of friendship and relationship, such as trust, honesty, sincerity, e.t.c and the fruits of these values are cooperation and self fulfillment. In using the materials and applying the theories I have learned in psychological thought, I will be able to effectively manage interpersonal skills.

**Career and Professional Opportunities**

Students studying psychology are well prepared and equipped in the study of psychology for employment opportunities in a wide range of career and profession, such as education, sports, health, law, business, government institutions, and financial corporations. As these careers and professions come with opportunities so it comes with a high demand to meet high expectations. One of the demands is education beyond a Bachelor’s degree. I am well convinced that I must make it a goal to gain an education that will meet the demands of these careers and professions and not just the opportunities.

**Emotional Intelligence**

The various courses in psychology including psychological thoughts provides students not only the skills, but also the ability to recognise their emotions and the emotions of those they associate with in their daily activities of life. In recognising one’s own emotions, it creates the opportunity for that individual to evaluate his or her own emotional tendencies and also learn how to view matters that arise from other people’s perspective. I will commit to self development of the attitude and skill for “emotional intelligence”.

**Lesson 3: THINKING IN EDUCATIONAL TERMS**

**ASSIGNMENT: What Does Critical Thinking Mean in Education?**

**Thinking Skills in Education and Life**

An adequate understanding of the term “critical thinking” both for teachers and educators is one of the key roles for the achievement of the goal of education. So therefore the goal of teachers and educators is helping students learn critical thinking skills. When students learn critical thinking skills, they learn how to think more effectively and independently. Emphasis has been made on the importance of critical thinking skills than the many other skills in the 21st century learning, because of the fact that almost all those in the education field agree upon its priority. Before going any further, I think the line must be drawn between the terms creative thinking and critical thinking. Teachers must get this right and not make in-distinctive parallel lines for the achievement of the goal of helping students learn critical thinking. Teachers must not make the mistake of conflating these two terms as the same. When teachers and educators themselves are critical thinkers they are able to define the meanings and outline the characteristics of each term and therefore be able to achieve critical thinking as an objective in their teaching profession.

When we are talking about what critical thinking means in education, we are identifying the benefits, activities and strategies, role, logic and ethics in education.

**Benefits of Critical Thinking**

There are many benefits in education. Critical thinking in education has the things that it moves us away from and the things that it leads us into.

**Moves us Away From:** Ineffective Communication, inability to solve problems better, Poor leadership skills, Rash conclusions, Complicated expression of ideas, Mystification, Impaired vision, Denial of personal responsibility for one’s own thinking

**Moves us Towards**: Effective communication, Ability to solve problems better, Good leadership skills, Intellectual discipline, Intelligent conclusions, Clear expression of ideas, Solution, Clear vision Acceptance of personal responsibility for one’s own thinking.

**Activities and Strategies**

The principles of critical thinking are not to be generalised in the area of activities of teaching, they are to be customised with instructional activities for students with different ages, experiences and abilities. Using scientific method as a strategy for critical thinking is a formal experimentation to examine the theory. This becomes a simple methodology that re-strategies the role of critical thinking and scientific method from intuition to an uncomplicated teaching strategy. **“Critical Thinking Mindset”**  “After more than 30 years of assessing critical thinking students of all ages and in working adults from all types of workplaces, the researchers at Insight Assessment have learned that there is an array of reasoning skills and mindset attributes that are predictive of success in both life and work. All are important for reliable reasoning and decision-making.” [www.insightassessment.com](http://www.insightassessment.com)

**The Role of Critical Thinking in Education and Life**

Critical thinking is a basic requirement and an important factor for education in the 21st century. Critical thinking skills are to be introduced from the early stages of the learning process of students and throughout their education so that they can gain the ability of critical thinking skills in all of the developmental stages of learning. The role of critical thinking in education helps students to nurture other skills such as good interpretation, evaluation and communication skills to relate in other aspects of their lives.

The role of critical thinking is also critical, for excellence and success in business, corporations, financial organisations and government institutions. Leaders, managers, and professionals are always faced with the challenge of decision making and selection of goods, services and their employees critical thinking skills to manage tasks responsibly, communicate detailed information effectively and solve complex problems intelligently.

**The Logic of Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking skills involve much logic and much of that skill of critical thinking involves the ability to evaluate theories and arguments, to detach validity from error, and rational from irrational beliefs. Critical thinking as an ongoing process forms the logic and attitude of the mind, and when the mind is being developed through critical thinking processes, it can be fully engaged in any subject matter, field of study, or practice in various areas of life. The interdependence of critical thinking core concepts and informal fallacies can be seen in everyday activities and experiences of life. Logic in critical thinking helps us avoid those common flaws in reasoning and in theorizing. **“CRITICAL THINKING AND REASONING: Informal Fallacies”** “An informal fallacy occurs because of an error in reasoning. Unlike formal fallacies which are identified through examining the structure of the argument, informal fallacies are identified through analysis of the content of the premises. In this group of fallacies, the premises fail to provide adequate reasons for believing the truth of the conclusion..” [www.courseslumenlearning.com](http://www.courseslumenlearning.com)

**The Ethics of Critical Thinking**

Experts have a strong disagreement on the subjects of limitations of all types of thinking. On the subject of the ethics of critical thinking the, majority has argued for the possibility that a person can be good at critical thinking, which means that the person can have the theoretical application of cognition at his or her disposal but yet lacks the practice that is equivalent to moral standards. For instance, an individual can be involved in the process of critical thinking (argument) and does not distinguish its contents (ethics) thereby failing to recognise human relationships developed in the course of critical thinking.

On the other hand, the minority has defended their argument on the nature and definition, that the subject itself in its own right is an ethical practice. They believe in the correlation of thoughts and behaviours so they look for the similarities.They also defend their argument of the subject of critical thinking, that it is not compatible with the unprincipled and fraudulent practices mentioned. They strongly believe that critical thinking as it is plays an important role in ethics, that a person who is good at critical thinking can also develop a mental process of judgment that determines what is right or wrong in any given situation.

**“What is the Connection Between Critical Thinking and Ethics?”** “While ethical considerations have some areas of universal or global overlap, ethical practices and solutions to all problems are hardly universal, which is where the considerations of the connection between critical thinking and ethics are drawn. The application of critical thinking to a defined situation will enable an individual to make the right decisions as to the right ethical choices or principles to apply to a particular situation.” [www.infobloom.com](http://www.infobloom.com)

**Lesson 4: COMPLEX THINKING**

**ASSIGNMENT: What is Complex Thinking?**

Complex Thinking: Creativity, Critical Thoughts and Logic.

Complex thinking begins all the way from lower levels to higher levels of thinking. At the lower level of thinking, students are introduced to memorizing theories and identifying problem solutions and at the higher level of thinking, students are exposed to the process of standardizing methods of experiment and analyzing principles. The operation and evolution of higher level thinking skills makes provision for both creative and critical thinking that involves such as appreciating concepts, interpreting theories, initiating original ideas, and applying analytical propositions in dealing with abstract and complicated problems.

Instructional strategies is an essential requirement for the discussion of the various forms and skills of thinking, namely problem solving, creative thinking and critical thinking. Teachers and educators must give considerations on how each of these skills can enabled suitable instructional strategies. There are various instructional strategies whose purpose is for motivating complex thinking and some that are teacher-control and others that depend on the students’ resources.

Because critical thinking is a skill that requires conceptualizing ideas, evaluating information gathered from observation, experience and reasoning, the demeanor in which the learning process is demonstrated in relation to a particular subject matter, or in any other field of study must not be ignored. In the learning process of complex thinking there must be a balance between people with strengths in complex things and those that are not.

As much as the need for complex thinking can be emphasised in a broad range of subjects, the need for it also to be concentrated in a particular subject or field of practice must not be ignored. Different people are good or are best at thinking about different kinds of ideas and concepts. When a person’s interest is focused on a particular subject matter, his or her level of understanding about ideas and concepts on that subject matter is higher compared to other subject matters that he or she has no level of interest in.

Complex Thinking Skills and Reasoning

In critical thinking the teachers aim is for their students to go beyond rudimentary observation of theories and thoughts in the development of their analytical, creative and problem solving skills. Critical thinking skills form the base upon which students develop many other learning abilities to deal with complex matters of family, work and their community at large.

“Teaching Thinking Skills” “Deborah Gough’s words quoted at the beginning of the report typify the current viewpoint in education about the importance of teaching today’s students to think critically and creatively. Virtually all writers on this subject discuss thinking skills in connection with the two related phenomena of modern technology and fast-paced change. Robinson, for example states in her 1987 practicum report: Teaching children to become effective thinkers is increasingly recognized as an immediate goal of education. If students are to function successfully in a highly technical society, then they must be equipped with lifelong learning and thinking skills necessary to acquire and process information in an ever-changing world.” (p.16) [www.educationnorthwest.org](http://www.educationnorthwest.org)

**Lesson 6: SIX THINKING HATS**

**ASSIGNMENT: How can You Apply the six hats Thinking Skills to Your Life? What do the six hats Have in Common?**

Six Thinking Hats.

“Six Thinking Hats” is an investigating tool used to explore matters, and decisions from several perspectives and widening thinking in a non-biased way. It is used both by individuals and groups to make practical and worthwhile decisions that are not influenced by their habitual style of thinking or traits. This tool was created by Dr. Edward De Bono, a Maltese physician, psychologist and philosopher, who is widely considered the father of modern creative thinking.

In a parallel thinking process, it helps an individual whether an optimist or a pessimist to be more effective and clear in their perspective. There is a tendency that a person who is an optimist may not contemplate the disadvantages and challenges to a decision. This may prove their failure to make adequate plans and realistic options in opposition to the plan. On the other hand, a pessimist who is unreasonably careful might not see available possibilities and opportunities.

These Six Thinking Hats are designed for individuals and teams to solve problems with different approaches and investigate a variety of perspectives. Each of the six hats has a designated colour and indicates a distinct thinking proposition.

In a team, each person wears the same hats at every given point in time to avoid confrontations and reassure cooperation to cautiously regard each person’s argument or make fractured decisions about what is “right or wrong”. I am a Resident Pastor of a Community Church and also

**How can you Apply the six hats Thinking Skills to Your Life?**

I am a Resident Pastor of a Community Church and also teach English at an English language school. I have the responsibility to appoint leaders into various and major offices, ministries and departments of the Church. Set up Executive and Ministerial board meetings and oversee the general activities, programs and projects of the Church. From what I have learned in this course I can apply the “Six Hats Thinking Skills to my personal life and profession as a leader and teacher.

**White Hat**

This hat helps me to focus on the available information, how I can learn from it, communicate it to the leadership of the Church, and what would be our plan of action from the information we have received. At school, what is the latest news, current affairs and trends in the educational field? How I’m I going to keep up with data and facts that relate to me and my working environment?

**Red Hat**

Wearing this hat helps me rely on my intuition, gut reaction and putting my emotions. As I rely on my intuition I will also have to consider the emotional reaction of others who may be affected by the result and effect of my reasoning. Following your intuition in problem solving is a great part of being in Church leadership. In the classroom as a teacher, feelings and emotions of gratitude, hope, and love will be expressed for my job and students.

**Black Hat**

The black hat helps me have a closer look at the possible solutions from the negative outcomes of the decision. As a leader in the Church and a teacher at the school I will take the time to scrutinize faults in every plan, look for ways to eliminate them and create possibilities for plans to work.

**Yellow Hat**

Wearing this hat puts me on the optimistic side of life. This hat is so needed as a leader and a teacher, because of the challenges and obstacles that they face consistently. As a Pastor with this hat I would be able to say to the Church when things look gloomy, “we can accomplish this mission, and we can fulfill this vision. As a teacher I would be bold to tell my students who feel they cannot achieve success, “you can achieve success and you can be the best that you want to be”. As a leader and a teacher, I would be able to tell my congregation and my students that “the price to be paid now for future benefits is worth it, and giving up is not the best alternative”.

**Green Hat**

The green hat helps me accept creative and innovative ideas in solving problems. Creativity and innovation are the wings of any form of leadership. As a Church leader I will discourage criticism of creative ideas and encourage followers not to be limited by rules and traditions in their thinking process, but on any matter of attention, they should think outside the box. As a teacher, I will encourage students to solve problems creatively and do things differently.

**Blue Hat**

Wearing the blue hat helps me to control and manage the process. As a Church leader very often I’m in the position to set up and chair executive and ministerial board meetings. I would be responsible for making things in part work when ideas are running out. I would be faced with these questions, what is the present problem we are facing as a Church or as a team? What is the most effective approach in dealing with the problem? What would be the benefits after solving this present problem? What is our main objective in dealing with this problem?

**What do the six hats Have in Common?**

One thing that is common with the six hats thinking skills is that it is a significant and effective technique for decision making that involves different perspectives. In a designed parallel thinking process, it helps an individual or a group to be more effective and conscious in their perspective in a discussion.

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The six hats thinking skills is to encourage a wide variety of viewpoints when it is in the interest of an individual or those involved in a group as part of a discussion in reaching the same conclusion on a decision making process or shared purpose.

The six hats thinking skill goes into the operation of brainstorming when a team is working towards a project, whether providing services or creating a product to achieve an objective result.

The procedure and the modus operandi of the six hats thinking skill recognizes reaction and questioning in the discussion process so that group members consider the problem creatively.

**Lesson 7: THOUGHT AND KNOWLEDGE**

**ASSIGNMENT: How can You Apply Thought and Knowledge to Become a Better Listener/Questioner and to Think Critically?**

**Thought and Knowledge**

The state of the mind in which reason and logic is processed and knowledge is deposited must be a scientific concern in the subject of critical thinking. An individual has to have a healthy state of mind to think rationally, logically and to be knowledgeable in different matters and fields of study. The theorization of the distinctive mental elements such as thought, consciousness, and imagination in the process of acquiring knowledge are not automatic, but can be categorized into these two mathematical equations: neuronic and mnemonic equations. Neuronic Equations: A constant thinking process of the brain that represents an immediate action response. Mnemonic Equations: This equation conditions the long-term behaviour reflections of the brain prototype.

Discovering the Brain “The preponderance of the cerebral cortex (which, with its supporting structures, makes up approximately 80 percent of the brain's total volume) is actually a recent development in the course of evolution. The cortex contains the physical structures responsible for most of what we call ''brainwork": cognition, mental imagery, the highly sophisticated processing of visual information, and the ability to produce and understand language. But underneath this layer reside many other specialized structures that are essential for movement, consciousness, sexuality, the action of our five senses, and more—all equally valuable to human existence.” The learning of thinking [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

To become a better listener and questioner we must have a disciplined mind, and to have a disciplined mind, the learning of the art of thinking must be a priority. A disciplined mind is the mind that makes decisions not based on self perception or external influence, but reaches conclusions when you analyse logic and arguments, validate facts and evidence.

**A Good Listener**

Be a Good Observer

The process of becoming a good listener is to become a good observer, collecting and evaluating information, exploring situations, solving problems and scrutinizing arguments in your surrounding circumstances to the best of your thinking ability. To be a critical thinker, you must be conscious of the things around you, reaching convincing conclusions and making purposeful decisions not based only on your opinion. To be a “good listener” presupposes taking into consideration all judgement and viewpoint from different angles and both sides of the coin.

Acquire New Knowledge

Critical thinking as a problem solving skill requires a great deal of listening to other people’s opinion to get to the bottom of the situation or matter at hand and to acquire exceptional knowledge. This new knowledge gives added advantage in solving ongoing and future problems. Critical thinkers see things from different perspectives as they ask all sorts of questions from different people. They are able to analyse facts and solve problems more efficiently from the feedback they receive. A good listener takes the time to look both on the surface for any biases and look beneath the surface for a deeper meaning. Evaluate your understanding of an issue with someone else to get rid of indistinct, unclear, shadowy, ambiguous thoughts.

**A Good Questioner**

Dare Your Thinking

The process of becoming a good questioner is to subject your thinking to the test by questioning your own thoughts and perceptions. Gaining the confidence as a good questioner is to first dare your thinking.

Question Questions

A critical thinker does not only ask questions, but be on the look-out for relevant questions. Skilled questionnaires are not preoccupied in the perceptions and definitions given by others that they lose focus on the relevant reality. Good questionnaires do not accept information as it is submitted to them, they ask questions so that they identify and understand various facts in the world around them. The questions of a questionnaire puts to the test anything that is of a resemblance, and camouflages or spins the fact.

Be reasonable

It is advisable to be on the look-out for acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in yourself and others. Look on the surface for genuinity and beneath the surface for pretence. There must be a reality check of what people say and what they do. Give attention to unacceptability. There are times or situations when people’s words are in complete contrast to their behaviours. Do your best to distinguish between sincerity of words even when their behaviour seems to be contradictory. You must be willing to listen to the opinions of others when you assume what is right is contrary to their opinion, and be smart enough to put down resistance from hearing what others are saying. There must be no problem or difficulty in the change of mind when you are given an adequate reason to. Critical thinkers are willing and ready at all times to accept brilliant ideas and adequate knowledge to accept the opinions and perceptions of the people they disagree with. They put reason at work.

**Lesson 8: THE IMMATURE BEHAVIOURS**

**ASSIGNMENT: What are Immature Behaviours? How can You Learn From This Type of Behaviour and Turn it Into a Positive Thought?**

**What is Immature Behaviour?**

The immature behaviour is seen in the person whose only concern is all about himself or herself and not considerate about the interest of others.

Persons of immature behaviour are concerned about what they want and stand to gain at the expense of others. They manipulate circumstances and suppress the good of others in order to satisfy their own selfish needs.

The person who is immature is egocentric. They live only for their own self-existence, self-seeking, self-serving, self-regarding and see things only from their own point of view. As much as you can serve and satisfy their needs, as much they regard you as a person.

Persons of immature behaviour are engaged in activities and matters that causes and promotes divisions in society, like race, colour, class and sex. They see a person’s status and not their self-worth. Their sense of judgement and discernment is superficial, putting others in categories they don’t actually belong.

They are quick to give reasons for their failures and they shy away when they are the focus of attention in wrong doings. They easily see those who resist their stubbornness as enemies and are self-justifying when their true character are uncovered

**How can You Learn From This Type of Behaviour and Turn it Into a Positive Thought?**

In our daily activities of life we encounter various situations and meet with different kinds of people. In our family circle, at the workplace, marketplace, school, e.t.c. We meet with people who are actually difficult to relate or deal with mainly because of reasons ranging from attitude, character and behaviour. In most cases we don’t know how to handle such a situation and to deal with such people. Many people are stocked in disputing with such a difficult person because they lack the vision and understanding of what exactly they are dealing with.

In the usual everyday life, immaturity has been judged in society by conforming to different standards set by society itself, and it has been defined in the study of psychology as the “ability to control emotions”. Society can be blindsided when people are only conforming to the standards set in the society and ignore the basic principles of moral conduct. Immature behaviour is toxic in society.

We have to learn how to deal with such people and also identify the traits of immature people. Looking at the impossibility of the immature to change their behaviour and meet the standards of social behaviour in society it is advisable to have less to do with such individuals. To an extent that an immature person may go in their relationship with others it can be concluded that they cannot contemplate their negative impression to the general public.

Most of the traits of immature behaviour have a direct negative effect on a person’s thought pattern and mental health. There is a great deal of responsibility on the side of a person who is doing his or her best in maintaining a relationship with a person of immature behaviour.

**Engage in a Honest an Open Discussion**

There is always a need to confront immature behaviour about their insensitivity and selfishness in a very honest way. After a period of time that you have noticed and identified their negative behaviour, you can let them know plainly what that has caused you personally and what they have to do to change their immature behaviours.

**Get a Third Party Involved**

When the first option of an honest and open discussion doesn’t bring expected results you might go for a second option of involving a third party. You look for a third party based on the type of relationship with the person of immature behaviour. In the case that the immature person is a spouse you look for a marriage counsellor. There might be a tendency that the immature person may begin to consider their negative actions and make a change for a respectful and thriving relationship.

**Lesson 9: METACOGNITION**

**ASSIGNMENT: What is Metacognition? How Will You Apply What You’ve Learned Today Into Your Daily Routine?**

**What is Metacognition?**

It is the perception and apprehension of one’s own thinking and learning process. An individual becoming a self thinker and a learner. It is the intentional and critical thinking about the way you think and learn. It is the knowledge that goes beyond knowledge, that is knowing the when and how of your knowledge accumulation, (what you know and what you don’t) and knowledge application in solving problems. Generally, metacognition has been classified into two elements: knowledge about cognition and regulation of cognition.

Metacognition as a skill for a life long learning or as a subject being taught in many fields of study and practice has been defined by many scholars differently. John Flavell, an American developmental psychologist defined metacognition as “knowledge about cognition and control of cognition”. Metacognition is self-monitoring, self-devising and self- improvement of one’s own thinking and learning process. The individual who is engaged in metacognition identifies different learning concepts and strategies and different approaches at every point in time of the learning process and problem solving.

Metacognition is also an individual’s thinking ability to apply knowledge gained to understand his or her own unique study skills and strategies, information recollections, distinguishing areas of strength and weaknesses in learning, to devise a plan of action in problem solving, managing procedures and to contemplate and judge outcomes.

**How Will You Apply What You’ve Learned Today Into Your Daily Routine?**

As metacognition is a knowledge thinking skill to regulate your cognition, it can also be used to control daily activities and actions to realise future goals and dreams. In applying metacognition in my daily routine, it empowers me as an individual in connecting my cognitive abilities with my actions to create an environment to success, excellence and fulfillment

A necessary tool in metacognition that can be useful in a non-academic environment is evaluation of how things are done. Metacognition enables an individual not only “thinking about thinking” but also thinking about doing. As metacognition also thinks about one’s thinking process, it also thinks about one’s doing activities. In applying metacognition in my daily routine, it gives me the opportunity to ask how I do something in getting a desired result. When such questions are asked, options are being presented on how to do it and decisions are made on which option to use.

As metacognition refers to what you know about your thinking abilities and learning processes, it enables an individual to be conscious of his or her conscience and values. In this process, there is a negotiation of the inner voice and the behaviour. Knowledge gained, information received and skills acquired are all in dialogue with the inner voice to control emotions, desires and how to improve awareness and learning. As a student, as I monitor my cognitive knowledge in the learning process, I tend to understand a concept or a subject more in reading than in listening. In applying metacognition in my daily life, I will build on my weaknesses and improve on my strengths.

**Lesson 10: GENERAL REVIEW**

**ASSIGNMENT: What Have You Learned in Regards to the Review of Critical Thinking?**

**Critical Thinking Dispositions**

Critical thinking dispositions is about the display of the individual’s structural kind of thinking and behaviour. A critical thinker displays a wide range of dispositions that directly influences and informs his or her beliefs and actions at every point in time, in any field of study, matter or concept. Critical thinking dispositions in a nutshell can be displayed in the following:

It can be seen as curiosity: the process of inquiring beyond their horizon.

It can be seen in inquisitiveness: They seek for information that goes beyond their knowledge, experience or interest.

It can be seen in credibility: actively in search for credible and reliable information. They are focused on investigating and selecting information.

It can be seen in open-mindedness: in accepting other people’s point of view.

It can be seen as flexibility: with sufficient evidence that contradicts either their opinion or theory, they are willing to change their stand.

It can be seen in honesty: reliable in experiencing personal bias.

It can be seen in maturity: limit of knowledge in the process of presenting possibilities rather than defending proof.

It can be seen in wisdom: they withhold perception and reasoning when evidence is insufficient.

It can be seen in accuracy:eager to pursue clarity and leaving no doubts in people’s mind

It can be seen as analytical: they formulate and evaluate strategies in solving problems, investigate and correlate collected information resulting from observatory and experiential sources as a pathway in what to believe and do.

It can be seen as systematic: ability to deal with complex matters in an orderly manner and to project the next step in a process..

It can be seen in wide knowledge: critical thinking skills can be applied in a wide variety of subjects.

**Critical Thinking Skills**

Critical thinking skills can be applied in every area of our daily lives, in schools, businesses and workplaces. In order for this to be done, we must learn what critical thinking is and develop the basic critical thinking skills which will help us to think critically. Developing critical thinking skills takes a great deal of time and work. The three basic critical thinking skills are clarification, inference and strategy. Each of these critical thinking skills have corresponding characteristics and form a framework upon which they operate in everyday life.

**Clarification Abilities:** The ability to observe all assumptions and presumptions and communicate your evaluation and opinion clearly.

**Inference Abilities**: The ability to surmise whether available knowledge or information are adequate and reliable. Information comes as a raw material or data, inference ability is to assess every information received and derive an interpretation that might help evaluate the situation

**Strategy Ability:** The ability to identify factors that influence a type of situation and problem and how to adapt to it effectively in a more cautious and responsible way. Ascertain the most important information for review and engage the proposed agenda to the best of your ability.

**Characteristics of Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is gaining access to one’s self mind and to engage in an independent and constant self-thinking and self-learning. Reasoning and reflection are complex processing tools in critical thinking in which we use to constitute rationale to support belief systems and the scrutinization of our own and the thoughts and ideas of others. Critical thinking is not only intellectual or conceptual, it is also practical. In presenting truth, evidence and perspective, actions are more rational than emotional. In critical thinking conclusions are not reached merely by belief and opinion, there is a process of careful deliberation to determine whether judgement of the truth, observation of an experiment, collection of presumptions or an instruction for living standards should be accepted, rejected or suspended.

**Knowledge**

In critical thinking there is an evaluation of both internal and external knowledge. To understand certain values and beliefs about oneself is a vital part of critical thinking. This critical thinking skill sets the motion for the acquisition of external knowledge which is the ability to identify and compare information to knowledge acquired.

**Comprehension**

Comprehension in critical thinking is the ability to relate new knowledge and information to one’s self acquired knowledge either from the writer to the reader or from the speaker to the listener. This process of comprehension comes in a wide variety of ways, reading a magazine, a newspaper, a novel or listening to a school teacher give a lesson and a public speaker gives a speech. Comprehension in critical thinking is to engage your mind deeply into every material in the information received, this means relating with words and ideas, processing concepts and creating images. The foundation and ultimate test of comprehension in critical thinking is for the individual to process the writer or the speaker’s words into his or her own words of expression.

**Application**

An essential part of application in critical thinking is to impartially scrutinize the information and knowledge you have acquired, reaching an intelligent conclusion and taking practical steps to perform the thing you have comprehend in a real situation.

**Analysis**

Analysis is a vital key in critical thinking both in its form and content.. Analysis in critical thinking involves breaking down the information received into intelligent parts, to order and correlate different ideas in a logical way. The process of analysis in critical thinking can be mathematical, scientific, theoretical or philosophical, e.t.c.

**Synthesis**

Synthesis in critical thinking is the ability to combine the de-constructed parts of analysis with new details to design something original and different. It requires that an individual be formative in contents, ascertain options and creative in various ways in problem solving.

**Evaluation**

Evaluation is the final stage of the other critical thinking steps we have been discussing. Once the other steps in critical thinking are understood and applied it makes it easy for an individual in critical thinking to judge the source, merit and reliability of an information, idea and belief. Evaluation in critical thinking is logical, rational and practical on the decision of belief or action at every given point in time. Evaluation in critical thinking requires scrutinizing information, investigating defence and explaining reason.