

Characteristics of Critical and Uncritical Thinkers

Critical Thinkers...

- ✓ Are honest with themselves, acknowledging what they don't know, recognizing their limitations, and being watchful of their own errors.
- ✓ Regard problems and controversial issues as exciting challenges.
- ✓ Strive for understanding, keep curiosity alive, remain patient with complexity, and are ready to invest time to overcome confusion.
- ✓ Base judgments on evidence rather than personal preferences, deferring judgment whenever evidence is insufficient. They revise judgments when new evidence reveals error.
- ✓ Are interested in other people's ideas and so are willing to read and listen attentively, even when they tend to disagree with the other person.
- ✓ Recognize that extreme views (whether conservative or liberal) are seldom correct, so they avoid them, practice fair-mindedness, and seek a balance view
- ✓ Practice restraint, controlling their feelings rather than being controlled by them, and thinking before acting.

Uncritical Thinkers...

- ✓ Pretend they know more than they do, ignore their limitations, and assume their views are error-free.
- ✓ Regard problems and controversial issues as nuisances or threats to their ego.
- ✓ Are impatient with complexity and thus would rather remain confused than make the effort to understand.
- ✓ Base judgments on first impressions and gut reactions. They are unconcerned about the amount or quality of evidence and cling to their views steadfastly.
- ✓ Are preoccupied with themselves and their own opinions, and so are unwilling to pay attention to others' views. At the first sign of disagreement, they tend to think, "How can I refute this?"
- ✓ Ignore the need for balance and give preference to views that support their established views.
- ✓ Tend to follow their feelings and act impulsively.