How to Improve Your Critical Thinking

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Critical thinking is no longer a strange concept in this world. It is being talked about all over, from university to the workplace, from developed countries to poor ones. The importance of thinking critically has never really been considered properly until recently. In fact, critical thinking is believed to be the new intellect of the modern era that reflects a person's ability to analyze daily problems and make the right decision.

As it's not a specific talent that people are born with, critical thinking requires practice and effort. Ironically, while critical thinking has become popular all over the world, not many people know how to develop their critical thinking skills effectively. Therefore, we are about to show you how you can effectively develop these skills.

1. Ask Basic Questions

This sounds very easy, right? However, this action is more complicated that you'd expect. Many people get lost when they receive a complex answer to their question. This answer baffles them and makes them forget about their original question. Therefore, it's best to ask basic questions. What do you want to know? What do you already know? By asking a simple, basic question it is easier to see the problem. Some of the most spectacular solutions to problems are surprising not for their complexity, but for their graceful simplicity. Therefore, remember to ask a basic question before trying a complicated one.

**2. Question Basic Assumptions**

Another thing that you should know when you're learning how to develop your critical thinking skills is basic assumption. We all make assumptions – this is just what our brain does to help us get along in daily life. These assumptions are based on our critical framework and we use these assumptions to make a decision about that which is happening around us. But what if all your beliefs turned out to be wrong? Your world might start to fall apart and you'll have to rebuild the whole foundation. To avoid this, you have to keep asking yourself about your assumptions. What would have happened if Einstein never questioned Newton's assumption about the laws of motion? All humans may have lived with the wrong perception about the world's movement, and science as we know it today, may have been completely different.

3. Keep an Open Mind

When it comes to critical thinking, an open mind is required. Things you believe are right today, might be wrong tomorrow – if you allow your mind to be restricted, you'll cut yourself off from reality. The characteristics of a closed mind include a rigid set of attitudes and opinions, or the reluctance to discuss. If you want to process something properly, you have to acquire all the information that is available. This can only be achieved by having an open mind.

4. Try Reversing Things
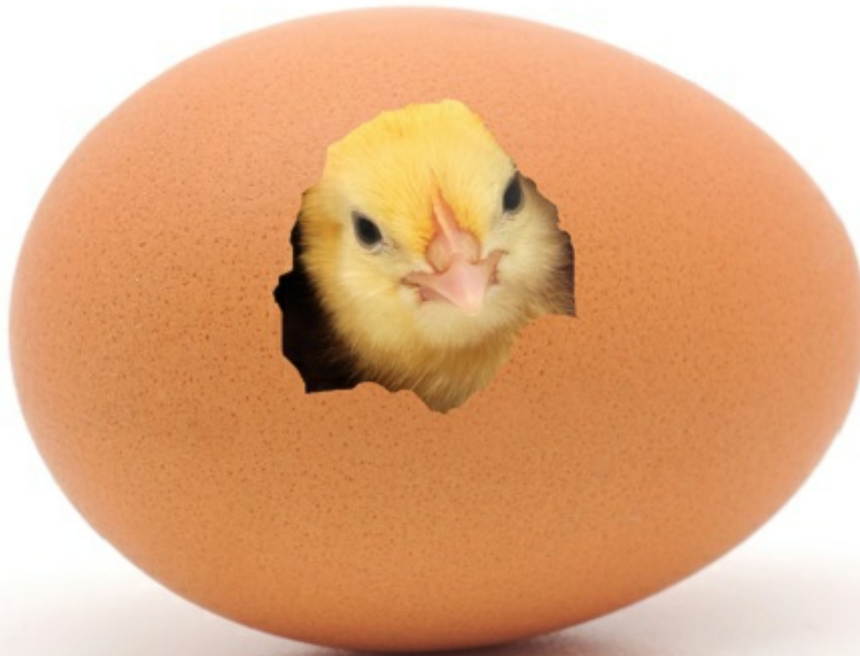
Everyone has heard the "what came first, the chicken or the egg?" question. This is a typical example of thinking

reversely. Scientists have proved that a great way to find a solution to a tricky problem is to try reversing everything. It seems obvious that chicken lays eggs so it must have come first, but where did the chicken come from? If chickens come from eggs, the egg must have come first. Whenever you think about one problem, remember the chicken and the egg story. One thing that seems to be the cause can actually be the result and vice versa. Looking at something from different viewpoints can help you think more critically and might help you find the solution more effectively.

5. Understand Your Own Biases

There are many factors that can have an impact on our perspective and decisions. One of them is our own biases. Human judgement can be frail, subjective, and spiteful, and you'll have to recognize your own mindset before learning how to develop your critical thinking skills. One recent study pointed out that parents who received correct information about the benefits and safety of vaccines were less likely to get their kids vaccinated. This is because understanding does not always go with correct action. Realizing what your biases are as well as how these biases will affect the way you deal with information, will help develop your critical thinking skills.

6. Put Yourself in People's Shoes

Empathy can also help you develop your critical thinking skills. Whether it's about understanding literature better or improving your negotiating tactics, placing yourself in other peoples' shoes will help you understand their aspirations, motivations, and turmoil. You can use this information to be persuasive, get leverage, or be a better person.

7. Read Great Books

Books can teach us a lot and can help us develop our critical thinking skills. When you read a book, not only do you receive interesting information, but you also learn how information is interpreted and analyzed. Questioning and answering during reading time is also a very effective way to get your brain working in a critical manner. Never stop broadening your knowledge and widening your views, because a narrow mind will not get your anywhere in life.

8. Playing with People Smarter Than You

There is no better way to learn than learning from your friends. If you want to develop your critical skills, make friends with smart people and throw away your ego. Furthermore, if you are eager to learn, surround yourself with people who are smarter than yourself. Not only can you learn from them how to think critically, but you can also learn lessons from their personal lives.

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