What is critical thinking?

(Adapted from “Critical Thinking as Defined by the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking”)

Conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication.

It examines, with scrutiny, what we take for granted about purpose, assumptions, concepts, alternative viewpoints, and frames of reference. It may involve scientific thinking, mathematical thinking, historical thinking, anthropological thinking, economic thinking, moral thinking, or philosophical thinking.

Critical thinking can be seen as having two components: 1) skills in generating information and belief and 2) using those skills to guide behavior.

Critical thinking of any kind is never universal in any individual; everyone is subject to episodes of undisciplined or irrational thought. Its quality is dependent on, among other things, the quality and depth of experience in a given domain. No one is a critical thinker through-and-through, but only to such-and-such a degree, with such-and-such insights and blind spots, subject to such-and-such tendencies towards self-delusion. For this reason, the development of critical thinking skills and dispositions is a life-long endeavor.

For more on critical thinking, see the following link:

<https://www.thoughtco.com/critical-thinking-definition-with-examples-2063745>