

Key Definitions of Critical Thinking

- Gibbs and Gambrill (1999) define critical thinking as: "the careful examination and evaluation of beliefs, and actions. It requires paying attention to the process of reasoning, not just the product".
- Thayer-Bacon (2000): "Consider all aspects of a case, looking at strengths and weaknesses in a position. Once the dichotomy between two positions is considered, critical thinking seeks a synthesis that allows a person to bring together opposing viewpoints. Critical thinking requires that workers see discrepancies, ask questions to explore the meaning of what was heard, before making a decision."
- Gibbs, L., & Gambrill, E. (1999). *Critical thinking for social workers: Exercises for the helping profession(s).** Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge.
- Thayer-Bacon, B. (2000). Transforming Critical Thinking: Constructive Thinking. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

3 Integral Steps in the Critical Thinking Process

Analyze

 Consider the information available and deterimine the quality of information, if there is enough information and what biases may be present.

Generate and Test Hypotheses

Identify all possible options specific to the topic and work to rule them all out versus confirm just one.

Synthesize

 Consolidate all information and professional expertise to generate new meaning and understanding about a situation or information.