

# Nurturing Critical Thinking Nurses

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# Reflections

- What is Critical Thinking?
- How do you as a HCP expect CT to be used?
- Are learners actually implementing CT in practice?
- How will you promote CT?
- How will you promote critical thinking during your clinical teaching sessions?



# Reflections

# Scenario

“Educator A meets a group of learners in a classroom and gives a 1-hour lecture about the virus and related nursing care. Learners take a post-test with questions testing the facts about the virus. Learners duly memorise the content to pass the test. When learners pass the test, all are assured that learning has occurred”.

*Do U agree!!!!*

## Scenario 2

“Educator B and the learners are in a classroom with textbooks, journals, and computer access to the Internet and MEDLINE / OVID. The Educator asks, “what information do we need to take care of patients with this virus?” One learner checks out background information; another goes to the CDC website for guidelines; another checks the hospital policy manual for general protocols; and a fourth checks a drug reference that had been downloaded to a PDA”

## Scenario 2

“The educator prompts the group to evaluate the accuracy & completeness of the information obtained, and then asks them to consider how they will anticipate care for these patients. The Educator also asks the group to compare the care of the patient with this virus to patients with similar care needs. The Educator provides additional context for applying the knowledge attained, and asks what other resources, knowledge or procedures will be needed for patient care”.

# Scenario 2

“They take a practice test to validate their understanding of the concepts and along with the Educator, give **feedback** to each other as they **monitor their own learning** progress. To evaluate their learning outcome, the Educator uses an **online case study** and records the results in the online records”.

*Comments!!*

## *What do these scenarios mean to you?*

1. Need learners to:

- analyse
- synthesise
- evaluate data, resources & information

2. Educators must move beyond teaching that emphasises the memorisation of facts (giving lectures, giving online fact-driven tutorials, distributing PPT handouts???)

3. This means facilitating learning that requires critical synthesis (Ironsides, 2005)

# Quotes

*“To prepare HCP of the future, educators must structure educational experiences to assist learners to become **knowledge workers**”*

*“To foster development of these skills, educators must engage learners in **higher-order learning**”*

*Billings, 2005*

# Traditional Approach

- How do u usually teach?
- Knowledge acquisition
- Reasoning is seen as a group of conscious mental operations that precede and guide human action
- Founded in the concept of rationality and logic

# So ..What is Critical Thinking?

- Critical thinking, clinical judgment, clinical reasoning are terms used to explain the way HCP collect and analyse data to determine a plan of care
- CT as a concept is not unique to nursing alone
- CT is taught in many disciplines and forms the foundation for undergrad studies
- Principles of CT are universally applicable

# Definition: Critical Thinking

- So... is there a definition for CT????
- Facione (2004) "... 'plopping a definition on a page for the reader to memorise would actually be counterproductive to the process of critical thinking'"
- ... learner must
- explore **personal values and beliefs**,
- examine **current issues** in light of these **beliefs**,
- look at facts that support or refute current perspectives,
- consider **positive and negative options** and **consequences** and
- select action steps that are most likely to produce the desired outcomes"

# Critical Thinking in Nursing

- Walthew (2003) found the following in NEs view of CT:
- NEs reflected incorporation of both approaches into their definitions:
  - Traditional info gathering, linking theory to practice and logical problem solving
  - Contextual knowing: use of emotions including caring in decision making, relationship and communication

# What does Fostering Critical Thinking mean to U?

- Ability to **recognise** events as part of a bigger picture
- Looking at **relationships** among factors is paramount
- Understand how **related actions impacts one and another**

# So, how do we facilitate CT?

- Recognise that CT is not a single concept, but a gp of skills when existing together , form a foundation for safe and effective professional practice

# How to nurture critical thinkers.....?

## 1. Assess your own critical thinking ability

- Explore situations in which you have used critical thinking skills
- What skills did u apply?
- How did u use them?
- Did things progress the way you had intended or did u need to modify your plan to achieve desired results?
- What additional data supported your change in plans?
- Did u find that biases made it difficult to look at the situation objectively?
- What outcomes did u achieve?

**ARE U A CRITICAL THINKER?**

## 2. Reflect on your own teaching style

- How do u teach?
- Are u aware of and sensitive to the unique learning needs of your learners?
- What feedback have you received from learners?
- What outcomes do you achieve in your education activities?
- What might u do differently?

### 3. Be willing to change the way u teach

- Are u content with the status quo?
- Do u want to develop something new & different?
- Have u challenged learners to think?
- Have u explored ways you could incorporate content into their practice?

ARE U WILLING TO CHANGE?

## 4. Give yourself a new name

Call yourself something besides teacher or instructor

- How are u sharing your knowledge in such a way that information is learned, retained and integrated into practice?.. a teacher teaches...
- Do u facilitate learning?...or do u teach?
- So what is your role??

## 5. Prepare differently for the learning experience

- Do you spend time thinking about the critical elements that learners should achieve?
- Do u focus on higher order objectives?
- Do u encourage learning leading to ability to assess, create, critique, analyse or evaluate (rather than describe, discuss, list...)?
- Do u use socrastic questioning?

## 6. Introduce concept of critical thinking at the beginning of learning experience

- Do u design learning experience to focus on active involvement of learner?
- Do u expect learner to take time during learning to reflect on anticipated application of knowledge gained?
- Do u use creative approaches e.g. computer simulations, mind mapping, music to encourage CT (instead of Q&A)?
- Have u focused on what the learners know, want to know, and can share with one another?

## 6. Introduce concept of critical thinking at beginning of learning experience

- Have u changed from teacher to facilitator?
- Have u developed rapport with learners to establish trust & create environment to stimulate CT?
- Do u use 'what', 'why', 'how', and 'what if' scenarios?
- Do u build on previous learning by providing opportunities for reflections between sessions?

## 7. Be open to questions and challenges

- Do u avoid giving learners the impression that they are the questioners and you the answerer?
- Do u stimulate learners to seek new knowledge & to refine the knowledge they have?
- Do u give opportunities for learners to ask challenging questions?
- Do u give guidance to resources to help them continue their learning after formal session is over?

## 8. Provide time for learner to reflect on learning experience

- Do u provide opportunities for learners to reflect on care they have provided? – what have worked, why did it work, what didn't go well, why, what might have been done differently, were there additional resources they can use
- Do u give feedback during and after learning & clinical experiences?
- Do u allow learners to acknowledge feelings, values & issues that have impacted current situation?

## 9. Provide periodic & realistic feedback to learner

- How do u interact with learner during course of learning event?
- Do u give periodic honest feedback about their learning, their actions, & their work?
- Do u use periodic feedback times to reinforce CT skills, suggest further options & challenge learner to continue quest for clinical excellence?

# 10. Keep learning

- Use every learner interaction as unique learning experience

# Cognitive-Building Through Critical Thinking Activities & Problem Based Learning

Present Problem

Interpretation of Data  
(What is important?)


Analysis of Data  
(What else do I need to know?)

Making Connections  
(What inferences are there?)

Prioritize Data

Implement Action

Evaluate Outcomes



***“The important thing is not  
to stop questioning,”  
Albert Einstein***



# Questions

