CRITICAL THINKING

‘Thinking critically is a skill that is taught at school and university but its main purpose is to better equip you to understand the world, to make more sense of the vast amount of information that is available to us and to avoid, being manipulated. It is a life skill’ (UoG, 2021).

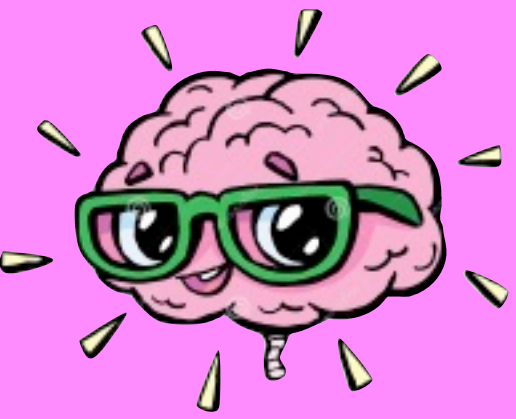
Top Tip:
Chat with friends to compare points - it is always good to have an extra set of eyes and other opinions as it makes our arguments more open. It is also useful to redraft as we pick up more points when revisiting our work (Croft, 2020)

Our future depends on critical thinking. Societies and economies rely on these skills to solve problems as effectively and efficiently as possible (Team Circle, 2021)

- Achieve peace of mind
- Helps with decision making
- Improves relationships
- Filters out noise
- Fosters career success
- Promotes a good orderly society

Blooms Taxonomy

1. Creating
2. Evaluating
3. Analysing
4. Applying
5. Understanding
6. Remembering



- Analysis
- Communication
- Creativity
- Open Mindedness
- Problem Solving

Weak critical thinking skills can lead to bad decision making and poor judgement, inaction in situations where action is imperative or providing false information or bad advice, dangerous and recurring errors, a halt in later learning and less chance of success in future career (Insight Assessment, 2023).

Critical thinking refers to the ability to analyse information objectively and make a reasoned judgment. It involves the evaluation of sources, such as data, facts, observable phenomena, and research findings.
Good critical thinkers can determine positive outcomes from a set of information, and prioritise useful and less useful details to problem solve or make educated choices. Employers favour those who have the ability to think critically. There are many benefits to learning and developing the skill of critical thinking (Doyle, 2022).

Reference List

Alison Doyle (2022) Critical Thinking Definition, Skills, and Examples - ThoughtCo

University of Greenwich (2021) What is Critical Thinking?

Team Circle (2021) What is Critical Thinking and Why is it Important? - Magazine circledna

Insight Assessment (2023) Risks Associated with Weak Critical Thinkers

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What is good time management? This essay will explore and discuss what factors are most imperative in good time management, why it is important to manage time effectively, how to prioritise and break up tasks to ensure full capability is reached and what negative effect not obtaining good time management skills can have on the quality of work, and the stress associated. There are two aspects of time management. Physical time management, which involves allocating time, and building a positive working environment, and psychological time management, which refers to the ways in which we motivate ourselves and discover what methods work best for each individual (Cottrell. S, 2013).

Physical time management requires a lot less planning as opposed to psychological time management. There are numerous effective ways of getting prepared for upcoming tasks and deadlines to ensure they are met. One useful resource is devising a personalised SMART plan. Firstly, specific, determine what outcome is desired in order to calculate the steps required to meet the set goals. Secondly, measurable, the landmarks of progress to ensure that everything is kept on track. Thirdly, achievable, how the end result will be accomplished, also thinking about what abilities and qualities will be applied. Fourthly, relevant, ensure that the plan in question is focused on achieving the desired outcome and keeps the reason for the completion of the assessment at the forefront of the planning. Finally, time-bound, the importance of working towards realistic deadlines and not applying pressure through striving beyond expectations (CrowJack, 2022).

Psychological time management is divided into two main focuses, the practical use of time management techniques, and the ability to control and maintain distractions and procrastination. One of the main hurdles in successfully managing time appropriately is procrastination. Human beings naturally procrastinate tasks they are not looking forward to completing or do not find enjoyment in, or sometimes it may be because it is unclear what actually needs to be completed, or it could be that it is simply forgotten about until the very last minute. Some students may procrastinate intentionally in order to motivate themselves to produce creative pieces. This is not proven to be an effective method of working, however, can certainly be expected to increase stress levels. Not only this but procrastination can also negatively impact social relationships, where one person's actions become a burden to others close to them in a knock-on effect. Fortunately, there are many ways to overcome procrastination, such as, recognising and arranging what needs to be done, and simplifying the steps, seeing early signs of procrastination and overcoming distractions (Cherry. K, 2022).

Mark Twain once said 'Eat a live frog every morning, and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day.' This is a motivational quote which encourages people to get work done out of the way rather than putting it off, for reasons such as waiting for the right frame of mind, as the chances are that the right frame of mind will never come, and until the most tedious task is done there will be no real peace of mind. Based on this advice, it is recommended that the least interesting or appealing task should be top of the list, therefore the task deemed most enjoyable or satisfying should fall at the bottom of the list. (Oxenreider. T, 2010)

It is of utmost importance that whilst studying, any forms of distraction are avoided at all costs. If a person is distracted from their work in any way, it will definitely have an adverse effect on performance and increase chances of submitting work of a poorer standard. There are two different kinds of distractions, external distractions, referring to other people and the studying environment itself, and internal distractions, which are more physical and mental aspects. In order to avoid external distractions, it helps to be aware of the working environment, focusing on the set up of the room and desk, it is much easier to work in a setting that is uncluttered and radiates a calming aura, no one would enjoy working in a space that is uncomfortable. One of the main distractions in todays society would be phones or other electronic devices, it is extremely challenging to ignore constant notifications from friends and family, there is no harm in switching off other devices during study time and getting back to any messages that may have been missed afterwards (Technische Universitaet Darmstadt, 2012).

Internal distractions usually stem from personal needs that are not being met, for example, hunger and thirst. It is scientifically proven that drinking water positively impacts academic ability, not only is it essential for the body but also for the mind, research shows that water intake improves concentration and aids in accelerated performance. It is also vital to eat regularly as mental ability is reduced when food intake is not substantial, small snacks often are considered the most effective form of energy consumption, also best for keeping in shape (Technische Universitaet Darmstadt, 2012).

To conclude, physical time management is relatively straight forward to grasp with many helpful resources such as plans and templates, and examples of useful strategies to better organise time and structure, however psychological critical thinking can be a lot more tedious since altering a person's mindset can be an impossible task, especially when a strong willed outlooked has already been adopted, which is not open to thinking more optimistically. The market is flooded today with tips and tricks to make everyones life easier and make work more enjoyable, so now everyone can learn good time management.

References

Cottrell, S. (2013). The Study Skills Handbook. (4th ed). Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan

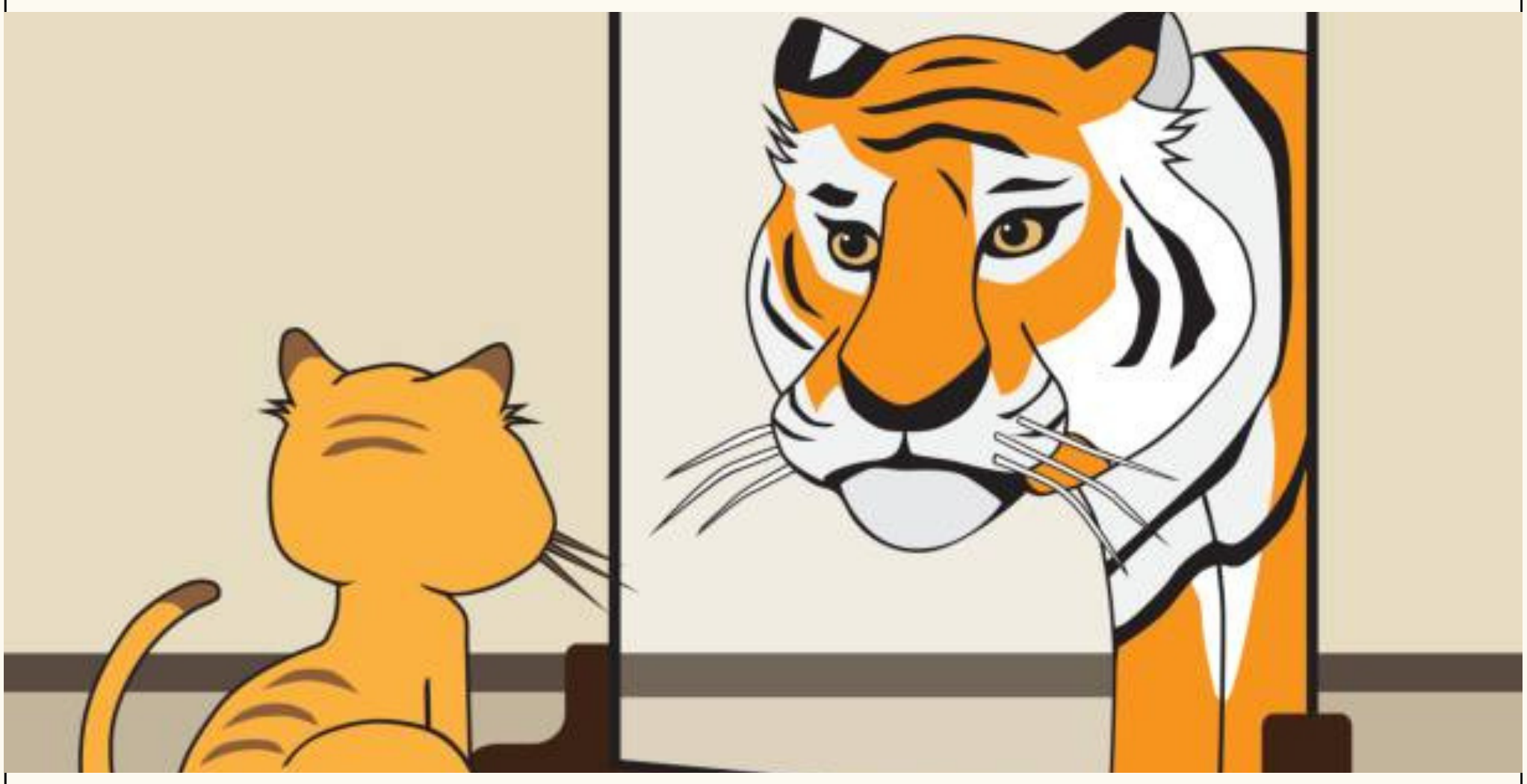
CrowJack (2022). A Pragmatic Elucidation of SMART Goals with Relevant Examples

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Kendra Cherry (2022) What is Procrastination? Very Well Mind

Tsh Oxenreider (2010) Start your Day by Eating a Frog, The Art of Simple

What is reflection and why should we use it?



'REFLECTION IS THE PROCESS OF EXPLORING AND EXAMINING OURSELVES, OUR PERSPECTIVES, ATTRIBUTES, EXPERIENCES AND ACTIONS/INTERACTIONS. IT HELPS US GAIN INSIGHT AND SEE HOW TO MOVE FORWARD.' GILLET, HAMMOND AND MARTALA, 2009, P.164.

EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON

The good, the bad, and the ugly all lead us to where we are meant to be in the end. No one is perfect and the best way to learn is actually by making a mess first, without any rain there wouldn't be a rainbow, you can either complain about the storms or you can use the water to help your garden grow. It is easy to live your life letting everything get you down, but what the world really needs is more people who recognise the beauty in living even if there are some hurdles along the way, and sometimes the best part is we have no idea what's coming next!

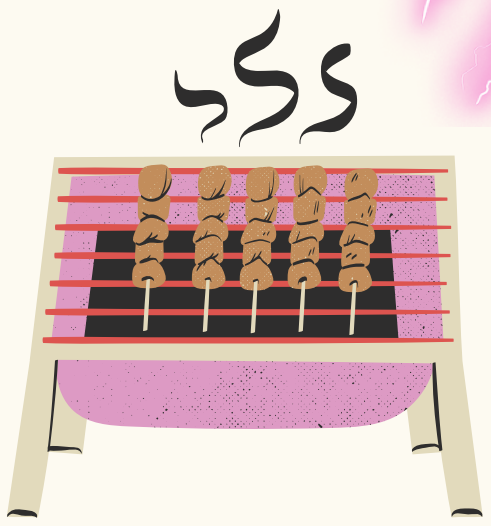
Picture this, you've finally gathered all your friends and family together for some sizzling fun in the sun, you've got the beer, you've got the sausages, and everyones bringing their best smile. It's the height of summer, what could possibly go wrong?

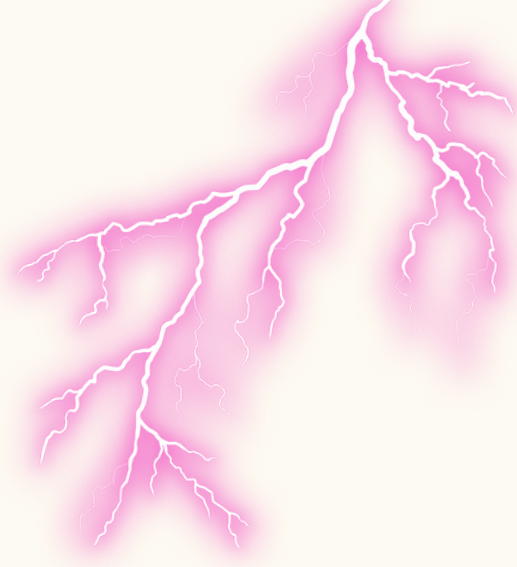
FLOWERS NEED TIME TO BLOOM... SO DO YOU











Well, what you didn't prepare for is the lightning that shook the town, the inflatable flamingo has flown away, and I think my wig is going to be next! Quick! Grab the punch before it's watered down and run for shelter as fast as you can (or as fast as your heels will let you)

You could sense the gloom, the party we had all been waiting for was over before it even had the chance to go wild. What are we going to do now? Did somebody say pub? It can't rain in the pub! So off we went, drink in hand, spring in our step, and it didn't take long to realise, it was never about the food, the venue, the flamingoes or the weather, it's about the people who bring the sunshine to your life.

Who would have thought? We had the best night we could have imagined, grooving to the old bops on the jukebox, the smell of the drips from the draught taps (ewwww!) and I even won a game of pool!

So next time, worry less about that fancy outfit or the tomatoes that were out of stock, instead just appreciate what we already have, and that's some amazing, super caring, extremely fun, and absolutely hilarious people close to our heart who can turn water into wine! (literally)

So whatever life may throw at you, remember you've got more than one hand.





