

FREE RESOURCE

CRITICAL THINKING WEEKLY™

The CTW Framework

An Introduction to Disciplined Thinking

*"The goal is not perfect thinking.
The goal is disciplined thinking."*

— Jazmin Sharelle

ASK

IMPLY

CONNECT

REFLECT

CALL TO THINK

APPLY

By Jazmin Sharelle

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What Is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively **analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information** to guide belief and action.

It is not sarcasm. It is not contrarianism. It is not intellectual performance. It is **discipline** — the decision to slow down long enough to examine what is being said, what must be assumed, what context matters, and how your own values shape your interpretation.

Critical Thinking IS NOT	Critical Thinking IS
Being argumentative or contrarian	A repeatable method anyone can learn
A political stance or personality trait	Developed through practice and reflection
Cynicism or dismissiveness	Investigation — not reaction
Performing intelligence	Aligning your reasoning with your values

"You are not learning what to think. You are learning how to think — consistently."

SELF-REFLECTION

Before the Work — A Few Questions to Sit With

Critical thinking starts with honesty about how you currently think. These questions are not a test — they are a mirror.

- *When I form an opinion, am I reasoning — or am I reacting?*
- *Think of a belief you hold strongly. Where did it come from? Have you examined it?*
- *What is the difference between a fact you know and a feeling you have about the same situation?*
- *Can I hold a position while remaining open to new information?*
- *Does my reasoning actually align with the values I say I hold?*

KEY VOCABULARY

Essential Terms

Assumption	An unstated belief that supports a conclusion — often held without examination.
Inference	A logical conclusion drawn from available evidence.
Bias	A predisposition — conscious or unconscious — that influences how information is interpreted.
Discernment	The ability to judge well through careful examination, rather than reaction.
Agency	The capacity to make choices and act independently within a given set of conditions.
Structure	Social, economic, and institutional conditions that shape what is possible for individuals and groups.

WHAT'S NEXT

Introducing the CTW Framework

Now that you understand what critical thinking is — and have begun to examine how you currently think — the next step is learning a structured method to do it consistently.

The CTW Framework is a six-step sequence designed to move you from reaction to reasoning. It gives you a repeatable process for examining any belief, statement, or decision — in your personal life, your work, and the world around you.

THE CTW FRAMEWORK — 6 STEPS

ASK · IMPLY · CONNECT · REFLECT · CALL TO THINK · APPLY

Each step builds on the last. Together, they train you to slow down, examine what's actually being said, connect it to context, check it against your values, and walk away with real understanding — not just a reaction.

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Ready to learn the full framework?

The CTW Foundations Workbook walks you through all six steps with guided exercises, self-reflection prompts, real-life examples, and applied practice. Available now for individual purchase.

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