



Thinking (4th Edition)

By Gary R. Kirby, Jeffrey R. Goodpaster

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This book about thinking presents readers with a systematic, practical, and friendly approach that encompasses all fields of study and business. It explores a valuable skill that will inspire and enlarge people's ability to think through life. Chapter topics cover what thinking is, personal barriers, sensing, brain and memory, language, feeling, creative thinking, organizing, logical thinking, scientific thinking, persuasive thinking, problem solving, evaluating, decision and action, and the challenge to go on thinking. They draw ideas on thinking from every period of history—from the philosophers, poets, scientists, psychologists, linguists, and neuroscientists. For thinkers of the new millenium.

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Editorial Review

From the Publisher

This text was written to give teachers and students a better and more comprehensive critical thinking text; one that presents an interdisciplinary, systematic, practical, and friendly approach to thinking--a valuable skill which can enlarge the students' ability to think through life.

From the Back Cover

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We are but thinking reeds, but because we know, we are superior to the universe. Thought constitutes our greatness.

— PASCAL

THE CHALLENGE

This is a book about our thinking. If we begin to think more actively, some stunning changes are possible: we can know ourselves better, we can have more options in life, we can distinguish fact from fiction and hype from hope, we can learn to think more decisively as we choose life roads to walk down, and we can become more persuasive as we listen and talk to our fellow thinkers.

We often define ourselves by our actions. In a way, we are what we do, but perhaps more than we realize, we are what we think. For instance, if people pretend to like someone whom they hate, is it their hateful thinking or their false acting (or both) that really represents what they are? "Whether a thought is sport or not, it is the real thing and has power" (Herbert, 1987, p. 257).

We want you, the reader, to use this book, to challenge your mind, to strengthen your thinking ability. Five hundred years ago Leonardo da Vinci used analogy that is being supported by research today: "Just as iron rusts unless it is used . . . so our intellect spoils unless it is kept in use." (Da Vinci, p. 294). Dr. Gold Scheible, director of the Brain Research Institute at UCLA, tells us: "If you decrease input you decrease structure. The brain is just like a muscle--use it or lose it. Indeed, 'scientists are now discovering that the brain can grow and reorganize. If, within limits, past puberty and well into adulthood'" (Sheppard, 2000, p. 42).

We have used our brain to explore the universe, and the sciences of physics and astronomy are now firmly established. But exploring our thinking will be more difficult. The neurosciences are still at an early stage, even though knowledge of the brain has leapt exponentially. We have already identified many of the neurotransmitters that control neural activity, and our ability to look inside the brain has progressed from anatomy to EEG to CAT to MRI to PET to MRS to PEPSI (proton echo-planar spectroscopic imaging). Even with these advances, unlike the DNA code in genetics, the brain code has not been deciphered. If we use physics as a measure, brain research may still be at the pre-Newtonian stage of knowledge.

Complicating this puzzle is our brain's enormous intricacy: Over a trillion cells compose it; 100 billion of them are neurons devoted to our thinking process. Each of these, on the average, reaches out to make thousands and thousands of other contacts. If we could walk along this marvelous labyrinth, the number of different journeys we could take may exceed the number of atoms in the universe! The neurons cannot communicate to quite that extent, but the number of real, potential pathways in the brain is still absolutely unimaginable! With such tremendous complexity, can our thinking brain even begin to comprehend itself?

And that, perhaps, is the greatest obstacle of all: we are attempting to know our mind *with* our mind. That is like a pair of pliers trying to grasp itself. How can the instrument of thinking grasp itself? While this obstacle may seem theoretically insurmountable, practically we do experience the ability to reflect on our thought; and in an attempt to escape from this cyclic conundrum, we will frequently stress communicating our thinking in writing and in dialogue so that we can objectively analyze the results of our thinking. One of the best ways to understand what is in our mind is by what comes out of it: our expressed thinking.

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY CHALLENGE

This book is not pitched towards a specific discipline: students of all disciplines think. No one area of research or academic discipline owns a monopoly on thinking: the more we share our knowledge the better thinking we can do. In this text we have begun at our classical wellspring of thought, and we have drawn ideas on thinking from every subsequent period of history from the philosophers, the poets, the scientists, the psychologists, the linguists, and the neuroscientists.

Professors of philosophy will find a large chapter on deductive and inductive logic, with formal and informal fallacies. Other fallacies are placed logically throughout this text as are contributions from Parmenides, Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Ockham, Anselm, Aquinas, Montaigne, Pascal, Descartes, Bacon, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Kant, Schopenhauer, James, Dewey, Russell, and Wittgenstein.

English professors will find that our definition of thinking focuses on the expressed thought of writing: writing is called the mirror of our mind. Most of the chapters are directly applicable to writing. For instance, "Language" heightens word awareness, deepens knowledge about crafting a structure, and stresses clarity and brevity, thus assisting expository writing. "Sensing and Listening" helps the writer perceive more acutely and describe more vividly; thus it demonstrates the descriptive paper. "Feeling" helps writers infuse pulse and tone into their writing. "Creative Thinking," which addresses the beginning point of discovery that incorporates classical topics and invention, helps writers solve the fundamental hurdle of saying something strong and original. "Organizing" supports writing a research paper by demonstrating what all good writing needs: a clean structure. "Persuasive Thinking" presents powerful methods to move other minds that can be used in writing a persuasive paper. All of these chapters have been successfully used in writing classes, and there are over three hundred thinking challenges which can be given as writing assignments.

The scientifically minded will find a full chapter on scientific thinking as well as chapters dealing with each step of the scientific method: observation correlates with the chapter on sensing, hypothesis with creativity, experimentation with action, and validation with evaluation. Additionally, there are references throughout this text to neuro-research, to the chaos theory, and to giants such as Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Mendelev, Einstein, and Watson and Crick.

Psychology professors will find that we deal with the whole person, addressing the cognitive, behavioral, and affective dimensions. The chapter "Personal Barriers" covers important cultural and psychological barriers to clear thinking. "Brain and Memory" addresses the neurological basis of thinking, the effects of drugs, and some characteristics of memory and forgetting. "Scientific thinking" examines various research designs, their limitations, and the assumptions of the scientific method. In addition, throughout this text we draw upon

psychological research and such psychological thinkers as Freud, Jung, James, Winner, and Maslow.

CHAPTER ARRANGEMENT THINKING BASES

Thinking is a whole and cannot be chopped into chapters. Yet because we need some way to reflect upon and understand what is going on in our mind, we have organized this book according to "thinking bases," places to anchor and check a "dart" of our thinking. Some of the major bases, or thinking platforms, are sensing, feeling, language, creating, organizing, logical thinking, judging, deciding, and acting. All of these bases interrelate, and most of our thinking involves many of these fundamental bases.

Although the chapters on these bases are arranged somewhat "chronologically" from the original perception to the final result of thinking (decision and action), our thinking can begin at any point and jump to any other point. Rarely do we move systematically from one base to the next; sometimes we start with our memory and not with our senses. Except for repetition, each of our thinking acts is unique, just as each of us is unique. Pardon us then, this artificial, analytical act of chopping thinking into chapters.

THINKING SUPPORTS: PRACTICAL AND PERSONAL

To actively engage, enlarge, and enrich thinking, to help students adapt and personalize the chapter concepts, and to provide meaningful in-class and out-of-class assignments, we have placed over three hundred thinking challenges throughout the book, arranged into three kinds:

1. At the end of each chapter there are over a dozen thinking challenges, most of which can be easily used for group discussions, a journal entry, a personal reflection essay, a research paper, or a class presentation.
2. Within each chapter there are major thinking activities to help students practice or apply a particular aspect of thinking. These, too, can be used in multiple ways.
3. Also inside each chapter are brisk ventures into thinking called "Think About It." These summons to think can also be used flexibly. All of the thinking supports in this book can greatly enliven a classroom.

In addition, the book contains selections from students and some highlighted material on great and courageous thinkers like Leonardo da Vinci, Galileo Galilei, and Benedict de Spinoza. These can serve as models of inspiration for students' thinking. Lastly, each chapter has an introduction that weaves the coming sections together and a summary to reinforce and bring the concepts home.

Throughout this text, the reader is encouraged to pause and think often, to use this book as a beginning place to understand one's thinking and to improve it, and then to go on to discover, create, and apply one's thinking toward a richer life.

ASSUMPTIONS

Three assumptions underlie this text. First, we believe that the teaching of thinking is best done through an interdisciplinary approach. All the logic courses in the world will fail to unseat psychological barriers rooted in enculturation, fear, or a need to protect one's self-esteem. Nor is logic alone particularly useful to a stressed mind, a depressed mind, or one possessed by an ideology. For these reasons we have challenged students in these areas, helped them to see the roots of their irrational thinking, and given them the freedom and insight to begin letting go of these...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Teresa Thomas:

Spent a free a chance to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they performing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Do you need to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book is usually option to fill your free of charge time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the e-book untitled Thinking (4th Edition) can be great book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

Duane Coley:

In this age globalization it is important to someone to acquire information. The information will make you to definitely understand the condition of the world. The health of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of personal references to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can view that now, a lot of publisher that print many kinds of book. Typically the book that recommended to you is Thinking (4th Edition) this e-book consist a lot of the information on the condition of this world now. This book was represented how does the world has grown up. The language styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. The particular writer made some study when he makes this book. This is why this book acceptable all of you.

Lisa Loo:

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