

How to Improve Your Thinking

GoSkills online course syllabus

Skill level

Beginner

Lessons

18

Pre-requisites

No prior experience needed

Video duration

53m

Estimated study time

53m 8s

Instructor

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Introduction

- 1 Why does thinking matter?
- 2 Thinking with others
We often think of thinking as an isolated, solitary activity.

The Attitude

- 3 Cultivating intellectual humility
Being a great thinker starts before you ever crack open a book or enter a conversation.
- 4 Taking your time
Our cultural emphasis on efficiency is often in tension with what makes for great thinking: patience and care.

Things to Do

- 5 Making distinctions
Some of the most critical tools in your thinking toolkit are distinctions.
- 6 Making more distinctions
A place where vagueness often slips into thinking or conversations is in confusing descriptive and normative sentences.
- 7 Only the best argument
When you're already inclined to think something, it's easy to be satisfied with the first argument for it that you hear.

8 Assessing your sources

You might already be skeptical of Wikipedia, but what makes for an actually trustworthy source of information?

9 Use generalizations carefully

Generalizations are both fast and useful, but sometimes they become a way to avoid thinking carefully about a topic.

10 Considering other worlds

Now what's this really about?

Things to Avoid

11 Not defining your terms

Perhaps the most famous philosopher of all time, Socrates, opened almost all of his conversations with one question: "What is that?" After this lesson you'll be able to avoid being stumped by this simple question and instead provide a clear account of your subject matter.

12 Resisting the strawman

When you already know you're right, it's really easy to dismiss your opponents.

13 Infamous ad hominem

One of the most familiar fallacies is the ad hominem.

14 On question-begging

A common phrase is "begging the question." But for philosophers, this phrase has a very particular meaning.

On Context

15 Two key questions

Answers are overrated! After this lesson you'll be able to ask two key questions to get to the heart of any issue, problem, or conversation.

16 What's up with truth?

Some of our most popular ideas rely on untenable claims about truth as a whole.

17 When thinking isn't the right tool

It's tempting to think that thinking alone can solve all of your problems, but sometimes you need to use a different approach.

Conclusion

18 Where to go from here

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