

Intellectual Traits Inventory

Our aim as critical thinkers is to cultivate ourselves as fair-minded, intellectually responsible persons. To achieve this goal, *we strive to develop intellectual traits*. These attributes are essential to excellence of thought. They determine with what insight and integrity we think.

Rating Scale:

- 1 = very weak disposition, needs much development; 2 = weak disposition but showing a tendency toward development;
3 = a fairly well developed tendency toward the disposition; 4 = a strong, well-developed disposition

Intellectual Traits	1	2	3	4
Intellectual humility is knowledge of ignorance, sensitivity to what we know and what we don't know. It means being aware of our biases, prejudices, self-deceptive tendencies, and the limitations of our viewpoint. To what extent do I:				
• admit that there is much to learn from others?				
• use the term "I don't know" frequently?				
• understand that my prejudices or biases influence my thinking?				
• explore my "uncritical thinking" attitudes and realize that they keep me from seeing things as they are?				
Intellectual courage is the disposition to question beliefs you feel strongly about. It includes questioning the beliefs of your culture and the groups to which you belong and a willingness to express your views even when they are unpopular. To what extent do I:				
• analyze the beliefs I hold?				
• question my beliefs, many of which I learned in childhood?				
• demonstrate a willingness to give up my beliefs when sufficient evidence is presented against them?				
• stand up against the majority (even though people ridicule me)?				
Intellectual empathy is awareness of the need to actively entertain views that differ from our own, especially those we strongly disagree with. It is to accurately reconstruct the viewpoints and reasoning of our opponents and to reason from premises, assumptions, and ideas other than our own. To what extent do I:				
• accurately represent viewpoints I disagree with?				
• summarize the views of my opponents to their satisfaction?				
• see insights in the views of others and prejudices in my own?				
• sympathize with the feelings of others if their feelings differ from mine?				
Intellectual integrity consists in holding yourself to the same intellectual standards you expect others to honor (no double standards, "walk the talk"). To what extent do I:				
• behave in accordance with what I say I believe?				
• expect the same of myself as I expect of others?				
• attempt to remove inconsistencies in my actions?				
• strive to recognize and eliminate self-deception in my life?				
Intellectual perseverance is the disposition to work your way through intellectual complexities despite the frustration inherent in the task. To what extent do I:				
• work my way through the complexities in an issue, i.e. not give up when I experience difficulty				
• think of a difficult intellectual problem in which I have demonstrated patience and determination in working through the difficulties?				
• use strategies for dealing with complex problems?				
• recognize that learning is often difficult and that it is important to engage in challenging intellectual work?				
Confidence in reason is based on the belief that one's own higher interests and those of humankind at large are best served by giving the freest play to reason. It means using standards of reasonability as the fundamental criteria by which to judge whether to accept or reject any belief or position. To what extent do I:				
• change my position when the evidence leads to a more reasonable position?				
• adhere to principles of sound reasoning when persuading others of my position and not distort matters to support my position?				
• see the issue from the most reasonable perspective and not try to just "win" at all costs?				
• encourage others to come to their own conclusions and not try to force my views on them?				
Intellectual autonomy is thinking for oneself while adhering to standards of rationality. It means thinking through issues using one's own thinking rather than uncritically accepting the viewpoints of others. To what extent do I:				
• not conform to the standards of others as a "blind follower."				
• critically accept what I am told by my government, the media, my peers?				
• think through issues on my own, not merely accept the views of others?				
• stand alone despite the irrational criticisms of others?				