

Critical Thinking and the Educated Person
EDTE 10
Analysis Paper 1: *Decision Making in Our Personal Lives*

We are called upon to make many decisions during our lives. Some decisions are life changing. Choose a life changing decision that you (or someone you know) is making or has made. If you were not happy with an outcome of a decision, you may want to write about a “do-over.” Use the decision model shared in class to describe the process and the content of an important life-changing decision.

Pre-Writing: (may be group work)

- Brainstorm decisions that you have had to make in the last 5 years or will make in the next 5 years.
- Categorize them into “small” (frequently made, less impact on life) medium or large (life changing, large impact on life; some decisions made on a daily or weekly basis add-up to be life changing).
 - Prioritize the cards in the “large change ” pile with the top being the decisions with the greatest impact on your life.
 - Choose one decision toward the top of your list (be sure you are willing to have a peer give you feedback on your writing about this decision.)
- Brainstorm descriptive phrases about the incident: age, the context, type of impact...)
- List alternatives you considered, advantages and disadvantages of each
- List the values that you used or emerged as you considered alternatives and weighed the advantages and disadvantages.
- List consequences of your decision: What would you do the same? What would you do differently?
- Metacognition: Go back to the Thinking Processes Chart: What specific elements of thinking processes did you use to come to this decision? What dispositions were evident and how do you think they influenced the event?

Draft: (individual)

- Write a 3 page paper: Choose an incident in your personal life (or someone else’s life) in which you believe you needed to be a critical thinker, specifically to make a life changing decision.
 - Describe the incident, including the context for the decision
 - Apply the decision making chart including alternatives considered, how you weighted the alternatives, the **values** that became apparent to you, the actual alternative you chose, and the outcome.
- In an appendix: Metacognition (does not count as the three pages):
 - Reflect on which aspects of the Thinking Process chart do you think you used or should have used? Be sure to include reflections on dispositions.
 - You may have a graphic organizer to illustrate the thinking processes you used.