

**Pensamiento crítico y la alfabetización mediática.**

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## **Critical Thinking and Media Literacy: Urgent Needs in Contemporary Colombian Society.**

We live in an era where information is abundant, but thought is scarce. In Colombia, this paradox is evident daily: a country with massive access to social media, yet with alarming levels of reading comprehension and critical analysis. In this context, critical thinking and media literacy emerge not as optional skills, but as mechanisms for intellectual and social survival. For those of us who choose to educate ourselves beyond the superficial, these tools are the antidote to ignorance disguised as entertainment and manipulation disguised as truth.

Critical thinking is the ability to question the established order, to analyze deeply, and to make informed decisions. It is not a whimsical skeptical attitude, but a conscious practice of mental independence. In my own journey as a self-taught digital creative, this skill has been key to avoiding accepting everything circulating on the internet or in traditional media as absolute truth. Critical thinking allows me not only to learn meaningfully, but also to build my ideas from a solid foundation and with judgment.

Media literacy complements this skill: it involves understanding how the media works, what interests drive them, and how they influence collective perception. In Colombia, where media consumption is dominated by sensationalism, empty reality shows, and an almost chronic obsession with social media, this literacy is practically nonexistent. The majority of the population accesses content without filters or analytical tools, allowing algorithms and sensational headlines to define their worldview. This deficiency is serious, because a citizenry without media judgment is a citizenry that can be manipulated.

Here, a clear statement is needed: the academic level in Colombia remains deficient. Not only due to the limitations of the educational system, but also due to a general culture that values virality over depth. Concepts are memorized in schools, but rarely taught how to question them. In our homes, celebrity gossip is rewarded, while scientific, cultural, and philosophical debates are ignored. This intellectual apathy is a reflection of a society that has normalized ignorance as a form of evasion, and superficiality as a form of belonging.

Faced with this scenario, thinking critically and mastering the language of the media is not just a strategy for personal development: it is an act of resistance. It means choosing the more difficult, but more dignified, path of seeking the truth amidst the tangle of digital distractions. It means understanding that true freedom lies not in having access to everything, but in knowing how to discern what deserves our attention.

## Conclusion

Colombia urgently needs citizens who are not content with consuming, but who dare to think. Who will not accept imposed narratives without analyzing them. Who live not through screens, but through their own ideas. Critical thinking and media literacy are more than skills today: they are a way to break the cycle of misinformation and mediocrity that prevents us from moving forward. Training in these areas is not only a commitment to myself, but also a commitment to the type of society I want to inhabit and build: one that is more conscious, more just, and more awake.