Every day, no matter who you are, you will have to think about something, whether it be about a new career field, making a purchase, what pet to get, family members, friends, etc. While thinking about these things one could use critical thinking without even realizing they are. To be able to take advantage of critical thinking it is important to know what exactly critical thinking is. Knowing what critical thinking is, allows us to identify when we are or are not using it, as well as, allows us to practice using it more often. So, what is critical thinking anyway? Critical thinking according to Moore & Parker (2015) is the process of thinking about what we are thinking to prevent making decisions based off false conclusions but instead making rational decisions based off factual, accurate conclusions.

To put this in perspective, I will give an example of one of my experiences of using critical thinking and the decisions I have made based off those thoughts. In my pursuit to becoming a civilian from a soldier, I have had to do a lot of critical thinking as to what I want to do after retirement. I have researched numerous job fields that I could apply my military skills to, however is the fact that I am in the Infantry I have been limited to mostly the law enforcement fields. I am in my opinion too old to be trying to get these kinds of jobs. With a lot of thought and research, I have narrowed it down to be a small business owner; however, I lack some of the important skills, so I decided that a business degree is what I needed. Through this critical thinking process, I have realized that I need an education, which is why I am here taking classes at the University of Phoenix.

When making decisions, either life changing as in the example or something simple such as how we view something or someone, it is important to be critical in your thought. This helps to prevent us from making irrational decisions based on our beliefs and claims. Just because we believe something is right or wrong does not make it right or wrong. If we claim something to be true or false does not make it so. To be able to make decisions based on these factors we need to be able to have hard facts. It is important to use critical thinking to determine the facts (Moore & Parker, 2015).

For example, when deciding what school will be best for your children, it is a great idea to gather as much information as you can prior to deciding. You cannot just ask one or two people and based solely on their opinions decide that a certain school is what you’re looking for. No, you need to gather much more information that. For example, what sports they have, how are the teachers, the students, the neighborhood, and where it is in proximity to where you are trying to live. These are just examples of why it is so important to think critically when making decisions and coming to conclusions.

It is easy to go on and on about why critical thinking is important, but unless you practice it, you never fully understand. I would not say that I am an expert because I am not in any way. However, every day I do use some form of critical thinking. In my job, I am required to think fast on my feet and decide the best route to go when attacking an objective, and as well as where to place security to prepare for possible counterattacks. The decisions I make will affect the outcome and can even cost lives. It is very important to not only use critical thinking but to do it quickly. Now, I don't have to do this all the time, if I did that would be very bad. However, it is just an example of another important time to use critical thinking to be able to make the right decisions at the right time. Critical thinking is a part of our everyday lives. We can choose to embrace it and become better at it or to constantly jump to false conclusions based on our beliefs and claims.

# References

Moore, B. N., & Parker, R. (2015). *Critical Thinking* (11 ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education. Retrieved March 29, 2018, from The University of Phoenix eBook Collection database