



SOCIETY OF  
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# ***THE DILEMMA GAME***

**SRAI Pre-Award Meeting, May 4, 2026**

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# *The Dilemma Game*

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## Session Outcomes

- Obtain basic critical thinking strategies for problem-solving
- Learn how to work with colleagues to resolve professional integrity concerns
- Learn how to play The Dilemma Game

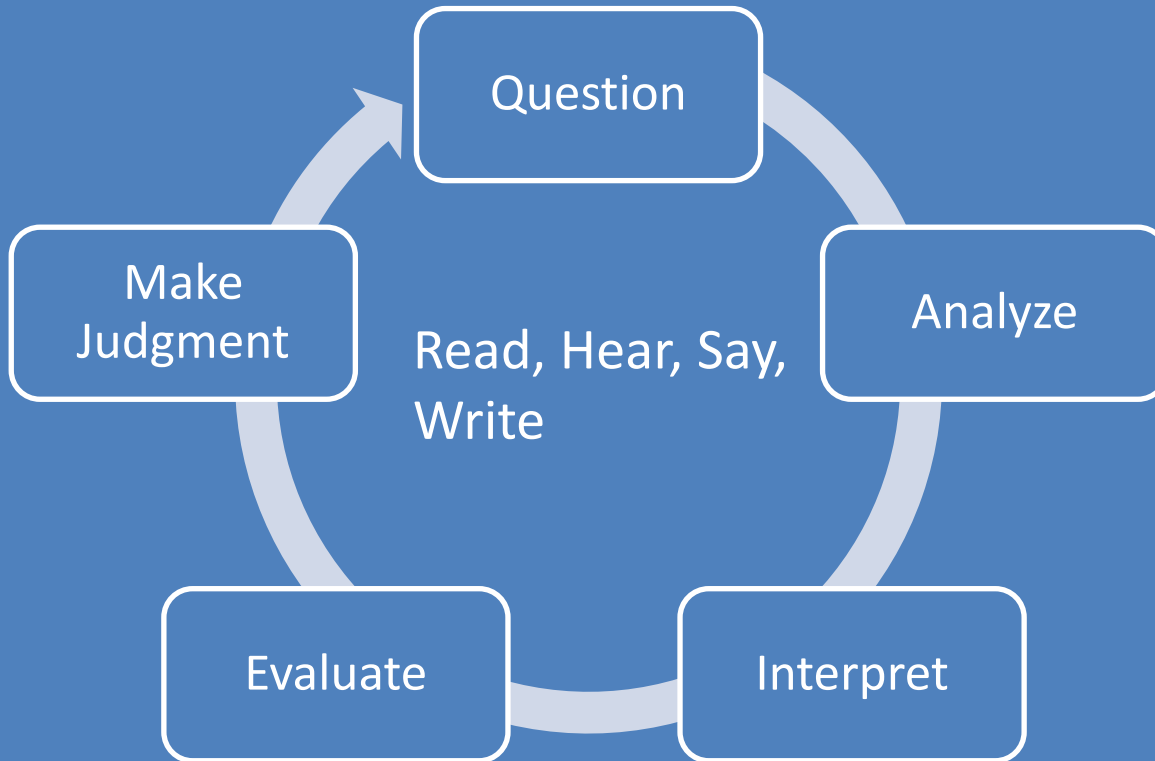


## Critical Thinking Overview





## Critical Thinking



Derived from the Greek *kritikos*, or “able to judge or discern,” good critical thinking is about making reliable judgments based on reliable information

# The Dilemma Game

## Critical Thinking

- Applying critical thinking does not mean being negative or focusing on faults.
- It means being able to **clarify your thinking** so you can break down a problem and interpret it objectively.
- The goal is to reach **informed decisions** or judgments rather than simply responding to opinion or motivation.



Critical thinking is a mindset that is built over time through structured application.



### Not Born With It

Critical thinking is not innate; it must be consciously developed.



### Improvement

Skills are sharpened through continuous practice and application.

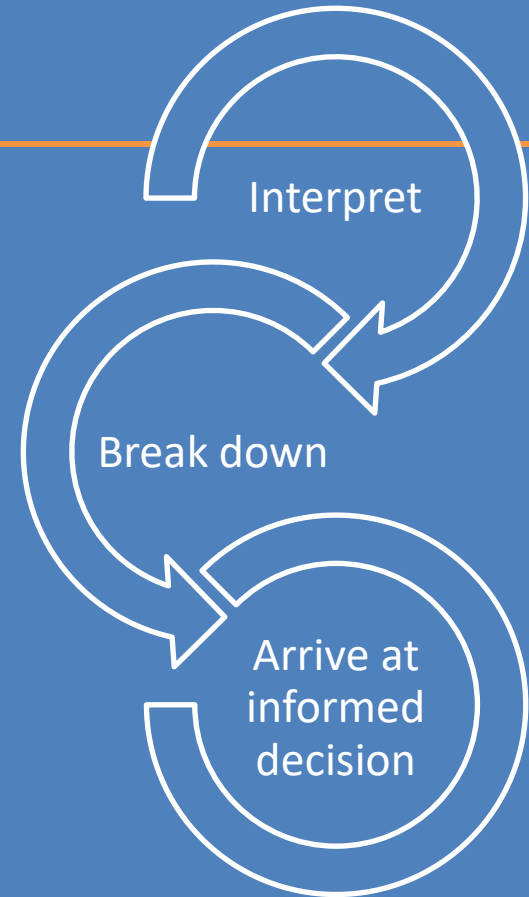


### Clarity

Moves thinking from emotional reaction to reasoned inquiry.

## Critical Thinking

Applying critical thinking does not mean being negative or focusing on faults.

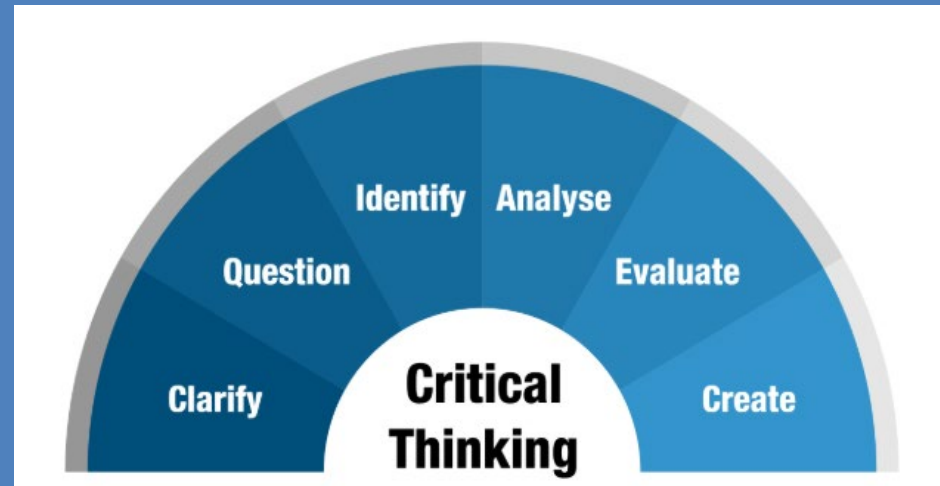


People who apply critical thinking consistently are said to have a critical thinking mindset, but no one is born this way. These are attributes which are learned and improved through practice and application.

## Critical Thinking

To become a better critical thinker, you therefore need to learn how to:

- **clarify** your thinking purpose and context
- **question** your sources of information
- **identify** arguments
- **analyze** sources and arguments
- **evaluate** the arguments of others
- **create** or **synthesize** your own arguments



# The Dilemma Game



## Process to Critically Think

0  
1



### Question Sources

Select information that is credible, accurate, and relevant.

0  
2



### Identify Arguments

Recognize the main points and sources within the material.

0  
3



### Analyze & Explain

Carefully examine and interpret sources and processes.

0  
4



### Evaluate Arguments

Assess claims, evidence, and reasoning from others.

0  
5



### Synthesize & Create

Bring together evidence to create your own reasoned argument.

*Follow this structured approach to transform information into validated insights.*

# *The Dilemma Game*

YOUR TURN!

**Challenge: prove the chair in front of you exists**



**Remember:**

- ✓ Question your sources:
- ✓ Identify arguments
- ✓ Analyze sources and arguments
- ✓ Evaluate the arguments of others:
- ✓ Create your own argument

# *The Dilemma Game*

YOUR TURN!

**Challenge: prove the chair in front of you exists**



**Remember:**

- ✓ Question your sources:
- ✓ Identify arguments
- ✓ Analyze sources and arguments
- ✓ Evaluate the arguments of others:
- ✓ Create your own argument

Answer: “What chair?”

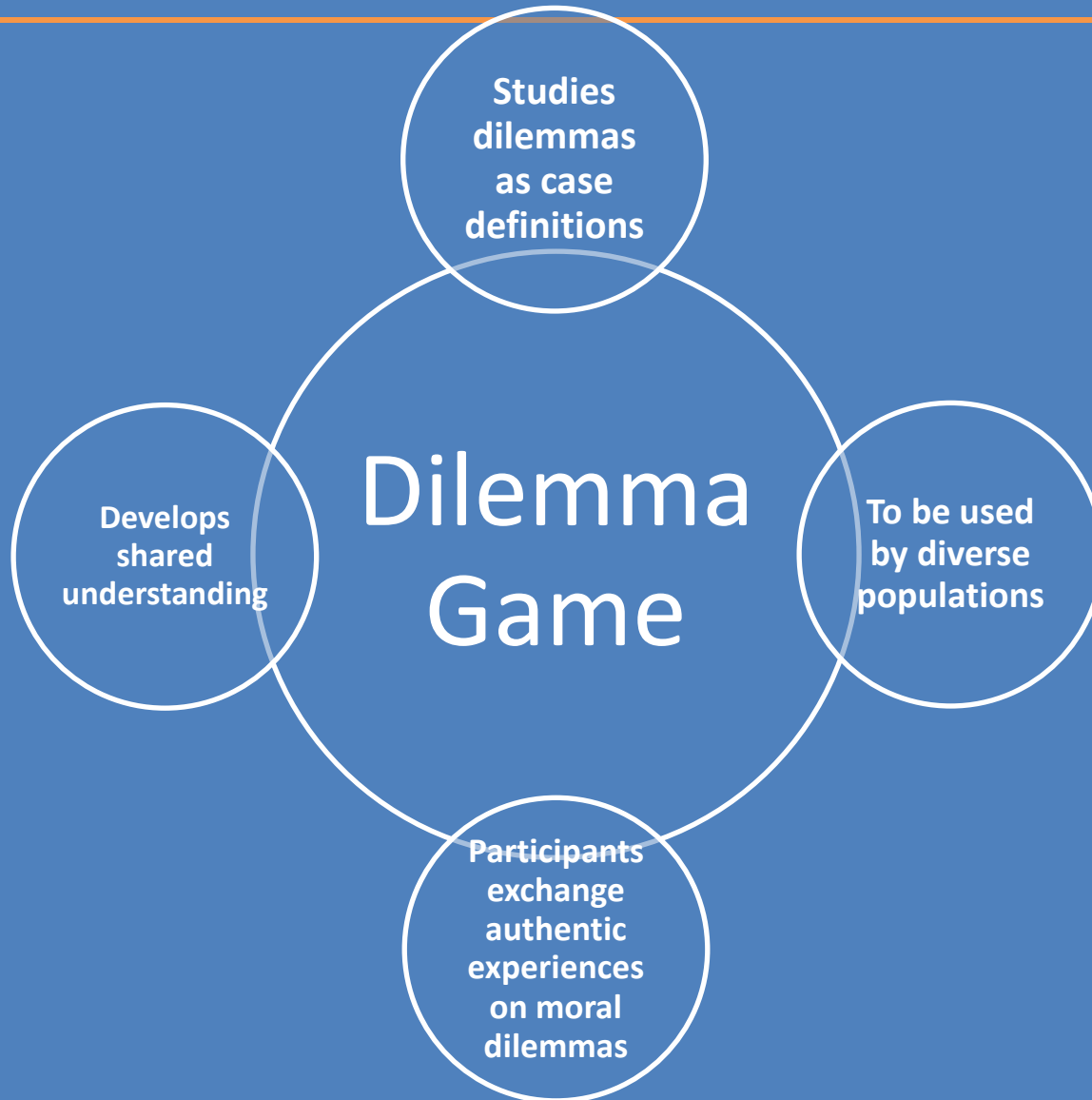
# *The Dilemma Game*

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## WHAT IS THE DILEMMA GAME?

It was developed as an initiative of the Erasmus University Rotterdam Taskforce on Scientific Integrity. The game presents various cases involving moral conflicts encountered in research practice and players have to determine the course of action they would take. The Dilemma Game won an award from the Council of Europe as Best Practice for promoting scientific integrity

# *The Dilemma Game*



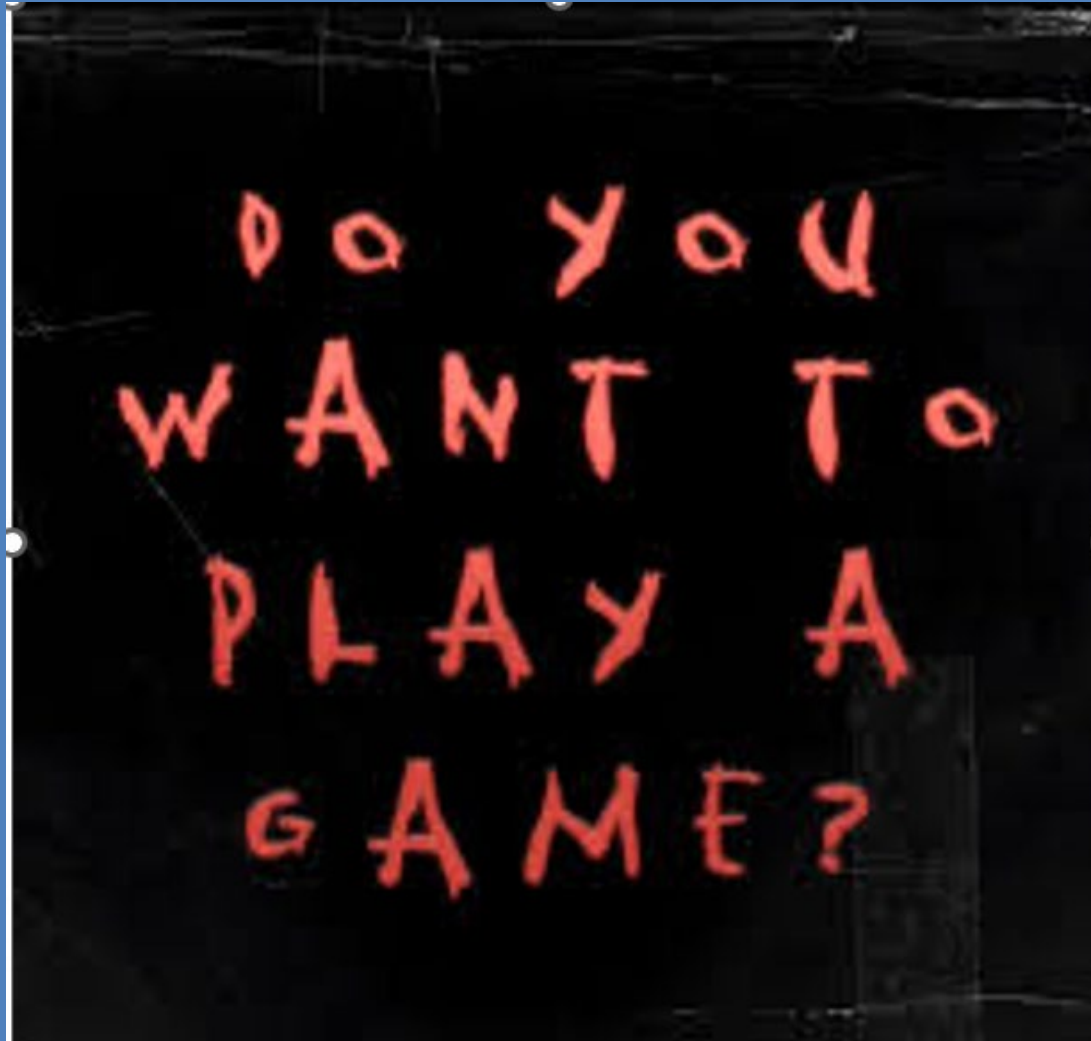
# *The Dilemma Game*

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## BENEFITS OF PLAYING THE DILEMMA GAME?

Reflecting on a variety of moral dilemmas with others in a fun way makes participants gain awareness about the moral content of their day-to-day decisions and actions. That might lead them to consider and understand other stakeholders' positions and justifications as well as their own in the light of ethics and research integrity values and principles.

# *The Dilemma Game*



# *The Dilemma Game*

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## Let's Play!

The Wallet: You find a wallet with \$500 cash and the owner's ID. Do you take the money and leave the wallet, or try your best to find the owner?

- a) Yes, I take it. I need a new Playstation
- b) No, I return the wallet to its home for a modest reward
- c) I turn into Lost & Found and sleep well at night
- d) I leave the wallet where I found it
- e) I find the owner but leave \$300 in the wallet

Would your answer change if you couldn't afford your kid's medicine?

# *The Dilemma Game*

## Let's Play Again!

Pretend you're a researcher. A colleague from your dept makes you the following offer. If you make him co-author on your next paper, he will do the same for you. You are both coming up for tenure soon. To outsiders, since your research overlaps, this will not seem illogical. What to do?

- a) You make him co-author on your paper but choose not to be co-author on his paper.
- b) You accept the offer on the condition that you both critically review each others' papers
- c) You ask advice from your mentor, who happens to also be your colleague's mentor.
- d) You decline the offer and report it to your compliance office

Would your answer change if you otherwise would not make tenure?

# *The Dilemma Game*

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## Suspicious

Students tell you that one of your faculty has manipulated the results of experiments. The students' story is a bit incoherent and you don't quite understand all the science. The faculty is well-respected. What to do?

- a) You tell the students to stop gossiping and start studying more
- b) You do forensic research on your own
- c) You contact your ethics office for advice.
- d) You whistleblow this yourself, reporting that the results of the faculty's research is fabricated

Would your answer change if you were paid from the faculty's funds?

# *The Dilemma Game*

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## Remember the process to critically think!

- ✓ Question your sources
- ✓ Identify arguments
- ✓ Analyze sources and arguments
- ✓ Evaluate the arguments of others
- ✓ Create your own argument

# *The Dilemma Game*

## The Race

Assume you're a postdoc vying for an Asst Prof position. So is your colleague. You are clearly the top two candidates. Your colleague needs your help in completing an experiment for a paper for a top-tiered journal. If she publishes this paper, it's a no-brainer she'll get the job. What to do?

- a) Obviously, I help her
- b) I tell her the problem is too complicated to do
- c) I suggest that I be a co-author on the paper in exchange for my help.
- d) I do the experiment but ensure it fails

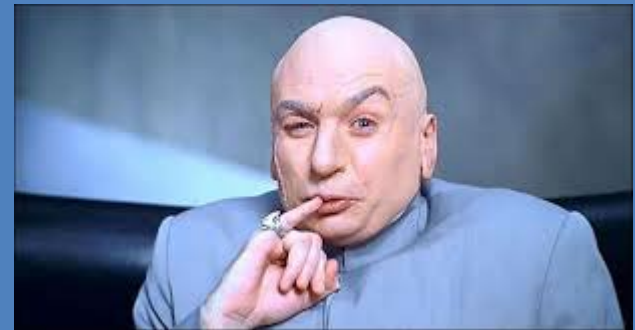
Would your answer change if the colleague had helped you last year on your last paper?

# *The Dilemma Game*

## Pre-Award Dilemma

Dr. Evil is submitting a R01. He wants you to add Dr. Voldermort to the proposal. Dr. Voldermort works in a different field and is dating Dr. Evil. You suspect nepotism, a conflict-of-interest, and fabrication of credentials. What do you do?

- a) Update your resume
- b) Ignore and wait to see if it will be funded
- c) Report to your supervisor
- d) Report to your compliance office
- e) Call Austin Powers to save the day



Would your answer change if you were leaving the dept in 2 weeks anyway?

# *The Dilemma Game*

## Pre-Award Dilemma

A senior position in your pre-award unit has come open. You apply. Your annoying co-worker has applied too. You find their resume on your boss' desk. You can increase your chances of getting the job if you remove your officemate's resume. What do you do?

- a) Of course you remove their application from the pile
- b) You are confident in your skills and do nothing
- c) You believe in good karma and fate
- d) You secretly plant a half bottle of booze in your co-worker's desk
- e) You do nothing but eat your co-worker's lunch in the fridge



Would your answer change if your co-worker was a really really nice person?

# *The Dilemma Game*

## Pre-Award Dilemma

You're leaving your job for a promotional opportunity next month. There is a subrecipient risk assessment that you're not comfortable with but you're getting pressure to approve. What do you do?

- a) "Who cares? I can sign off on it. I'm outta here anyway."
- b) The little angel on your shoulder reminds you that you want to get into heaven.
- c) You defer to your replacement
- d) You deny the subaward because the risk is unmitigatable.
- e) You eat your co-worker's lunch in the fridge



Would your answer change if your co-worker's spouse was a really really good cook?

# *The Dilemma Game*

## Post-Award Dilemma

Your PI has just received a major award from your institution for their research. However, you have just learned that the investigator brought samples in his suitcase last year from a private lab in China to perform his experiments. This is against export control policy and dangerous. What to do?

- a) The ends justify the means. You do nothing.
- b) You report it to the Export Control office.
- c) You mention it to your dept chair.
- d) You blackmail the faculty member.
- e) You call DOGE and report it.



Would your answer change if this resulted in a major drug to cure a long-term disease?

# *The Dilemma Game*

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## Personal Dilemma

You really messed up. In your haste, you transposed digits on a financial report and now your faculty has gone ahead and hired a bunch of new lab staff that he otherwise cannot afford. Admitting this would mean termination for you and likely layoff for the new lab staff. What to do?

- a) Fake your own death.
- b) Go into the witness protection program.
- c) Admit your mistake, resign, and pray for the lab staff.
- d) Discuss with the ombudsperson.
- e) Do nothing and hope no one notices.

Would your answer change if this resulted in a major drug to cure a long-term disease?

# *The Dilemma Game*

## Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training

### Required Core Topics:

- Research Misconduct (Falsification, Fabrication, Plagiarism)
- Data Management, Sharing, and Ownership
- Responsible Authorship and Publication
- Conflicts of Interest and Commitment
- Mentor/Mentee Responsibilities
- Peer Review
- Human Subjects and Animal Welfare
- Research Security and Export Controls (as of 10/10/25 for NSF)



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# Thank you!





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