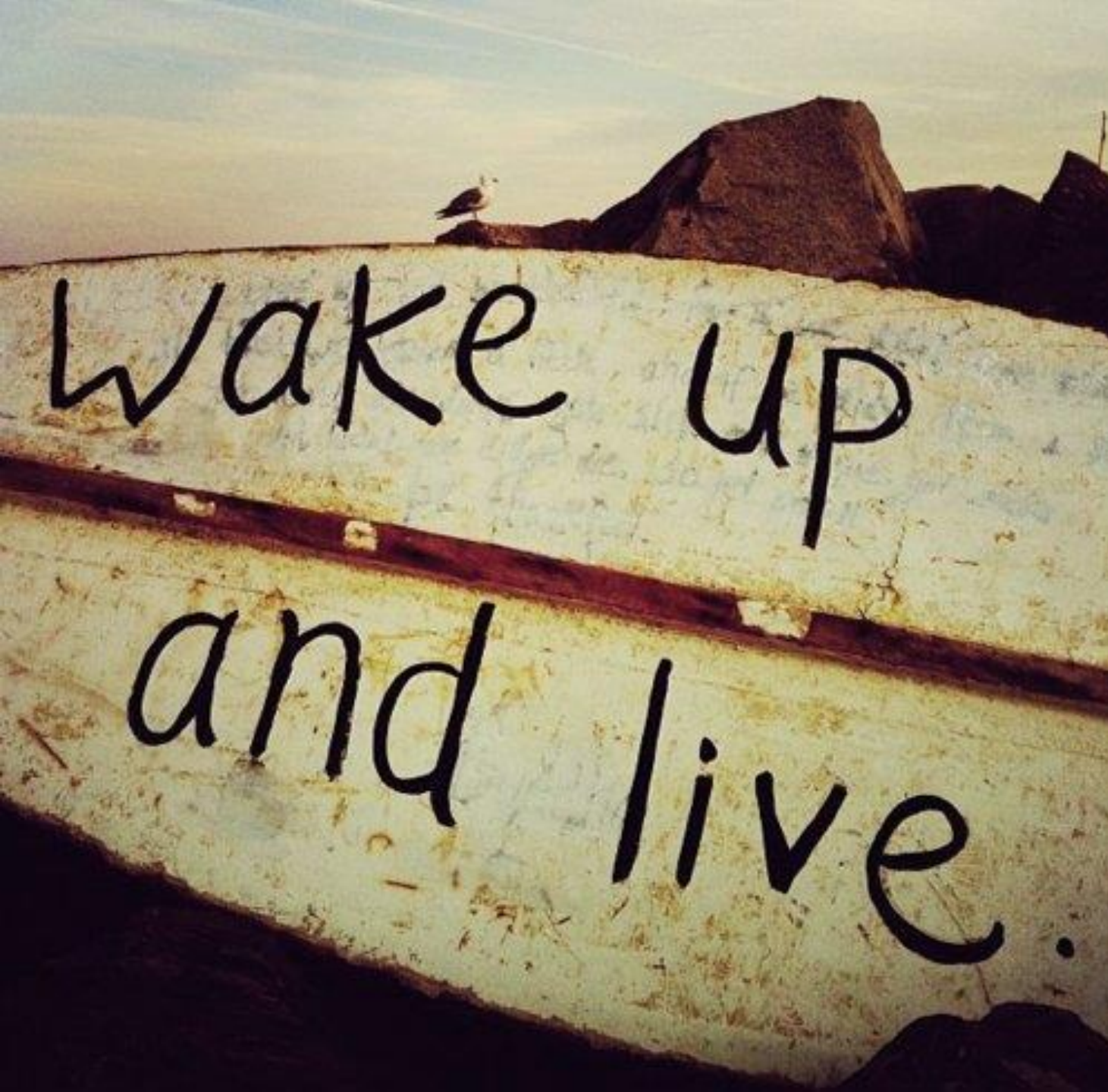


Welcome to ...



Introduction to Philosophy

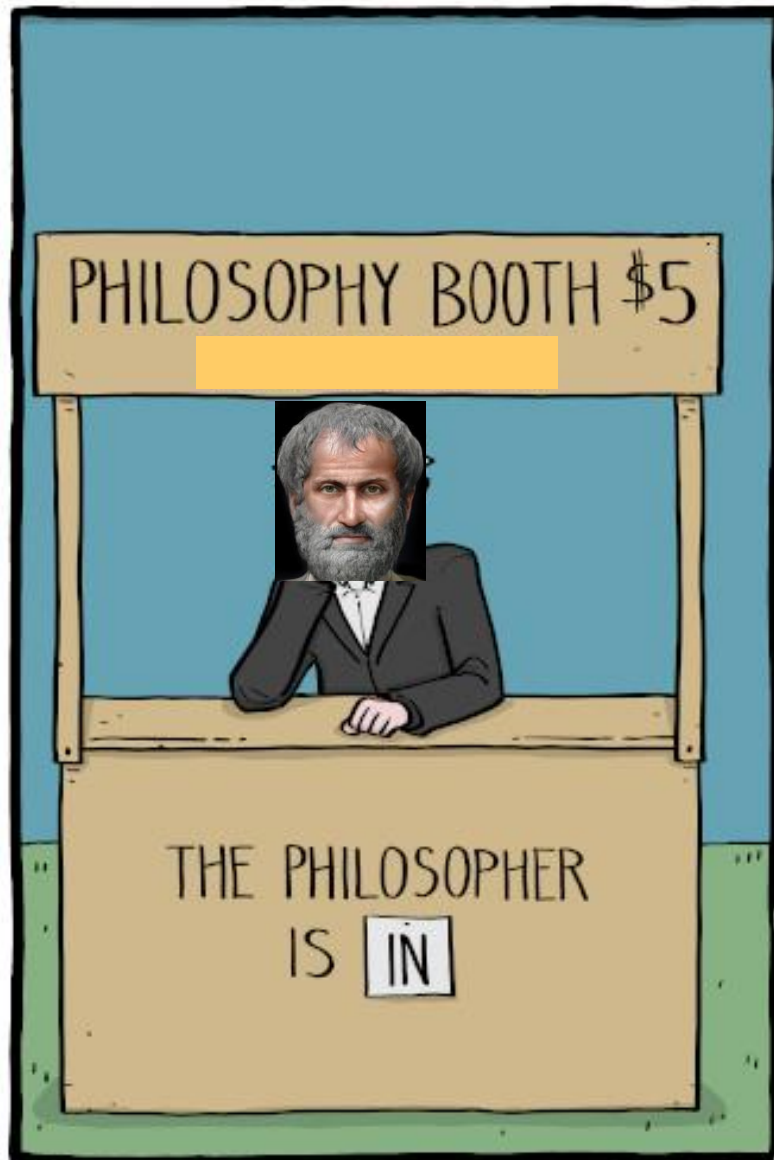


# Philosophy and Life

What are the  
big  
philosophical  
questions  
about life?

# Big QUESTIONS

## What Questions Might People Ask A Philosopher Today?





# Does Everyone Need Philosophy?

‘The unexamined life is not worth living.’  
Socrates, *Plato’s Apology* (38a5–6).

True or false?



Where do our ideas come from?



# Ideas Have Consequences



## Discussion Questions:

1. What are some ideas about the human person common today? (e.g. Who am I? What is happiness? What is the meaning of life? What makes us worthy?)
2. Do these ideas have consequences in ordinary life? If so, how?
3. What difference does a correct understanding of the human person make in family life? What can happen in the family and society when there is an incomplete vision of the human person?
4. What are some implications for individuals & for society?



## The Devil Wears Prada

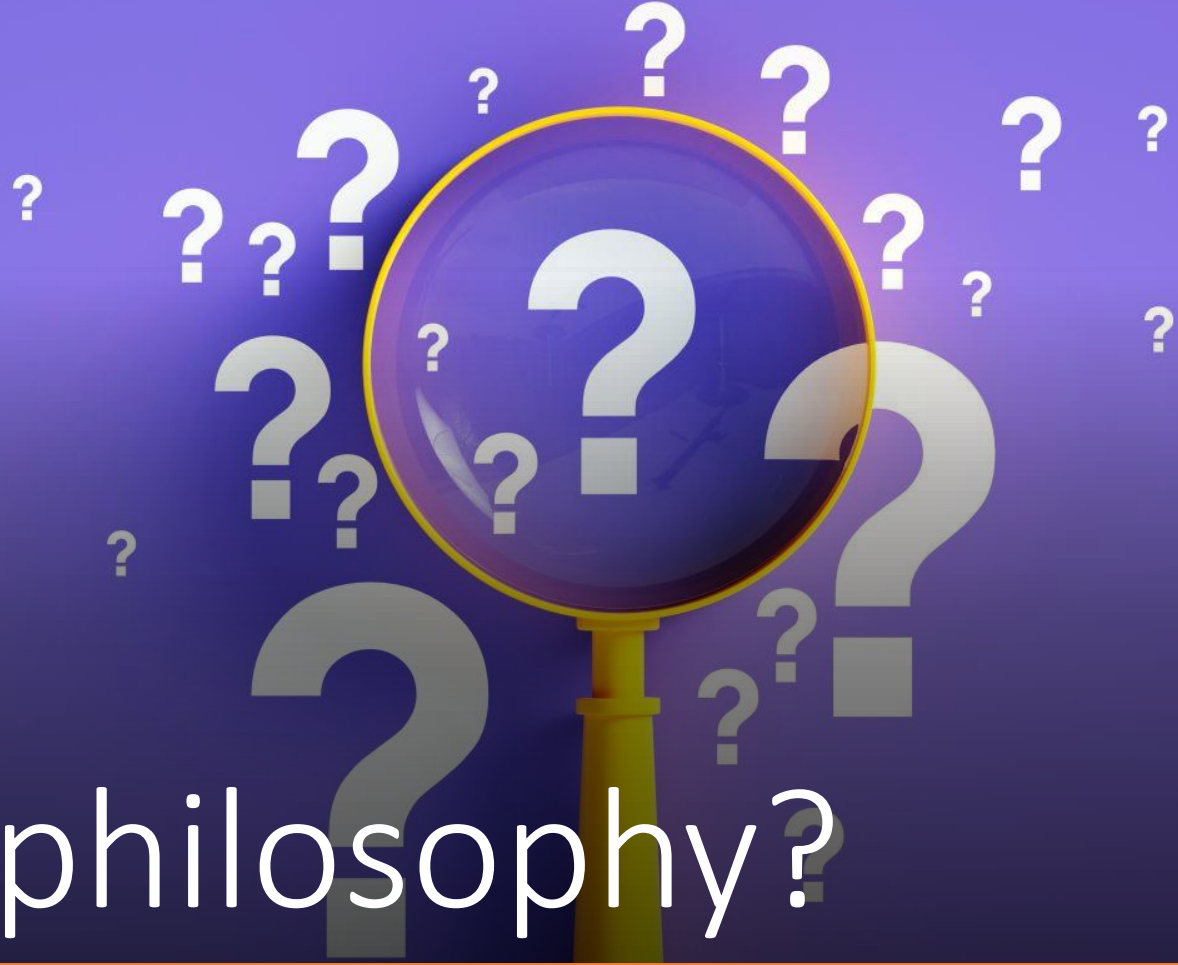
Know Thyself

A movie poster for the film "Flight" featuring Denzel Washington. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark blue pilot's uniform with a peaked cap that has a silver winged pilot emblem. He has a serious, intense expression and is looking slightly to the right. The background is a bright blue sky with a soft, hazy glow. The title "FLIGHT" is written in large, white, spaced-out, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

FLIGHT



## Thought Experiment: The Truman Show



# Why do philosophy?

The Speculative and Practical Intellect: Other ways philosophy is helpful for life?

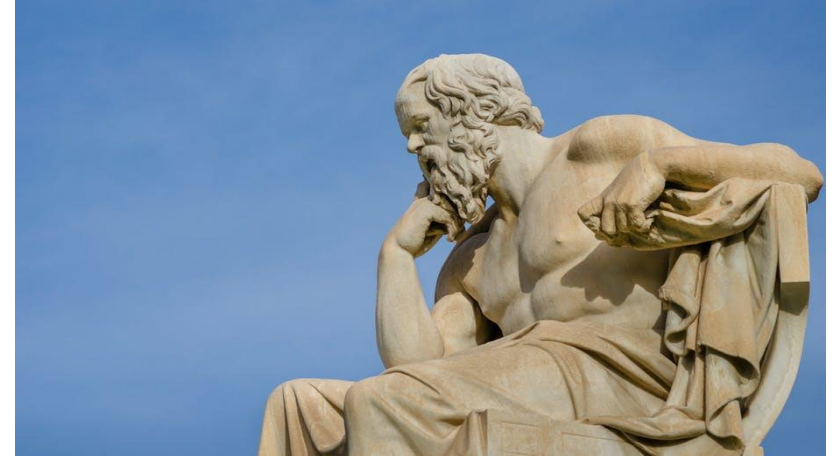




## Ideology

- Study of ideas
- Like philosophy in that it deals with ideas and knowledge, but is not a knowledge of reality but study of ideas (political/social sciences)
- Dependent on philosophical ideas
- **Fixed** ideas or doctrines. Strongly held. Absolutes
- A prism through which see and **interpret everything**.
- **Dogmatic**. Spreading the message.
- No room for discussion or disagreement.
- Set theories and principles for **action**
- Directed to justify a practical attitude or **political program** for action
- Examples?

# Philosophy v Ideology



## Philosophy

- Love of wisdom: Knowledge of reality in light of ultimate causes
- A way of life
- Search for truth
- Questions, discussion, arguments to enhance knowledge. Encourages dialogue, inquiry and learning



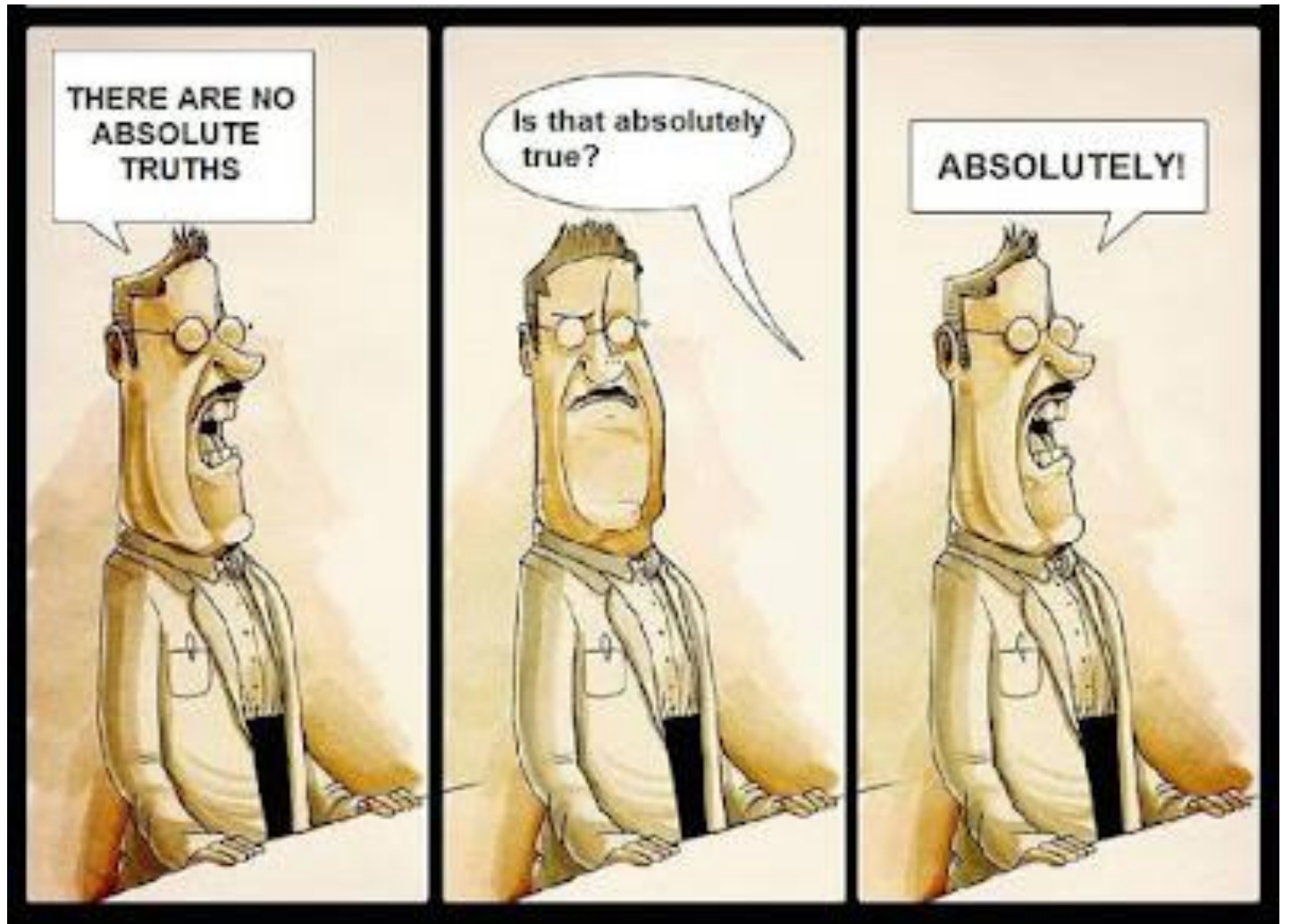
## Why Be Open-Minded?

‘The object of opening the mind, as of opening the mouth, is to shut it again on something solid.’

(G.K. Chesterton,  
*Tremendous Trifles*, 1909).



# Relativism



# Cultural Relativism v Cultural Sensitivity

## **CULTURAL SENSITIVITY:**

Understanding cultural practices as expressions of human nature

## **CULTURAL RELATIVISM:**

An ethical theory that states that ethical beliefs are cultural beliefs.

P1: All people are equal

P2: Different peoples have different cultural practices

C: Therefore all cultural practices are equal.

- Truth/human nature underlies the subjective expressions of culture.
- Culture is not just an expression of subjectivity but also an expression of truth from a subjective point of view.
- As culture is an expression of human nature, we can evaluate certain cultural practices as 'wrong' or harmful if they are contrary to human nature. (Human sacrifice? FGM?)
- Universal Cultural Patterns: Utensils, Social Norms, Language





*Right? Wrong?  
Purpose?:  
Relativism &  
Subjectivism*

**There is no objective moral right or wrong.**

**Subjectivism**: Ethical beliefs are matters of opinion. No one's beliefs are more or less valuable than anyone else's.

**Cultural Relativism**: Ethical beliefs are cultural beliefs. No culture's moral beliefs & practices are better or worse than those of any other culture.

# Some Consequences of Relativism

- ❖ Loss of reasoning skills
- ❖ Loss of questioning & search for truth
- ❖ Dogmatism
- ❖ Lack of conversation & sharing of ideas
- ❖ Equating disagreement with disrespect; taking things personally
- ❖ Culture of suspicion





What is an opinion?  
Are all opinions of equal  
value?

**Why or why not?**



# Are All Options of Equal Value?

- Ignorance of the Facts
- Bias/Prejudice
- Unsound Reasoning

## Arguments from Emotion

- Facts are Secondary & Easily Filtered
- Unsound: Reasoning is Secondary
- Arguments Lack Foundations
- Feelings Change
- Easily Manipulated/Swayed
- Word-Choices Change Response: the power of spin
- Emotions Can Influence/Obscure Reason
  - Sentimentalism, Fear, Anger, Insecurity, Belonging
  - Example: 'Status' of the Foetus before & after birth

# Evaluating Opinions

## Facts

- What facts is my opinion based on?
- How might personal experience or lack of it shape or colour my view?
- My sources (eg reading, personal experience, others, media, intuition, values, etc)?
- Are my facts reliable? Sufficient?
- What don't I know? How can I find out?
- What do I need to know? Might there be facts that I don't know are relevant?
- Relevant church teachings – faith & morals? (CCC, CSDC)

## Critical Thinking

- My values, feelings, perspective
- Preconceptions & assumptions; principles I take for granted?
- Analyse question: break it down
- Clarify terms; language used about the topic (eg 'equality')
- Intention
- Scope (what is/is not covered)
- Internal consistency/coherence
- Dialogue. Considering counter-arguments & other perspectives
- Mindmap

## Sound Reasoning

- WHAT I THINK (Conclusions)
- WHY I THINK IT (Reasons)
- EXAMPLES & SOURCES (Support the reasons)
- Sound Reasoning (Deduction)
  - What are the premises? (Facts true?)
  - Conclusion flow from premises?
  - Conclusion only one can draw?
- Evidence of bias/prejudice?
- Logical fallacies?
  - Ad hominem
  - Appeals to emotion
  - Reductio ad absurdam
  - The straw man
  - Slippery-slope



# Conversation

- Not just about ideas. Interpersonal.
- Exchange/sharing ideas as a *gift*. Listening and receiving, reflecting, learning.
- Open-mindedness. What can *I* learn?
- Acknowledging the common ground. Don't assume others see it.
- Critical thinking is not close-mindedness or suspicion. But critical thinking helps us to have opinions that can really be our own.
- Love for the truth.
- Intellect, will, heart. Whole person.
- Why helping people think & form opinions is important for conscience.
- Perspective.
- Conversation as respect
- Conversation with the whole person: it's not just about the facts. What else is relevant? How do I find out?

# Asking Questions

1. Why is a real conversation a sign of respect?
2. Why are questions important in a conversation?
3. How can good conversations foster trust?
4. It's not just about the facts and ideas. What else is relevant?
5. How can questions help a person form their views?  
How can they help a person reach the truth?
6. How can people react to being told what to think or told what 'I' think?
7. How can questioning and listening make us a better friend?

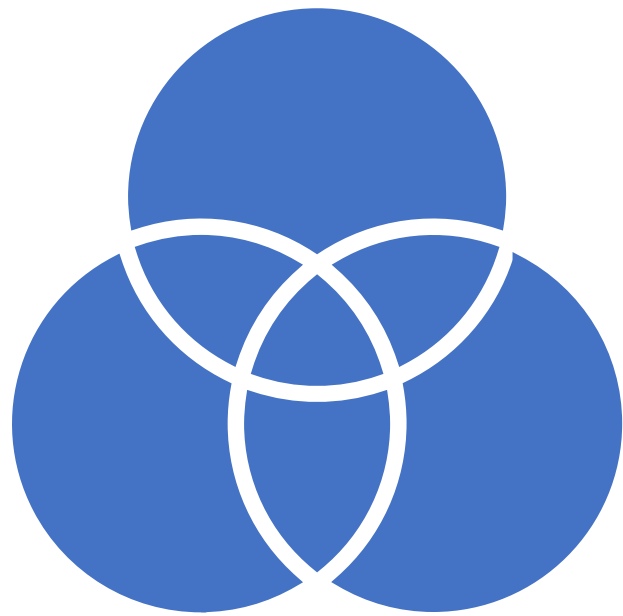


Pursuing the  
Truth

Critical Thinking

Humility & Courage

‘Know Thyself’



Dispositions for  
Philosophy?

Have you sought any information about the topic?

Yes/No

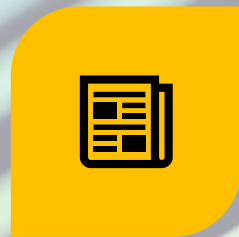
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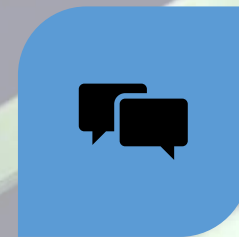
BOOKS/  
JOURNALS



INTERNET



NEWSPAPER



SOCIAL MEDIA



TALKED TO  
SOMEONE

Details: