

## THINKING SKILLS REFERENCE SHEET: ADULTS

### Language and Communication Skills

- Understands and processes spoken words with adequate speed
- Understands and follows conversations well enough to respond
- Expresses concerns, needs, or thoughts in words
- Is able to tell someone what's bothering him or her

### Attention and Working Memory Skills

- Stays with tasks requiring sustained attention (perseverance)
- Does things in a logical sequence or set order
- Keeps track of time; correctly assesses how much time a task will take
- Reflects on multiple thoughts or ideas at the same time
- Maintains focus and concentration
- Ignores irrelevant noises, people, or other stimuli; tunes things out when necessary
- Considers a range of solutions to a problem

### Emotion- and Self-Regulation Skills

- Manages emotional response to frustration so as to think rationally
- Manages irritability well enough to respond appropriately to others
- Manages anxiety well enough to respond adaptively
- Thinks before responding; considers the likely outcomes or consequences of his/her actions
- Can adjust his/her arousal level to meet the demands of a situation (e.g., calming down after being upset)

### Cognitive Flexibility Skills

- Handles transitions, shifts easily from one task to another
- Is able to see "shades of gray" rather than thinking only in "black-and-white"
- Thinks hypothetically, is able to envision different possibilities
- Handles deviations from rules, routines, and original plans
- Handles unpredictability, ambiguity, uncertainty, and novelty
- Can shift away from an original idea, solution, or plan
- Takes into account situational factors that may mean a change in plans
- Interprets information accurately/avoids over-generalizing or personalizing ("Everyone's out to get me," "Nobody likes me," "You always blame me," "It's not fair," "I'm stupid," or "Things will never work out for me.")

### Social Thinking Skills

- Pays attention to verbal and nonverbal social cues
- Accurately interprets nonverbal social cues (like facial expressions and tone of voice)
- Starts conversations, enters groups, and connects with others appropriately
- Seeks attention in appropriate ways
- Understands how his or her behavior affects other people
- Understands how he or she is coming across or being perceived by others
- Empathizes with others, appreciates others' perspectives or points of view