Strong Sense Versus Weak Sense Critical Thinking

1. I understand strong sense critical thinking to mean…

Strong sense critical thinkers are people who only hold opinions and beliefs based on the strongest available evidence from all qualified sources. And they look forward to being proven wrong due to the desire to wanting to get things right. When looking for alternative view points on an issue they will look for sources and authors who are authoritative on the topic. They stay away from opposing view points from weak sources. They do not hold views and opinions purely because their in group holds them. If they do hold an opinion that their own group holds it is purely be coincidence that the evidence and the strongest arguments support it. A strong sense critical thinker also has examples of times, that they have abandoned a belief due to the force of a stronger argument from their opposition. When I say opposition I mean information that does not align with their sociocentric and egocentric ways of thinking.

2. I understand weak sense critical thinking to mean...

Weak sense critical thinkers are thinkers who start from a desired conclusion and use critical thinking to work their way backwards from that conclusion. This is usually a conclusion that is favorable to their sociocentric group or their own personal self interests. It’s like “reverse reasoning”. Whereas a strong sense critical thinker evaluates evidence and information in order to arrive to a conclusion. Weak sense critical thinkers use logic and reason only to support positions favorable to their group or own personal interests. Weak sense critical thinkers have a predetermined destination that their thinking always arrives to. Whereas Strong sense critical thinkers only arrive at the destination that the evidence leads them to. When advising others instead of showing them the multiple pathways to a conclusion they will only show them the path that leads to the conclusion they agree with.
When evaluating evidence , instead of finding the best sources with an alternative view point, they will favor weak unreliable sources that do not risk challenging their view point.

3. I see the following examples of strong-sense critical thinking in my thinking and actions…

I’ve abandoned beliefs that favored my position due to the force of logic from an opponent. I try not to form an opinion that I will later express unless I’ve researched both sides of it briefly. I won’t form an conviction unless I’ve thoroughly researched an issue. I am also very skeptical of writers and commentators who favor my own personal view point and I often try to independently fact check them. One example is during President Trumps first term I intentionally looked for policies and positions that I agreed with. I did not support his presidency but I did look for areas of agreement. I did find things I agree with and most people would also agree with these things. But they were things that even his staunchest supporters were not even aware of. Another example is recently while I did not agree with Trump’s ideas on trade. I spent an entire day only looking and documenting reactions from the business community that coincided with the advertised objectives of his Tariff policy. Which I did find many. (In context the amount of information that was contrary was voluminous )

4. I can admit to the following examples of weak-sense critical thinking in my thought and actions.…

I at times can recreate an oppositions argument in it’s strongest logical form. And I’m afraid that it will be so convincing that I may help sway someone toward an opposing view point. What I end up doing is I may slightly alter the argument so it’s a little bit weaker. I sometimes dismiss ideas from unreliable sources. Or if it’s a person who I know gets their information from unreliable sources. There have been times I was dismissive only to find out they were right.

5. I can improve my thinking and my behavior in the following ways, based on this analysis…

Apply the same level of scrutiny from reliable and unreliable sources. And share all relevant information and arguments even if it may potentially convince people to move away from my desired view point. ( I’m not making any promises here haha! )