Structuralization of the formation of Critical Thinking Skills for Learning, Practice, and Development: Case of Buddhism

Jacob W. Buganga
Department of Religion and Peace Studies
Makerere University, Kampala-Uganda

“There can be no place for thinkers in Universities, no knowledge from researchers, no skills, knowledge, values, and professional qualifications without thinking. Status quo cannot survive from the realities from ecological questions.”

-Odora Catherine Hoppers and Howard Richards, University of South Africa.

Introduction

Critical thinking has vast derivatives from different schools of thought. The Buddhist perspective provides a more structured and guided form of critique, shaped by ethical and moral values that are channeled through the practice and structure of insight meditation. It provides consistent path of thinking and discipline towards attainment of knowledge facets. This comes with some resources such as time, good feeding, and initiative. The positive outcomes outdo the negative, and reinforce the initiative. This makes it most scientifically compliant form of thinking relevant to living fulfilling lives in relation to other philosophical approaches. This significantly prepares practitioners of the discipline for happier times ahead, henceforth; should be encouraged.

My first impression of the term critical thinking, came from what my experience as a child when my guardian challenged me to act every time I got subjected to a problem-solving task; and from the school of psychology where I was taught cognitive processes. Most of the tasks presented to me were to face an institutional system and bend to serve my needs within the shortest time possible, when the needs’ utilization was highest. Every time I failed to bend and fasten the institutional system’s slow processing of requests, my intellect was questioned. I often got asked, ‘Why don’t you think? Think! Think! Think!’ he said. I then got prompted to ask questions such as what, why, how, when, who, and which. My guardian used to call them the ‘six best friends.’ These, according to him, had to be my best friends if I equally had to deal with inevitable complex situations.

Indeed those helped me with time, and I remember to continue consulting them within myself or during my interaction with colleagues. At the school of psychology, I remember: the environment stimuli, sensory system, sensory, brain, motor nerves, and actions towards, and additional environment stimuli. It was a human mental functioning system required of me as a student to understand normal functioning processes and defects, and how they can be corrected.

1 Jacob W. Buganga is a Peace psychologist/researcher attached to the Peace and Conflict Program in the Department of Religion and Peace Studies, Makerere University, with background in mental health. He is also a member and former General Secretary of the Uganda Buddhist Center, and has published several articles on human and ecological justice.
Introduction to psychology provided some forms of learning subject to all beings, of which the most contemporary ones being learning by insight. It is a model most applicable to the so-called superior animals, the primates, including man. It is however supported by other forms of learning that provoke the thinking system, including operant conditioning, when dharma message is used to support the critical thinking process; modeling, involving practical demonstration of critical thinking enhancement processes, when a person practices and experiences critical thinking-enhancement processes.

**Issues Surrounding Critical Thinking Skills in Buddhism**

For the last 2600 years, Buddhism has been at the forefront of finding answers about questions regarding the unknown, through the concept and practice of vipassana, involving awareness of the inner-self, immediate, and far states of the environment. Vipassana is insight meditation. Insight meditation is Buddhist meditation. It is used to develop the mind (Nyunt, 2013). Parts of such developments are: thinking processes and their management and how they are coordinated to reach a certain goal; and the goal of attaining knowledge and wisdom.

Thinking is highly varied dependent on the ever changing emotions levels, either negatively or positively, as provoked by both external and internal stimuli. Much of the emotions involving the instinctual need for flight or fight trigger electric emotions and thoughts, leading into actions. They leave no time to think deeply and determine nature of emotion-triggered thoughts and action, most rationally. Development of critical thinking skills provides conscious and unconscious solutions to irrational, destructive, and conflict-ridden actions. Achievement of right thoughts and actions is a direct consequence of attained ability to master emotions and thoughts, respectively; and guided by rational values. There are values for any nature of emotions, thoughts, and actions, whether rational or irrational; positive or negative; constructive or destructive. This paper caters for the form of thought processes constructed around Buddhist values.

Vipassana or mindfulness provides structure for attainment of critical thinking skills. Incidentally, mindfulness is central in the Buddhist tradition. During the process, the practitioner explores the visible and invisible aspects of the natural world, from which an understanding of the current phenomenon were reached, solutions were identified, shared, and humanity continued to thrive. It has 7 sessions each day. It is 2 hourly 4pm to 6pm concluded by 30 minutes of Dharma Talk.

It involves first by breathing through the nose, taking refugee there, gaining experience of the sensory activities or events, and sustaining concentration on that for 2 days. These sensations are not reacted to but got wind of their existence. It is preceded by experiencing sensations on the moustache area for 2 days. From there, and exploration work begins, involving attaining awareness of the mid area of the scalp, shoulders (beginning with right one), arms (right), wrist (Right), and fingers (on right hand), the same case happens for the left shoulder and hand, legs (thigh to toes, beginning with the right one, ½ a day x 2); chest, abdomen, and back; general experiencing of head to toe sensor activity (back and forth for ½ a day), review unexperienced areas one at a time, review by sweeping the whole body from head to toe x 2, again experience unsensed one a time, pick out one sensory activity one at time when the previously unsensed become gross. In total, this takes days. The finish line (3 last days, per day for at least 2 minutes each): ‘brushing up-down and forth, experience sensory activity one at a time, pick sensory activity one at a time from the gross experience, single (uniform brushing), pick single sensory activity from the uniformly brushed areas, pick out on the blind areas, and lastly; test the mind to find out if it recalls the blind areas.

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2 Vipassana Training Course in Jinja, Uganda, 2010
That predisposes the mind to work more and be a basis of decision making rather than the emotions. Reaction tendencies implied troubles (consequential of poor virtues and mindlessness), and disruptions of life that have to consistently and systematically be eliminated and be replaced better ones that better emotions, thoughts and actions. Critical thinking is as old as mankind; it is an extension of our natural drives, such as the drives to eat, to socialize, to fight in defense or to flight in fear. It provides objective views of those drives before dictating an action to any of them. In other beings, it is electronic.

In the bid to establish existence of critical thinking in Buddhism, the writer explored aspects the mind’s critical thinking architecture and model – vipassana. The author specifically handled the following aspects in that regard: understanding critical thinking, characteristics of critical thinking, development process of critical thinking in Buddhism, impact of attainment of critical thinking skills, and critical thinking in relation to other philosophies.

Paper Design and Development
This paper is constructed from experiences within and outside Buddhist environments, and interfaces surrounding the concept of critical thinking skills that involved peer discussions (5 thinkers), analysis of dharma talks (recorded) by S.N. Goenka, and review of secondary literature regarding Buddhist critical thinking skills. The information was generated under each objective or theme stated above, and subsequently generated it as findings hereunder:

Understanding of Critical Thinking
Critical thinking is the deliberate process of systematically, objectively, and consistently applying the thinking system (learned from the school of psychology) to create awareness of the unknown (problem), understand it compositional elements, find their relationship (cause-effect), and source of solutions to questions about those elements. Self-imagery is a mental process of critical thinking, involving formation of mental images to derive meaning.

The behavioral patterns predisposed get consistent with the desired mental images, influenced my dharma lessons, social norms or traditions. The ultimate to thinking is learning, which is done by developing the inner mind, especially, the thought. When the concentration is right, the right thought follows (Akaraputipun, 2013).

While looking around for any deviations from my existing views about critical thinking, I critically thought that breaking down the term critical thinking into parts, critical and thinking could be a great starting point so that I develop information around singly.

The word critical and then thinking are interesting combination to consider and subject them to critical thinking process as well, to understand and derive meaning. From here, it becomes comprehensible that thinking is a vital part of living and wellbeing through conscious application of sustained mental effort to objectively concentrate on a given phenomenon over manageable period of time to achieve an overall sense of mental control over situations, by one’s ability to solve complicated cases. The Buddhist morality awareness is the path of gaining concentration and wisdom, which include: refrain from killing, refrain from taking what is not given, to refrain from misconduct in sensual pleasures, to refrain from false speech, not being covetous, free from ill-will and hatred, and right view (Gervasi, 2013).

From the World Wide Web, the following words were gathered in respect of the word ‘critical’: attention to errors and flaws, a point at which a phenomenon suffers abrupt change after application of an object to sustain change, and careful evaluation and
judgment. Additionally, for the term ‘thinking’, the following was attributed: the high value process of using the mind to consider something carefully.  

**Critical Thinking in Buddhism**

Different aspects of meditation point to thinking about a target issue of concern in order to solve a given problem; contemplation in order to find a way forward; and worrisome thinking provoked by negative emotions. All they share is the tendency to find solutions to given problems. However, some meditation class participants fail because they are not guided in standardized procedures to produce desired results, of understood phenomena and solutions to them. The Buddhist method of solving problems is by contemplating on thinking, breathing in long at the nostril down to the navel, breathing out long gradually, then wisdom rises to solve problems (Samut, 2013).

Like meditation which is an essential natural way of living, characterizing human beings, critical thinking is concentrated activity over a given situation, broken down into pieces of tasks requiring same amount of time, creating associations between the mind and stimuli, and causing deeper understanding and meaning of issues that seem complex. It involves giving up hindrances and freeing oneself from attachment of the body, and achievement of solitude where though is sustained (Peiris, 2013).

Insight meditation is superior mode of meditation; so how one meditates matters a lot to define person or group’s goal. One clear indication of meditations as a prevailing form of exercising thinking or critical thinking is the discovery of similar way of expression among the Uganda society. The word like *okufumitiriza* exists among the two largest tribes in Uganda. It is used to mean in-depth application of the mind to understand a situation, or taking time to think.

Peoples (2013:7) in his paper, ‘The Sangiti Sutta as a Meditation Manual,’ in respect to attainment of deliverance, noted: “…applying the mind to the Dharma and thinking and pondering over what is being mentioned and then concentrating attentively to the Dharma principle.” This associative nature of thinking is learning by insight in Buddhist teaching. After a while, the action taker will be in position to solve problems or make very shrewd decisions, a way out of puzzles of life.

It easily identifies gaps in living and fills them up. Indeed meditation is critical thinking but critical thinking is not necessarily meditation; meditation manages thinking. It goes a long way to concretely predispose the mind and body towards certain behaviors and discipline as taught by Buddha, about the realities of life, including the 4 Noble Paths.

A concept hereby presented within the context of critical thinking, includes making deliberate steps to invoke and provoke experiencing of stimuli, arousing of emotions, triggering of survival instincts of fight or flight, higher thinking (critical thinking) for higher sense of security, deeper attention, awareness, enlightenment, necessary to cause a transformative action on both the individual and his environment as appropriately and sustainably desired by the individual. Critical thinking is made possible by relaxation, attained through deep, and all of which are featuring elements during the process of meditation.

This paper, though, caters for critical thinking, combined, in a Buddhist perspective, in pursuit of the following objectives: find out an understanding of critical thinking in the Buddhist perspective, its origin, identify its patterns, its role in beings, and compare it (in Buddhist perspective) with other religious and philosophical perspectives. It gives the context within which critical thinking processes are held raises questions and thematic answers regarding it, as used in Buddhism.

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3 Word Web Computer Dictionary Application, used on 23 March 2013
Insight meditation also equals mindfulness. It happens in line with events and aspects in the environment. Though it one is able understand and differentiate them. Mindfulness develops insight, and subsequently he or she becomes familiar with realities of life (Gyi, 2013). Indeed insight meditation is as complete as learning by insight, thought, going far to incorporate other forms of learning such as observational learning and consistent learning.

For humans, to act outside the sieving roles of critical thinking phases in mental and behavioral processing, issues are reasoned out before being acted out. Bypassing that phase lead to dysfunction tendencies: compromised rationality. If a person has been doing mindfulness exercises, his or her action patterns will depict existing critical thoughts and from bases of religious and cultural values.

Critical thinkers thrived so much in the past, when people dedicated their entire time and lives on it to understand phenomena, predict outcomes and form conclusions to share with the rest of man-kind. It is based on values enshrined within the four noble paths. Much of what we base on to make instant problem-solving decisions and nurture new generations. There has been a greater tendency of reproducing more ancient thoughts than new ones, or rather ancient knowledge is dominant.

**Characteristics of Critical Thinking in Buddhism**

Critical thinking is an integral part of the Buddhist practice of Vipassana, and it has the following characteristics:

The daily disruptions, which may be hunger, phone calls, radio, television, and members of the opposite sex, among others, are controlled to facilitate critical thinking process. Food and drinks are made available during breaks; phones are shutdown to avoid any distracting calls, the same is the case with radios and televisions; and members of the opposite sex are asked to sit separated so as to enhance concentration.

The mind is relentless guided to focus on existing pattern of events in and outside the person’s sensory environment, including the natural environment. It is a levels analysis of events, penetrating the puzzles of life; both the desirables and undesirables. There are 2 to 3 hourly breaks shows the changes so far felt in as far as perception of the world, understanding it, intelligently relating to it, and succeeding in life alongside it. Pursuance of morally upright thoughts and behavior patterns, vertical and horizontal communication paths to the divinity and other beings, respect to spiritual leadership hierarchies, much dignifying of holy places, and scriptures as bases of Buddhist thinking and understanding (Wikipedia, 2010).

Critical thinking is not purposeless; it aims at solving problems that arise from accumulation of internal and external pressures and vice-versa, which cause mental and physical dysfunction. It exhibits on-going activities and events, their properties, from where the practitioner is able to align cases, tell their relationship, and predict favorable outcomes to best consider as solutions to emerging problems. The act of critical thinking must thus have a purpose. Even when one possible solution to a given problem fails or is not good enough, he or she is still surrounded by numerous alternatives, from which to select most applicable answer. The ability to do this evolves from successful practice of mindfulness, which is a Buddhist philosophy and practice of paying careful attention to the present moment. Elements in the present moment include breathing, heartbeat, and thoughts (Star, 2013).

It is a conditioned process or activity; the conditions include freeing oneself from the daily routines of work, receiving calls, watching television, listening to music, attractions from the opposite sex, and guilt arousing and mind-compromising habits like

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4 Vipassana Training Course in Jinja, Uganda, 2010
aggression towards animals and alcohol. Instead the person is enabled to focus on internal and external environment events in a more controlled and systematic way.

There are breaks in-between the critical thinking phases, to enhance mental coping and physical coping with the new experiences. At this time practitioner makes sense of the puzzles. Balanced diets accompanied by safe drinking water and other fluids are specially provided to support body after undergoing shocks and reactions to new experiences. There is mindful of what is eaten to avoid concerns associated with unhealthy eating habits.

It is practical not story-told to have critical thinking abilities. While debates about a subject such as critical thinking are common and easily engulfed into, it is rather common for anyone to make comments or make a speech over that matter, without prior experience of it. However, the Buddhist perspective of critical thinking gives room to experience and have a reason to speak about it.

It is inexpensive for beginners. The context within which critical thinking is exercised in Buddhism, known as vipassana, it is free course for beginners. After learning the basics, they are able to practice on their own and at their own time discretion; so the only incurrence turns out to be any time despite one’s busy routine.

It goes beyond the natural way of living, very essential for one realizes reason for living. People who attempt to forego this valuable etiquette can be termed as being simplistic, as opposed to complex animals; the kind human beings are expected to exhibit. Simplistic beings are the category of worms and ants

**Critical Thinking Development Processes in Buddhism**

Heong (2011:V2-282) wrote:

All students are capable to think, but most of them need to be encouraged taught and assisted to the higher order thinking processes. These higher order thinking skills are teachable and learnable. All students have the right to learn and apply thinking skills, just like other disciplines of knowledge. Higher order thinking is defined as the expanded use of the mind to meet new challenges [p.1]. It requires someone to apply new information or prior knowledge and manipulate the information to reach possible answer in new situation [p.2].

Similarly, in Buddhism, the process is taught and practiced guided by values, enriched by dharma message. This builds great experience of harmony and calmness, which are vital for healthy thinking exercises.
Figure 1: Vipassana’s Critical Thinking Development Process Structure

It is a systematic (following specific values and practices) and consistent mental concentration on a given phenomenon one at a time as their activities occur, without being judgmental, and without having prior goal as motivation to exercising it. The critical thinking exercises penetration of puzzles in the life and non-life systems back-to-back and either sides of objects reactions and events in the environment to gain deeper understanding of their tendencies without bias or subjectivity.

Besides, subjectivity is broken through equal time of observations, disappearances of mental contact, and muscular and general physical relaxation, regardless of what is happening in the environment. This continues to be the case in one’s day-today routines. The properties of the varied observations from which obvious, hidden, and the unknown answers (mysteries of nature) are encountered and found, get indiscriminatively known in unison, in depth and breadth.

During the mental interaction, unison if formed and end up being part of the existence of the practitioner, and making it easier to discern the good and bad based on universal values and principles enshrined in the Four Noble Truths. If the values are bad,
they will be strengthened in the mental faculty and behavioral patterns of the individual, and so will be the cases of values are good. From here, the unknown becomes known, and the individual is able to respond to appropriately and effectively to different complex questions that seem puzzling to many or everyone. The focus of attention is temporary; it soon vanishes and ceases to be an issue of concern. The mental solutions provide physical solutions. The mental action of concentration on particular elements and their dynamic nature, without going astray, is structured to facilitate physical concentration, high-levels of creativity, and productivity in their endeavors in line with the current needs. The process is directed from the narrowest of the scope to the widest, to free style, and to mental recollection of previous events. It is a total and in depth mental analysis of the visible and invisible events. The answers to emerging problems are found through consultation of the mass of information acquired during the critical attention on events happening in vipassana course. The information generated is inferential or referential. That is, it is used to understand future events and earlier ones. The practices and values that support critical thinking are the Eight Precepts, the Four Noble Truths, and the expanded Eightfold Noble paths so that the likelihood of adherence to those values is positively strengthened and perfected overtime, and thus; yielding success. The developments of critical thinking skills is shaped by Buddhist values, and are (critical thinking skills) further reinforced them: the Buddhist values

**Impact of Critical Thinking within Vipassana-Critical Thinking Structure**

The observation of the events impact individuals differently, depending on the efficacy of implementation of the idea; some take shorter times to feel the mental and physical changes, new abilities and competences in response to and managing them as well as occurring and incoming events about the social and natural worlds. From the variety of events observed, the individual is able to make a cost-benefit analysis whilst in the more practical world. The mentally-tasked cost-benefit analysis includes matching of events against existing values before making rational actions. A practitioner is able to cope with the mental, physical, and social distractions as well as those in the so natural environment such critically thought and planned activities are the ones that prompt behavior. Attain to details is developed and sustained through processes of problem-solving. It is easier to see through puzzles when others are struggling, about to give up, or have given up. It provides high quality decisions and actions. The practitioner is clear-headed (thinks healthily), makes quick resolutions from both knowledge gained during mindfulness, and walks the talk, without any inconsistencies. He or she assumes the role-model stature; becomes an admiration of the community and easily assumes leadership, all because of the consistently good ethical and moral conduct.

It builds a sense of psychological and physical security being able to walk around puzzles and the seemingly complex problems to solve for one’s and other’s wellbeing. Wellbeing is enhanced by way of eliminating fears, anxieties, and maladaptation that are common among people with stagnated problems in their minds. The person achieves a level of comfort, harmony, and peace with himself and the rest of the world, with which he or she shares the benefits. The elimination of insecurities in one’s life sets ground for healthy choices and decisions, calmness, confidence, courage, humanitarian, sociable, well-balanced mind and behavior, focused and goal oriented nature, productivity, and success. This has been supported by several writers, including recently, Star (2013), who said:
When practiced regularly, mindfulness can bring about a deeper sense of clarity and personal understanding. Insight gained through mindfulness can be a starting point that influences a change in behaviors. For example, through mindfulness, a person with panic disorder may begin to recognize how his/her self-talk affects deep emotions. The person may then decide to change this negative self-talk by working on new behaviors throughout the day, such as trying affirmations, stress management techniques, or gratitude journal writing.

It prompts positive response towards peace-building efforts, through forgiveness, restoration, healing, and transforming people from viewing it as a way of achieving personal-level success to community-level wellbeing (Rodrigues, 2010).

The attribute of patience is nurtured through the condition of persistence and enduring during the tense episodes to muscular actions, and mental boredom and exhaustion. These are rather looked at a representation of misery characteristic of usual afflictions of man and woman, which are only given equal observation time like all other events happening in the course of critical thinking. Critical thinking may undo defensive and protective roles of instincts, which require no thinking. However, earlier critical thinking exercises could provide immediate (instinctual) answers to problems that require instant solutions.

These whilst guided by Buddhist moral and ethical values generates the cessation of the sense of guilt, generating a positive sense of self and enduring harmony with others as errors and conflicts are minimized as much as possible through right thinking and actions. Also individuals are helped to avoid possessiveness that caused unnecessarily fearfulness, anxieties, and suspiciousness to avoid jealousy which increased mental pain; help to build individual diligence through application of energy and alertness of right intensities to achieve success; right intentions (or a life without stealing, taking other man’s wife) to avoid embarrassments, shame, guilt and loss of respect; to build individual confidence, social harmony with self and fellow men; and to avoid generating anger, among others, through verbal and behavioral provocations (Knight, 1999).

Anandarajah and Hight (2001) note that spiritual distresses and spiritual crises occurs when a person is unable to find sources of meaning, hope, love, peace, comfort, strength, connection in life, and when conflict occurs between the belief systems and life events. Buddhism is thus a way of life and understanding of all that surrounds beings, be it living or non-living things. Practitioners are made aware of the effects of the would be actions and effects and, subsequently; they are able to make right decisions.

Adverse Impact of Vipassana-structured Critical Thinking Skills

The adverse impact of the practice Buddhist practice of critical thinking falls under what is incurred to achieve positive outcomes, including the undesirable muscle reaction characterized by pain, tingling and tightening; the missed fantasies during mindfulness, and the time taken which someone would to do something else. In a very violent environment, critical thinking geared towards peace may be over showed by ones predisposition towards violence unless guided by peace-enhancing values. Still, the benefit outmatches the costs while at the same time the ill-feelings during the critical thinking exercise are short-lived and leave behind only positive benefits. It is necessary to receive guarantees about continued benefit from critical thinking exercise, which is achieved through the regular practice; but research has indicated that spiritually inclined practices easily accelerate individual to becoming mentally ill.⁵

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⁵ Spiritual people are prone to mental illness, Sunday Monitor, February 3, 2013 p.vi
Critical Thinking in Buddhism in Relation to other Philosophies

Critical thinking in Buddhism is independent of the ego while other religious philosophies make it egocentric, which prompt them to act on behalf of their mental states in the name of religion. Their subjective nature spreads to assume that everyone must be like them, where that fails conflicts ensue.

In Buddhism, it is a personal project set aside every day or according to a person’s discretion; in other religious philosophies, it is replaced by spiritual assumptions that the almighty God thinks on their behalf; and gives them solutions. It emphasizes more self-practice to obtain wonderful outcomes from right thought and structured processes than merely believing or being made to do so. It is rather a committed fight, a personal battle, and a way to liberation, a universal path acceptable to people of all shades (Goenka, 2007).

In Buddhism spirituality and the practitioner are partners and interact and form unison identity, from where understanding of the unknown (spirit or non-physical) is attained. In other religions spirituality dictates through written scriptures and known representative of a religious sect. The tendencies of vulnerability have been experienced in Buddhism in their response to terror attacks from other sections of religious thinkers. Moral guidance to thinking and practice exists among other religions, too. Hygiene and removal of shoes in worship places to express orientation to purity across the spiritual, mental, and physical segments of the being are used to generate senses of uprightness and union with the spiritual truth to guide thinking and practice (Seyyed, 1987).

In both Buddhism and other religious philosophies, critical thinking is crucial for the survival of the followers, from violence and through peaceful means. Critical thinking skills are a science which must be encouraged. Pope Benedict XVI cautioned about extreme attitudes towards science; he reveal that it holds answers to life problems (St. Andrea Parish Catholic Church, 2010).

In Buddhism, there is a considerable time and commitment to critical thinking, exercised through mental observation of particular events by equal amount of space and time. In other religious philosophies, it is the scriptures and leaders that provoke thinking.

In Buddhism subjects in which critical thinking is done, are diverse and ever-emerging, whereas in other religions subjects are unchanged. The thinking process is controlled, supported by human effort, egos and resources.

In Buddhism, critical thinking is respected and nurtured, in other religious philosophies, it is undoing the almighty position of God, who is overall master of all being, and thus is discouraged.

Similarities:

Buddhism and other religious philosophies have values and doctrines that guide their thoughts, regardless of the commitment placed to critical thinking process and the length of time given to it alone. They both provoke critical thinking in line with them. Until now, however, the benefits of critical thinking are outwardly still eluding all. Irreconcilable fanaticism has turned out to be the leading cause of trouble in recent years, leading into acts of terror on either side. Over the years Asia and the Middle East have been grounded in largely religious antagonism. Interreligious dialogue, through which to channel religious concerns across the religious thought-spectrum, suggests that sharing and discussing with other idealists was, however, the biggest way to go (Kung, 1992).

Buddhism and other religious philosophies have a shared spiritual space, with which they interact to cause changes in lives of subjects, attained through affirmation exercises during vipassana and mindful prayers or worship. Dharma is a universal phase for all people and elements.
While mindfulness has earliest origins in Buddhist philosophy, it permeably spread into other diverse areas. Star (2013) wrote: ‘The practice of mindfulness has origins in Buddhist philosophy, but is now widely practiced by people of a variety of religious backgrounds or spiritual beliefs.’

**Conclusion**

Critical thinking is an essential process of generating information to solve human problems and changes lives. It is equally vital for survival and sustainability of life and systems that support it. Because of the pressures of life, man and woman hardly take time to conduct critical thinking exercises, instead, they react and drown in misery. Buddhism approach provides critical conditions for critical thinking enshrined in vipassana practice, where proper thinking occurs, disruptions are controlled and given limited attention, to enhance critical thinking and learning. It is guided by moral and ethical values to project thinkers from making hazardous choices. Critical thinking is conjoined by traditional practices such vipassana. By divorcing it, it provides alternative model label for the traditions, alongside labels like mindfulness, insight meditation, and meditation. The duplication of the traditional could cause confusion among new generations of practitioners, and could give hard time knowing which is which. It is therefore safer to say that critical thinking = vipassana = insight meditation. More research is needed to show if there is any differences. Interestingly, the thinking patterns are most localized, from the inner environment to the far external world, which ensures that all solutions developed are most appropriate to one’s immediate world. Therefore, to contribute to the wellbeing of world through objective or purposed critical thinking and planning, one must critically focus his or her thinking about the self; understand the self, the immediate environment and the far worlds, apart. From here, one is able to make right and constructive decision for personal good and the benefit of others, now and in future.
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