

My critical thinking skills



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My critical thinking skills were put to the test when my husband and I were displaced by Hurricane Katrina. That tragedy turned our lives upside down; and all of my plans and dreams needed to be fully re-evaluated in light of our new circumstances. Being forced to move from New Orleans to Pennsylvania was unexpected. I did not know what opportunities would await me in a new state. Spending the time and money to pursue my dream of becoming a medical doctor seemed almost like a luxury. We literally had to start all over again, and it was very difficult to find a job that was sufficient to make a living due to the economic conditions at the time, and my status as a virtual refugee of Katrina.

Critical thinking came into play when I spent six months trying to find a job but got nowhere. I was at a crossroads where I needed to make a decision about whether my time was better spent continuing to look for work, which may or may not have been a fruitless search, or whether I should rededicate myself to pursuing academics in order to invest in my future and in my husband's future. The latter decision would be an enormous sacrifice. We really needed to make ends meet, and finding a way to boost my income rather than spending money on my education would have been the easy decision to make. Nevertheless, after seriously thinking through the options, I began to realize that making the choice to go to work now would have meant giving up on my future. I had to think critically about what I would be gaining and losing under both options.

Working right away would have helped us to live more comfortably in the short term, but would have locked us into a situation where we would always be living on the edge of subsistence. Perhaps most importantly, I knew I

would never really be happy. I had decided long ago in Algeria that my happiness was directly linked to my work in the medical profession. I began to realize I would always harbor some resentment toward myself if I gave up on that dream in order to placate a temporary crisis in my life.

Researching my options for breaking back into the medical profession led me to discover the Thomas Jefferson College of Health Professions. A thorough review of the school's reputation and the quality of its programs led me to the conclusion that this was the right course of action. This school holds out the promise of the fulfillment of my lifelong vision of caring for the health and the quality of life of other human beings. Ultimately, my ability to think critically led me to the conclusion that I needed to think with my heart and never give up on my hopes and dreams, regardless of whatever crises I might be confronted with in my life.