

# Points to Remember to Guide Learning

## Point #1: Definition of critical thinking

Although there are many definitions of critical thinking, the one that best describes the expectations of this section is purposeful and goal directed thinking (Halpern, 1984 as cited in Alfaro-LeFevre, 1999).

## Point #2: The reasoning process

The examination of the thinking behind clinical decisions helps to make the reasoning process explicit, so that it can be improved.

### *Characteristics of Critical Thinkers*

#### **As individuals:**

- Having a questioning attitude.
- Being aware of own limitations.
- Being open to new ideas and new ways of thinking about things.
- Being skilled in searching out information to keep up-to-date.
- Having an organized approach to work.
- Exchanging ideas by talking to others.
- Making judgments based on facts and logical reasoning.
- Maintaining a focus on continuous improvement.

Adapted from: *Critical Thinking in Nursing: A Practical Approach* (p.10), by R. Alfaro-LeFevre, 1999, Philadelphia: Saunders.

