OBSTACLES TO CRITICAL THINKING

OBSTACLES 1: Beliefs about how CT relates and compares to other courses
1. Critical thinking is not related to my major.
2. I’m in my third (or fourth) years at university, or I have a high GPA, or I’m a successful student, so I don’t need to take a critical thinking course.
3. This course should be like all other courses.
4. Critical thinking is going to be very difficult, and require too much work.
5. My critical thinking textbook should be studied like all other textbooks.
6. The instructor should not criticize the textbook.

OBSTACLES 2: Beliefs about thinking in general
7. To change one's mind is a sign of weakness.
8. To hang on to one's beliefs is to reason well.
9. To hang on to one's beliefs is a sign of courage.
10. If something is offensive, then it is defective and not worth examining/considering.
11. If it feels right, then it is right. If it feels wrong, then it is wrong.
12. Disagreements are threatening.
13. All truths are subjective, personal, intuitive, relative.
14. Everyone has an equal right to his/her opinion, so, everyone’s opinion is equally right.
15. There is no right answer.
16. To argue with someone is to compete with him/her, and to change one’s mind is to lose the competition.
17. In any reasoned discussion there is always a winner and a loser.
18. To entertain another view is to endorse it.

OBSTACLES 3: Beliefs about oneself and others
19. My beliefs are part of me. My beliefs define who I am. To criticize my beliefs is to criticize me. To praise my beliefs is to praise me: To ____ my beliefs is to ____ me.
20. I should express myself only if I am certain of what I want to say.
21. I will lose my friends if I apply critical thinking to our conversations.
22. I never misrepresent other people’s positions.
23. I should not or cannot reason from other people’s positions.
24. Whoever agrees with me is right, intelligent, and wise.
25. Whoever disagrees with me is wrong, misguided, and stupid.
26. I always know more than others.
27. Others always know more than me.
28. I must always be right.
29. I must always win an argument.
30. I must never make any mistake in my reasoning.
31. My country (my religion, my perspective, etc.) is better than any other. My ____ is better than any other ____.
32. If you are trying to change some aspect of me, then you don’t respect me.