**Thinking**

**The free thinking of one age is the common sense of the next. *(Matthew Arnold)***

**When thinking backfires: When presented with a new, complicated task -- such as learning how to ski -- it helps not to think too much. Researchers at the University of Cambridge in England asked a group of people to play a game that involved pushing a series of 300 buttons corresponding to lights on a screen. One group was asked to try to detect a pattern in the game, while a second group was told not to worry about it. The reaction times for the more relaxed subjects were much better; by not thinking about what they were doing, they discerned the pattern faster and responded more quickly. The researchers believe they know why. Brain scans showed that the volunteers who were trying hard to learn the pattern experienced a boost in activity in their right frontal lobes, the part of the brain responsible for sophisticated thought. Deep thinking, scientists say, isn't helpful in learning tasks that require instant analysis and quick physical reactions at once, such as learning how to ski or drive a car. "If you work out every turn in advance," researcher Paul Fletcher tells Nature, "it disrupts the process at the motor level." *(The Week magazine, December 17, 2004)***

**How to do your best thinking: If you've got a problem to solve, you may want to do your thinking in a coffee shop instead of in a quiet office. A new study shows that a moderate level of background noise actually promotes creativity more than silence does, ScienceDaily.com reports. Researchers from the University of Illinois put groups of volunteers in rooms featuring different levels of restaurant and traffic noise or pure quiet. Then they gave them creativity tests -- like asking them to brainstorm ideas. Those who were exposed to moderate levels of noise came up with the most original ideas; meanwhile, those exposed to high levels of sound, 85 decibels or louder, fared the worst. Researchers said that a moderately busy environment can make your brain work harder to process your thoughts -- which can jar you out of a mental rut. *(The Week magazine, July 20, 2012)***

**"This is the book recommended this quarter," announced my political-science professor on the first day of class. "However, we won't use it much, because my primary purpose is to teach you to think." Angered that my hard-earned money had been wasted, I raised my hand. "You mean I just spent $22.50 on a book I won't need?" "Good," replied the professor with a smile. "You're starting to think already." *(Earl W. Hensley, in Reader's Digest)***

**First man: "It's so noisy in here, I can't hear myself think." Second man :"I can hear you think. No, wait -- that's the ice machine rumbling." *(J. C. Duffy, in The Fusco Brothers comic strip)***

**People who say they don't care what people think are usually desperate to have people think they don't care what people think*. (George Carlin)***

**A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking. *(Arthur Block)***

**You ought to consider the ifs now and then. Thinking about if sometimes prepares you for when. *(Laura Kalpakian, in These Latter Days)***

**You think faster when standing than when sitting. As much as 20 percent faster. College testers have proved it. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**People who have no time don’t think. The more you think, the more time you have. *(Henry Ford)***

**Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is probably why so few engage in it. *(Henry Ford)***

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**If you are thinking about your difficulty, you are not thinking about God.**

***(Emmet Fox, in The Golden Key)***

**The thinking faculty in man makes him a free agent, because it is his creative center; in and through this one power, he establishes his consciousness -- he builds his world. *(Charles Fillmore, in Keep A True Lent, p. 114)***

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**Today is January 29, Freethinkers Day, honoring the life of Thomas Paine, who was born on this day in 1737. This philosopher, political theorist, and revolutionary American embodied independent thought and the freedom to pursue the truth. (*The Daily Chronicle)***

 **Free thinkers are generally those who never think at all. *(Laurence Sterne, author)***

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**Free your mind of the idea of deserving, the ides of earning, and you will begin to be able to think. *(Ursula Le Guin)***

**Thinking is a momentary dismissal of irrelevancies. *(Buckminster Fuller)***

**The conventional view serves to protect us from the painful job of thinking. *(John Kenneth Galbraith)***

**There’s just no place you can go any longer and escape the global problems, so one’s thinking must become global. *(Theodore Roszak)***

**Thinking is more interesting than knowing, but less interesting than looking. *(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)***

**A man had bought a new gadget -- unassembled, of course -- and after reading and rereading the instructions he couldn't figure out how it went together. Finally, he sought the help of an old handyman who was working in the backyard. The old fellow picked up the pieces, studied them, then began assembling the gadget. In a short time, he had it put together. “That's amazing,” said the man. “And you did it without even looking at the instructions!” “Fact is,” said the old man, “I can't read, and when a fellow can't read, he's got to think.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**What luck for rulers that men do not think? *(Adolf Hitler)***

**Most of the things we do, we do for no better reason than that our fathers have done them or our neighbors do them, and the same is true of a larger part than what we suspect of what we think*. (Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.)***

**If I don't think there is a way, then I need to change the way I think. *(Submitted by Guideposts reader Kathleen Miller)***

**A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices. *(William James)***

**Our hands are really servants of our thoughts, so if you want to understand what you're thinking, watch what your hands are going. *(Jewel)***

**A man seldom thinks with more earnestness of anything than he does of his dinner. *(Samuel Johnson)***

**I wonder why those who do the least thinking so often are the ones who tell you what they think. *(The Country Parson)***

**Life has taught me to think, but thinking has not taught me how to live. (Alexander Herzen, Russian author)**

**Husband: “I’m thinking about taking long walks every evening after dinner next year.” Wife: “Great dear. That’ll do you a lot of good.” Husband: “What will?” Wife: “Taking long walks every evening after dinner next year.” Husband: “Now wait a minute! Hold your horses! I just said I was thinking about it!” *(Dean Young & Denis Lebrun, in Blondie comic strip)***

**If I look confused it's because I'm thinking. *(The PassTime Paper)***

**Children must be taught how to think, not what to think*. (Margaret Mead)***

**TV announcer: “The following program contains ideas of an original nature and requires thinking. It may not be suitable for all audiences. Viewer discretion is advised.” *(The Saturday Evening Post cartoon)***

**Reserve your right to think, for even to think wrongly is better than not to think at all. *(Hypatia (350 – 415 A.D.)***

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**The greatest challenge to any thinker is stating the problem in a way that will allow a solution. *(Bertrand Russell)***

**Most people would sooner die than think; in fact, they do so. (Bertrand Russell)**

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**There are two ways to slide easily through life: to believe everything or to doubt everything. Both ways save us from thinking. *(Alfred Korzybski, linguist)***

**Saying what we think gives a wider range of conversation than saying what we know. *(Cullen Hightower)***

**If you just put your head between your hands today to think out something, you are asked if you have a headache. (Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, in Catholic Digest)**

**Bad week for: Thinking really small, after police in Lewiston, Idaho, said someone tried to pass a counterfeit $1 bill. *(The Week magazine, August 3, 2012)***

**We do not live to think, but, on the contrary, we think in order that we may succeed in surviving. *(Jose Ortega y Gasset)***

**T-shirt seen at Hampton University in Virginia: "Liberal Arts Major -- Will Think for Food." *(Jacob D. Rothberger, in Reader's Digest)***

**Think wrongly if you please, but in all cases, think for yourself. *(Gotthold Lessing, dramatist)***

**If you're going to think anyway, you might as well think big. *(Donald Trump, in Time magazine)***

**We must care to think about the unthinkable things, because when things become unthinkable, thinking stops and action becomes mindless. *(James W. Fulbright)***

**What can I think about? The past saddens me, the future frightens me, the present confuses me. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot Shots)***

**Words ought to be a little wild for they are the assault of thought on the unthinking. *(John Maynard Keynes)***

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