

# What is Principled Innovation™?

Principled Innovation™ is the ability to imagine new concepts, catalyze ideas, and form new solutions, guided by principles that create positive change for humanity.

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# About the Cards

This card deck is intended to generate individual and group reflection to engage character as part of our decision-making process and the way we design solutions for the dilemmas and challenges we face. Intentional reflection on our experiences contributes to the development of practical wisdom.

# What's on the Cards?

Every card features two questions, one as a “starter” question (white) to begin exploring an aspect of our character and another “deeper dive” question (color) to engage practices of Principled Innovation™. They are divided and color-coded into four categories:

*Moral* • *Civic* • *Intellectual* • *Performance*



Find a code on each card that indicates which practice the question is exploring.





## **MORAL**

**MORAL** character guides decision-making from multiple perspectives allowing us to honestly evaluate situations and respond in a meaningful and responsible manner.

**Assets include:** empathy, honesty, fairness and humility

## **M1: Identify and acknowledge fundamental values**

Distinguish the values that are important to the individuals, team, community, and learning environment and ensure that the process, structures, and solutions honor, appreciate, and reflect the identified values.

## **M2: Utilize moral and ethical decision making**

Use a values-informed reflective process to assess possibilities, navigate dilemmas, and make the best possible choice to serve the needs of the individual, team, community, and learning environment.



## CIVIC

**CIVIC** character supports a collaborative approach to solving systemic problems in order to contribute to the well-being of others and serve the public good.

**Assets include:** altruism, civility, perspective taking and inclusivity

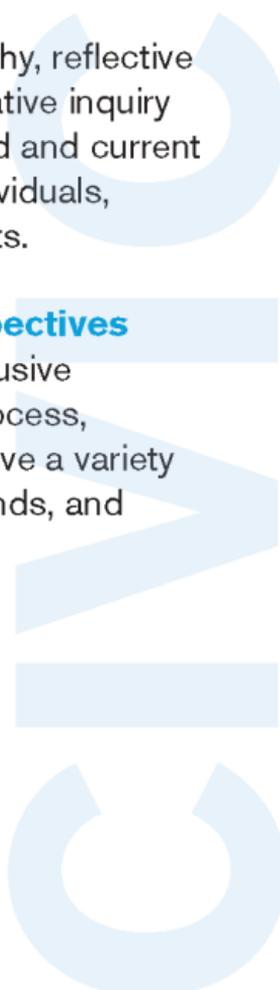


## **C1: Understand culture and context**

Use evidence-based resources, empathy, reflective questioning, and asset-based appreciative inquiry to fully understand and assess the lived and current experiences and circumstances of individuals, communities, and learning environments.

## **C2: Engage multiple and diverse perspectives**

Seek and champion equitable and inclusive involvement and contribution to the process, including many different voices who have a variety of lived experiences, beliefs, backgrounds, and cultural wealth.





# INTELLECTUAL

**INTELLECTUAL** character enables individuals to become reflective, critical thinkers who ask the right questions and seek answers from evidence-based resources.

**Assets include:** curiosity, reflection, truth-seeking and critical thinking

**I1: Develop habits of an informed systems thinker**

Use evidence-based resources and data to inform flexible thinking and appreciation of emerging insights and multiple perspectives, allowing one to recognize how the individual parts are influenced by their environment and interact to form a complex whole.

**I2: Reflect critically and compassionately**

Use a growth mindset to make meaning of experiences through contemplation and consideration of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions and how they affect the growth, development, and identity of the individual, team, community, and learning environment.



# PERFORMANCE

**PERFORMANCE** character, when informed by intellectual, civic, and moral assets, helps us marry the quality of our actions to the strength of our convictions.

**Assets include:** creativity, courage, resilience and collaboration

**P1: Design creative solutions**

Work collaboratively and intentionally for and with the community to define and understand the problem; then generate and catalyze purposeful, innovative ideas to achieve a desired outcome that creates positive change for humanity.

**P2: Navigate uncertainty and mitigate consequences**

Guide the decision-making process through observation and reflective questioning that helps to imagine and effectively respond to the possible outcomes. Allow space for meaningful action to increase the chance for desired results and reduce the risk of harm to individuals, teams, communities, and learning environments.

# Group Discussion

**A single question is often the simplest way to start a conversation.**

1. Identify a topic of discussion or challenge you're facing.
2. Each group member picks one card from the deck.
3. Participants discuss how each question relates to the identified topic/challenge.

**Extend the discussion**

1. Identify how your perspective on the topic or challenge shifted after using the cards.
2. Discuss the "big picture" and how your topic/challenge fits into the larger scope of your work.

# Self-Reflection Journal Prompt

**Personal growth occurs when we can look at a situation and find ways to reframe it.**

1. Choose a card from the deck and journal about how the question applies to a professional and/or personal situation in your life.
2. Review what you wrote - has your perspective on the situation shifted? Did your response bring up any additional questions to explore?

# Learning Experience Reflection

**Use questions from each character asset to help your learning experience stay human-centered.**

1. Identify an area in a current project/assignment where you would like to bolster the focus on character.
2. Randomly choose one card from each of the four character assets and use the questions to reflect on the project/assignment.
3. If there are any character assets that are not represented in your learning experience, how might you intentionally integrate them?

# Collaborative Meeting

**Think about using questions to collaboratively address a dilemma or to jumpstart a meeting.**

1. Before a meeting, look at the meeting topic or agenda to get a sense for what will be discussed.
2. Choose a card that could serve as a warm-up question to jumpstart everyone's thinking or questions that could help engage new perspectives on a dilemma or challenge your team is facing.
3. If you are reviewing current work or launching new projects, choose a question from each asset that could spark ideas and perspectives to further your work.

# Design Your Own!

**Think about designing your own reflection activity. This could be for individual or group reflection as it relates to:**

- **Group work/collaboration**
- **Project goals/outcomes**
- **Curriculum planning and development**
- **Debrief event or challenge**
- **What else?**

We'd love to hear more about the ways you're using these cards and any activities you design! Share your ideas and experiences with our team -

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**M1**

**What are my values?**



**How are my values  
reflected in my  
decisions?**

**M1**

**M1**

**Does this decision  
conflict with my core  
values?**



**How are we ensuring  
the intrinsic worth of  
people is being valued  
in an equitable and just  
way?**

**M1**

**M1**

**How are we practicing love and care?**



**What are the consistent opportunities and practices in place that encourage the development of authentic relationships?**

**M1**

**M1**

**How am I being empathetic towards myself and others?**



**How can we support others in finding their identity and interests through every interaction?**

**M1**

**M1**

**How does my role affect how and what people share with me?**



**How might I contribute to providing a safe environment to share ideas, thoughts, concerns, and viewpoints?**

**M1**

**M1**

**What emotion am I feeling?**



**How are my emotions  
in this situation  
connected to my  
values?**

**M1**

**M1**

**What do others  
need from me in this  
situation?**



**How might I contribute  
in a way that is fair,  
equitable, and just?**

**M1**

**M2**

**What is my mission  
or vision?**



**How am I aligning  
my choices with my  
mission or vision?**

**M2**

**M2**

**Why do we believe  
this is the right  
decision?**



**What other choices  
do we have in this  
situation?**

**M2**

**M2**

**How might others  
perceive my decision  
or action?**



**What ethical concerns  
or implications exist in  
this decision?**

**M2**

**M2**

**What are my biases?**

**Do I acknowledge the bias I bring to this situation, or am I taking action to remove that bias?**

**M2**



**M2**

**Is the choice I am making affected by my biases?**



**What assumptions or judgments am I making?**

**M2**

**M2**

**What qualities are you grateful for when collaborating with others?**



**How does gratitude  
impact our decision  
making?**

**M2**

**M2**

**How might others  
be suffering in this  
situation?**



**What decisions or  
actions can I make to  
alleviate suffering?**

**M2**

C1

What actions did I take to get to know the community or context in which we are operating?



What are the strengths of the community in which we are operating?

C1

C1

How am I taking time to build relationships?



What kinds of partnerships do we need to establish to ensure our work respects the social context?

C1

C1

What is the cultural wealth of the people in the community?



How are we moving  
from culturally  
responsive to  
culturally sustaining  
practices?

C1

C1

How are we showing compassion for others' needs?



How might I be more compassionate in my responses?

C1

C1

**How have we received feedback from the community about this project/decision?**



**How might we effectively use feedback from the community to ensure their needs are being met?**

C1

C1

**What is the importance and value of service and giving back?**



**What action steps can I take to engage in and commit to regular service opportunities?**

C1

C1

**How might understanding these experiences help us to connect with each other?**



**How might I better understand the experiences and responses of the members of the community?**

C1

C2

**Whose perspective,  
different from my own,  
do I need to solicit?**



How will we learn  
more about the socio-  
cultural and historical  
context where we  
plan to implement this  
initiative?

C2

C2

What opportunities have we provided to view the problem through different lenses?



What are the ways we can be more transparent in this situation?

C2

C2

**Who in my network  
can bring a different  
perspective or inform  
this conversation?**



**How might I engage  
active listening to  
remain open to all  
perspectives?**

C2

C2

How do my decisions affect the community or those around me?



What actions and steps can I take to get to know the community and context around me?

C2

C2

**What are my biases around the community in which we're operating?**



**What other perspectives were considered to interrupt implicit bias?**

C2

C2

What does civility look like in practice?



How might I foster civility in my daily interactions and conversations?

C2

C2

Who will be affected by this action?



How might I confirm that I am accurately understanding their needs?

C2

I1

**How am I ensuring  
I'm using accurate  
information?**



**How do I accurately  
disseminate  
knowledge?**

I1

I1

**What opportunities are available for me to lead change?**



**How do I work with and influence stakeholders?**

I1

I1

**How do we encourage questioning and risk-taking?**

**How might we create an environment that supports questioning and risk-taking?**

I1



I1

**What data or resources informed our decision?**



**What evidence are we seeing that the decision had a positive impact?**

I1

I1

How do we recognize multiple perspectives in systems change?

What information do we need before addressing systemic change?

I1



I1

**How do I think critically about who is not served by the current system/process?**



**How will critical thinking about who is excluded from the current system/process start plans for improvements?**

I1

I1

**Am I claiming more than I actually know?**



**How can we be transparent about our knowledge gaps or biases?**

I1

12

**How might we support  
a culture of intellectual  
humility?**



**How might we be  
more resilient as an  
organization?**

12

12

**What are my opportunities for growth?**



**How do I amplify innovation within a group?**

12

12

**What evidence do I have to support my perspective?**



**Do I understand how my bias or perspective may influence the approach I take?**

12

12

**How did I respond to challenges?**



**Did my responses support the greater good?**

12

12

**What might we be missing?**

**What opportunities will there be for critical and compassionate reflection?**

12



12

**Do our institutional processes support critical thinking?**



**How is our team encouraged to improve our current processes?**

12

12

**How have I been transformed by this experience?**



**How might I use this experience to guide future actions?**

12

**P1**

**How will we know  
if the innovation is  
effective?**

**What support or  
resources do we  
need to overcome  
the challenges of the  
problem?**

**P1**



**P1**

**How might we  
preserve what's  
working well in various  
contexts?**

**How will this design  
value the intrinsic  
worth of all people it  
impacts?**

**P1**



**P1**

**How have we engaged the community in the design process?**

**How will the design support the well-being of the individual, community, society?**

**P1**



**P1**

**Have we allowed ourselves to ask “What if?” in order to engage possibility thinking?**



**How might we take  
actionable steps to  
enact our imagined  
possibilities?**

**P1**

**P1**

**How are the proposed solutions a fit for the context of the community?**

**How might this action/  
solution be perceived  
by others in the  
community?**

**P1**



**P1**

**What does successful collaboration look like in this design?**

**What steps can we take to collaborate effectively, resulting in a positive experience?**

**P1**



**P1**

**How do I support  
and build on team  
members' ideas?**



**How do my team  
members support and  
build on my ideas?**

**P1**

**P2**

**How do I respond  
to obstacles or  
challenges?**



**What are alternative  
ways of approaching  
the situation?**

**P2**

**P2**

**What strategies am I using to respond instead of react to this idea/situation?**

**What kinds of unanticipated issues are emerging and how can I respond to them?**

**P2**



**P2**

**What does positive growth and transformation look like?**

**How do our decisions contribute to positive growth for everyone involved?**

**P2**



**P2**

**What can I as an individual do to make the situation better?**

**Have I fully considered unintended consequences to the best of my ability?**

**P2**



**P2**

**How are we responding to changes, and are we remaining open minded?**



**How have other organizations responded in similar situations?**

**P2**

**P2**

**What is the best  
mistake I've ever  
made?**

**How did that  
experience help me  
make meaning or  
change my decision  
making?**

**P2**



**P2**

**Have we created an environment that encourages questioning and risk-taking?**



**What are the risks of missed opportunities or the risks of inaction?**

**P2**

# Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College

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For more information and  
resources, visit:

*[principled-innovation.org](http://principled-innovation.org)*

# Let us know what you think!

Share your feedback and ideas with  
our team by emailing us at  
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