THINKING SKILLS REFERENCE (Rev. 7/10)

Executive Functioning Skills
- Handling transitions, shifting from one mindset or task to another (shifting
- cognitive set)
- Doing things in a logic sequence or prescribed order
- Sense of time
- Reflecting on multiple thoughts or ideas simultaneously (working memory)
- Sticking with tasks requiring sustained attention (perseverance)
- Maintaining focus for goal-directed activities (sustained attention / concentration)
- Ignoring non-relevant stimuli (distractibility)
- Thinking before responding, considering the likely outcomes or consequences of actions, forecasting (reflective not impulsive thinking)
- Considering a range of solutions to a problem

Language Processing Skills
- Expressing concerns, needs, or thoughts in words
- Identifying or articulating what's bothering you
- Understanding what is being said and/or processing it quickly enough to respond

Emotion Regulation Skills
- Managing emotional response to frustration so as to think rationally (separation of affect)
- Managing irritability and/or anxiety on a chronic basis (outside the context of frustration)

Cognitive Flexibility Skills
- Seeing the "grays", being comfortable with "iffy" thinking (vs. more concrete, literal, black-and-white thinking and need for precision)
- Thinking hypothetically or inferentially/ using hypothesis-testing
- Handling deviation from rules, routine, original plan
- Handling unpredictability, ambiguity, uncertainty, novelty
- Shifting from original idea or solution/adapting to changes in plan or new rules rules/possibly perseverative or obsessive
- Taking into account situational factors that would suggest the need to adjust a plan of action
- Interpreting information accurately / avoiding cognitive distortions or biases in thinking such as over-generalizing or personalizing ("Everyone's out to get me," "Nobody likes me," "You always blame me, "It's not fair," "I'm stupid," "Things will never work out for me")

Social Skills
- Attending to and/or accurately interpreting social cues and nuances
- Starting conversations, entering groups, connecting with people
- Seeking attention in appropriate ways
- Appreciating how behavior is affecting other people; often surprised by others' responses
- Empathizing with others, appreciating another person's perspective or point-of-view
- Appreciating how one comes across or is perceived by others