



HER PHILOSOPHICAL MIND

BLACK WOMEN'S THINK TANK

Dorothy W. Parker

WE'RE NOT ASKING FOR PERMISSION.
WE'RE EXPANDING THE WORLD BY
THINKING IT ANEW.

—HER
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Contact Us:

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Her Philosophical Mind: A Black Women's Think Tank



Vision:

Our aim is to cultivate developing minds, spaces where women exercise critical thought, intuitive intelligence, and philosophical depth. These “gyms for the mind” restore the art of thinking as a daily practice, moving us from passive consumption to conscious creation. Each session is designed to strengthen the muscles of awareness, reflection, and reasoning that keep a society alive.

Dorothy W. Parker
Creator/Founder

Her Philosophical Mind: A Black Women's Think Tank

Mission:

Black women don't need permission to think. We only need space to explore the wonders of our own mind.

About:

Her Philosophical Mind is a gathering space for Black women who are ready to move beyond inherited frameworks and engage the big questions, consciousness, reality, existence, and meaning, through our own lived intelligence.

For centuries, there was no separation between philosopher, scientist, psychologist, or theologian. Each was simply a lover of wisdom, asking the same essential questions about life, awareness, and our place in the cosmos.

Somewhere along the way, those conversations, once alive and world-shaping, were lost or made inaccessible. We are here to bring them back.

This think tank exists to restore deep philosophical dialogue in women's circles. It is a space where intellect meets intuition, where our experiences become data for discovery, and where Black women reclaim our rightful place in the global conversation about consciousness and reality.

We're not asking for permission. We're expanding the world by thinking it anew.

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Find out more



Black Womens Think Tank

For centuries, there was no meaningful distinction between a philosopher, a scientist, a psychologist, or a theologian. They were all just philosophers, literally, "lovers of wisdom", asking fundamental questions about reality, the self, and our place in the cosmos.

What happened to those conversations that changed the world? I want to restore these deep philosophical conversations especially in women's circles.

Dr. Dorothy/Founder



Historical Think Tanks

Before formal “think tanks” existed, women were central to intellectual circles: in salons, study houses, abolitionist societies, literary movements, and philosophical correspondence networks. These spaces were the original incubators of theory, policy, and worldview, places where women shaped discourse under the guise of “conversation” rather than “research.” When the 20th century professionalized knowledge through universities and policy institutes, those informal but potent circles were displaced. The gatekeepers became credentialed men who framed rationality as detached and masculine, while women’s ways of knowing, relational, integrative, intuitive, were devalued as “soft” or “subjective.”

Even now, modern think tanks mirror the hierarchies of academia and politics: they privilege access to funding, institutional affiliation, and policy influence, spheres where women, and particularly Black women, remain underrepresented. Yet the irony is sharp: many of the most transformative ideas in education, psychology, and social justice began in women-led circles, not boardrooms.

To reclaim that lineage isn’t nostalgia, it’s correction. “Her Philosophical Mind” fits directly in that tradition: reviving the circle as an intellectual engine, restoring collective reflection as a legitimate form of thought production. It says: wisdom doesn’t require a podium or a fellowship. It only needs women willing to think aloud, together, again.



The Modern Paradox

We have access to more information than ever, but we may be engaging in less original, foundational thinking. We are fed conclusions, not data; summaries, not source material.

My call for more "think tanks" is a call for a return to the "development" model, a space where ideas are not just consumed, but forged.

This line of thinking naturally leads to a practical question. If we are to build these "gyms for the mind," what are the essential ground rules that would make them successful and protect them from becoming echo chambers?



Operating Principles

Essential operating principles for an effective "think tank" dedicated to mental development.

Guiding Philosophy

The goal is not to win, but to build. The group is a laboratory, not a courtroom.

Foundational Principles

1. The "Strong-Form" Principle (vs. Straw-Manning)
 - The Rule: You must be able to articulate another member's position in a way they agree is accurate (or even stronger) before you are allowed to challenge it.
 - Why it Matters: This forces active, high-level listening. It prevents people from arguing against a weak or misunderstood version of an idea ("straw-manning") and forces genuine engagement with the core concept.
2. Decouple the Idea from the Person
 - The Rule: All ideas are "objects" placed on the table for the group to examine, stress-test, and dissect. An idea can be wrong without the person who offered it being wrong.
 - Why it Matters: This is the antidote to echo chambers and ego. It gives members the "right to be wrong" and the freedom to test half-formed thoughts, which is the very essence of development.
3. Shared Questions, Not Shared Answers
 - The Rule: The group unites around a central question (e.g., "What is the nature of consciousness?"), not a central answer (e.g., "We all believe consciousness is X").
 - Why it Matters: This sets the trajectory. Unity around an answer leads to programming (reinforcing the dogma). Unity around a question leads to development (genuine, multi-directional exploration).
4. The "Define Your Terms" Protocol
 - The Rule: Any member can pause the conversation at any time to ask for a definition of a key term being used (e.g., "When you say 'reality,' what do you mean by that?").
 - Why it Matters: Many disagreements are rooted in mismatched definitions. This principle forces the group to build a shared vocabulary and uncovers hidden assumptions, preventing the conversation from floating on "premade" (and vague) concepts.
5. Process Over Conclusion
 - The Rule: The success of a meeting is not measured by "Did we find an answer?" but by "Did we ask better questions?" or "Did we see the topic in a new way?"
 - Why it Matters: Rushing to a conclusion is a hallmark of "programming." True development is often slow, messy, and iterative. This principle values the act of thinking itself as the primary goal.
6. The "Laboratory" Rule (Confidentiality)
 - The Rule: What is said in the group, stays in the group. Personal stories and untested ideas shared during the exploration process are not for public consumption.
 - Why it Matters: This builds the psychological safety required for members to be vulnerable, explore unconventional ideas, and engage in the "mental exercise" you described without fear of external judgment.

These principles create a container where the mind can be exercised (developed) rather than simply filled (programmed).

Principle #7: The Cross-Paradigm Inquiry.

This rule is the structural antidote to "programming."

- What it Prevents: Without this rule, it's easy for members to engage in "confirmation research", only seeking sources that validate their existing, "premade" ideas. This isn't development; it's just reinforcement.
- What it Achieves: By committing to research outside one's usual paradigm, a member is forced to engage with opposing, challenging, or entirely different models of thought.

This is the very definition of "mental exercise." It's the willingness to leave the comfort of one's own intellectual neighborhood to see if the maps created by others have any value. It ensures the "think tank" is continuously introducing new data, not just re-circulating the old.



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