

SPIRITUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

A Mathematics Professor's
Perspective and Practice

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Reasons to Study Mathematics (reasons of the spirit)

1. Its beauty
2. Its power and efficacy as a problem solving tool.

If you want to make the world a better place, it helps to have mathematics on your side.
3. To enable you to empower others by teaching mathematics.

Mathematics is held in high regard for good reasons:

its beauty and
its problem solving efficacy.

But there is a corresponding notion in our society:

that mathematics is so difficult that only an elite few will be able to master it.

Anxiety

Self-doubt

Stress

Mindful Awareness can focus how we:

- ▣ Deal with suffering
- ▣ Transform trials into wisdom
- ▣ Discover our path and our purpose
- ▣ Interpret our personal connectedness to our community and our world.

Network of educators,
kindergarten to university,
who practice and discuss
mindfulness and
its practice in our profession:

www.mindfulled.org

Observe what thoughts cross your mind in 5 minutes of mindful awareness

- ▣ ...about 70,000 five-minute intervals (awake) every year.
- ▣ ...multiply the number of stressful thoughts, anxieties, self-doubts you have in a five-minute period by 70,000.... Looks like something we might want to correct!

Short periods of meditation help math students deal with stress

- ▣ Sit erect, shoulders relaxed, both feet on floor
- ▣ Focus on your breath
- ▣ Coordinate your in and out breaths with the phrases of the meditation verse:

In/Out

Deep/Slow

Calm/Ease

Smile/Release

Present moment/Wonderful moment

What does it do?

- ▣ Create a beautiful sense of calm;
- ▣ Recreate self-confidence;
- ▣ Re-establish belief in self.

Holding stress in the Light

- Students:
 - Learning blocks
 - Exams
 - So many things!
- Professors:
 - Troubled student
 - Anxious class
 - Self

Hold stress in the Light to let it be transformed.