

MATH ANXIETY? WORRY NO MORE

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Years ago, I saw two students in the class I observed who do not excel in Mathematics. I found out from the teacher that they were actually like that from the beginning of the school year. They also tend to make 'excuses' to be excused from her class at first. One always avoids being called during recitations, the other responds less frequently and sometimes, both of them seem to react aggressively through showing anger when being needed to perform in the subject. As an educator who seeks for answers because I think that such actions may have been rooted from something, I did my research to find out what is really happening to them, and Research introduced me to Math Anxiety.

According to Sakolowski and Ansari (2017), math anxiety is the feeling of stress when facing math-related situations and one among the primary causes is the poor mathematics skills itself. At one point, a child will be quiet and then everything which is denotable as 'unusual response' will follow. This is a serious issue being faced by youngsters today which the teachers also have to sustain since they have to bring all the students to learning without anyone being left behind. Math anxiety in general may result in negative self-talk and deteriorating self-confidence and worse, low performance and achievement in mathematics.

Considering how essential the subject is, an educator must do something in order to alleviate this condition. Picha (2018) suggested various strategies to cope up with math anxiety through the initiative of the educators. First, students must understand why math is necessary and why it must be learned. Making them understand the subject will

eventually influence them in exerting efforts to a matter which may concern their future. Teachers are also expected to use healthy and accurate messages when trying to teach the children in the said situation. Being aggressive as well will never help. When asking questions, it is emphasized that students be given enough time to think and to not rush them for it may just prolong their anxiety. Lastly, being mixed with other students in group activities will help them open up where they are having difficulty learning. Peer tutoring is a proven effective way of learning without the fear of rejection.

Math anxiety is becoming a reality to students, especially those who are not really into numbers. Everything can be learned and strategies must be applied in order to combat such conditions which in the first place is avoidable if only educators will provide focus to every learner. It may cost a lot of time but what is a chunk of moment compared to a clearer understanding of mathematical concepts which learners could make use of for a lifetime? Math anxiety can be replaced with math interest and a little encouragement and talking may make such a quick transition.

References:

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