

Progress in Math

From Most Hated to Most Loved Subject

Calvin Brown

BEFORE YOU READ: Share a time when you loved learning something. What made you love it?

For me, math was always the worst and most difficult class. I joined after-school programs, and I participated in all kinds of activities to try to be around teachers or tutors or other students who might be able to help me with math. I eventually lost interest in it because it was hard to be excited about something so challenging.

That all changed one day in 2018. It was a day I'll never forget. It was the day my daughter, who was 12 years old, asked me for help with her math homework. "Doom! Doom! Doom!" (That's the

sound of the scary music I heard in my head at that moment.) I was so nervous. I knew I was terrible at math!

I sent her to her mother for help, but I had a choice to make: I could keep being afraid. I could refuse

to accept this challenge. I could miss the best parts of life, like when a young father helps his beautiful, intelligent daughter with her homework. Or... I could learn more about math!

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That's when I found out about a program called the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK). I decided to enroll, and I am glad that I did. The program has awesome instructors and tutors who are working with me on my math. Thanks to them, math is now my most loved and most enjoyable subject.

I can see the change it has made in the bond between me and my daughter. It's good to not hear that scary music when my kid asks for help with her homework. We're spending more time together, she loves to joke with me about how we're both "getting our education," and she shares my passion in the kitchen. She said when I open my own restaurant, she's going to be my manager. Hearing that brought a smile to my heart.

It gave me another decision to make: I decided to keep working and keep pushing toward my goal. Once I complete the TASK program, I will start working on my culinary and food service management degree.



Career Paths

How will math help you on your career path? Read more about career pathways in Issue #45 of *The Change Agent*.



AFTER YOU READ: Read the articles on pp. 3-7. What do these parents have in common with Calvin and with each other? What is different?

Calvin Brown is from Trenton, NJ, and attends the adult education program at the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. His favorite subjects have always been reading and writing (and now math!), and his hobbies are video games and skating. Calvin's dream is to open his own restaurant and run his own kitchen.