

Qualitative Study

Deidre Norman

University of Mary Washington

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“I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work.”

Deidre Norman

### Reference

Quan-Lorey, S. (2017). Roots of mathematics anxiety in college students. *Journal of Mathematics Education at Teachers College*, 8(2), 19 - 30. Retrieved from <http://journals.tc-library.org/index.php/matheducation/article/view/1224/744>

### Summary

This qualitative study took place on a college campus on the West Coast with thirteen undergraduate students in non-mathematics related majors. Over the course of one day, students completed a questionnaire to explain the roots of their mathematics anxiety. These categories of roots ranged from teacher influence, parental influence, to experiences such as bad grades or disappointment. Of the thirteen students, eight mentioned teachers influence on their worst experiences. One female student found herself discouraged by her male teacher due to comments such as “It’s okay because you’re pretty. You don’t need to be that good at math.” These comments kept her far from asking the teacher for help, causing her to fail and repeat the course. Some students were strong in mathematics before receiving a bad grade or struggled with mathematics for the majority of their time in school. Students also feared disappointing people they highly regarded in addition to their math anxiety. Overall, previous experience influenced a long-lasting anxiety towards mathematics and finds itself starting from the teacher.

### Implications

As I read this article and the students’ experiences, it reminds me that being a teacher requires care. Self-teaching will not work like some teachers attempt as is going too fast. There’s

a balance that needs to be found. Sometimes a student may not ask for help, but require it and it is the teacher's job to help.