

None of my students believe me when I tell them, but I was not always good at math. As a matter of fact, when I was just beginning to take algebra, I was absolutely terrible at it. No matter how much math help I got, I couldn't succeed. Most of my teachers seemed to think that I was just being lazy - that was the way a lot of teachers felt back then. I wasn't being lazy. I simply couldn't understand math. My dad tried to give me math homework help, but it was no good. I got more and more frustrated, as did he. He was a good father, and he was often very good at helping with other homework. Unfortunately, he did not understand the principles of math well enough to explain them to me. Few people know this, but if you want to teach something, you really have to master it. There is a big difference between being able to use math and being able to teach it. My father could do the former, but not the latter.

Back then, although teachers could give math problems help, they really did not know how to get to the core of an inability to understand mathematical concepts. Nowadays, thanks to educational psychology and the recognition of learning disabilities among the mainstream academic community, we can do more to help with math than ever before. There are all kinds of strategies that a good tutor can use to help explain a hard to understand concept to a pupil. Unfortunately, a lot of these strategies are being ignored. It is not because people don't know how to give real math help, but because they don't care. They would rather make money.

There are thousands of people offering tutoring and resources, from basic math help to advanced mathematics, who have no idea what they are doing. Some of this is free math help online, and that is basically harmless. At worst, it won't help, and nothing is lost. Other math tutors, however, claim to have invented revolutionary systems that, in reality, do not work. They might have the kids play educational games, use some type of jargon-heavy "new math," or do something else entirely. There is a new fad almost every week, but almost all of these fads are destructive. The parents spend a fortune on math help for their kids, who are unable to learn and end up feeling worse about themselves than before. The result? Both the kids and the parents give up.