



Intersection Points Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Research
Council on Mathematics Learning

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The Research Council on Mathematics Learning seeks to stimulate, generate, coordinate, and disseminate research efforts designed to understand and/or influence factors that affect mathematics learning.

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Message from our President

drop of elixir of life and iron becomes gold. A word of the ultimate principle and the commoner becomes a sage. If you know that gold and iron are not two and that the commoner and the sage are basically the same, then obviously not even a drop is needed. Tell me: What drop is this? - Book of Equanimity, Case 43

Commenting on Case 43 of the book of Equanimity, Wick (2005) notes that later, after Razan's realization of the ceaseless arising and vanishing:

...a monk asked Razan [a central character in Case 43 of the Book of Equanimity], "When in front of you is a ten-thousand-foot cliff, and behind you are tigers, wolves, and lions, then what?" Razan replied, "Be there!" Where else can you be? (p. 133)

Be present. As we trundle through a second pandemic winter and approach spring, be present. As we encounter human beings engaging in mathematics, be present. As we wrestle with our own conceptual understandings, be present. Being present creates and allows for space in which we are individually able to address our anxieties in ways that are productive for lowering collective anxieties of those around us. It is understanding that the commoner and sage are basically the same. Both share this reality, the contexts, the phenomenon, the structures. In teaching, learning, and engaging with mathematics, dispositions of being present are indispensable. As teachers, I am confident that each of us has witnessed the wealth of anxieties that exists within any particular human being once their understanding of mathematical structures become far shakier than they expected. Being present creates space that allows a teacher to bring a blank sheet of paper (or shared document) to life after the 15 minutes provided to groups to outline their thinking for the upcoming whole class discussion. It is a recognition that richness exists while we are in any moment of our reality.

This spring I once again will provide my students with a task, "I saw math today." That's it. Tell me about where you said to yourself, "I saw math today." Academically, I believe it is a productive task for elementary teachers to simply appreciate the richness of the mathematical structures of their lived experiences. Myriad mathematical structures define and inhabit our individual realities. Responses from my students as to where they saw math ranged from recipes, to grouping contexts, to collecting data on one's morning routine.

As researchers, I am confident that each of us has witnessed our own Piagetian process of equilibration, the need for our own world-view, our schemata, to be revised. Such revision processes can be rife with anxieties. Our world-views are challenged by data, reasoning, and logic, and we collectively move our understandings forward through disseminating our research and seeking to understand research of our peers. Our collective role is to be present in our understanding of the processes involved in learning and teaching mathematics, in the nature and connectedness of mathematical structures, in methodologies and philosophies of research in mathematics education, and in purposeful and compassionate sharing of our knowledge with our communities. Our collective role is to reduce anxieties within our spheres through reasoned, compassionate, and informed problem solving. I am positive that any member of this organization recognizes the rich history of our collective quest to understand ways in which humans come to individually and collectively understand mathematical structures. In learning mathematics, we are all the sage and the commoner at any given moment. Let us compassionately be present, and provide space for others and ourselves as we continue to investigate the learning of mathematics this Spring.

Wick, G. S. (2005). *The book of equanimity: Illuminating classic zen koans*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, Inc.

2022 RCML Annual Conference in Review

Moving Forward, Leaning In: Acceleration over Remediation

[Conference in Review - Click here!](#)



The 49th Annual Conference of the Research Council on Mathematics Learning (RCML) was held in Grapevine, Texas, on March 3-5, 2022 at the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center. RCML conferences offer us a time to learn with and from each other, while pushing our field forward through our research and practice. RCML conferences are also about making connections.

Four years ago, I became a member of RCML as a result of a connection I made with Georgia Cobbs (University of Montana) at a student leadership conference in Minneapolis, MN. My first conference was in Charlotte, North Carolina where I connected with Nickolaus Ortiz (Georgia State University), Taajah Witherspoon (University of Alabama at Birmingham), and Jamaal Young (Texas A&M University). I joined the community extremely nervous and disconnected, but left the conference with a new family! These three pushed me and helped extend my practice as a mathematics teacher educator and mathematics education scholar.



The next year we traveled to Las Vegas, NV. There, I completed my very first conference presentation. I also connected with Colleen Eddy (University of North Texas). Through our interactions, she recognized the assets that I could bring to the RCML community and encouraged me to run for a position in our organization. I currently serve on the Publications Committee and serve as the Editor of our newsletter.

Year three we went virtual. During one of the final sessions of that conference I connected with Trena Wilkerson (Baylor University), Megan Che (Clemson University) and again, Colleen Eddy and Jamaal Young. From that session, we formed a great working partnership and began exploring partnership processes in mathematics education. A year later, we presented our collective work during the RCML 49th Annual Conference.



This year, I made additional connections, too many to name. My professional circle continues to grow through RCML. Please take this time to reflect on this year's conference, which is the first time we were able to connect face to face since the pandemic. Consider the connections you made, the learning you contributed to, and how much more work we have yet to do as a community. Our journey continues next year during our 50th Annual RCML Conference in Las Vegas, NV! I hope that you join us!

Tina Mitchell, Ed.D., Delaware State University
RCML, Intersection Points Editor

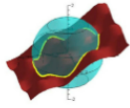


Upcoming Conferences and Meetings:

American Educational Research Association (AERA) - April 22-25, San Diego, CA
Conference for the Advancement of Math Teaching (CAMT) - July 13-15, San Antonio, TX
International Group for Mathematical Creativity and Giftedness (IGMCG) - September 25-28, Las Vegas, NV
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Annual Meeting (NCTM) - September 28 - October 1, Los Angeles, CA
School Science and Mathematics Association Annual Meeting (SSMA) - October 27- October 29, Missoula, MT

2023

Research Council of Mathematics Learning (RCML) - March 2-4, Las Vegas, NV



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