

Dr John Mighton Biography

Dr. Mighton began tutoring children in math in his early 30s as a financially struggling playwright, using an approach he had used to teach himself, after abandoning the subject for years after nearly failing first-year Calculus. What had been a massive source of anxiety became a passion when he saw the high levels of success in his students that teachers and parents had thought impossible. His own experience and that of repeatedly witnessing the high learning potential and low expectations of and for his students fueled his belief that everyone possesses great untapped potential. This gave him the confidence to earn a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Toronto. He was later awarded an NSERC Fellowship for post-doctoral research in knot and graph theory.

Dr. Mighton's own experience with math and that of his students spawned the belief that the widely-held assumption that mathematical talent is a rare genetic gift is a myth, which has created a self-fulfilling prophecy of low achievement in math students. He also believes that this same assumption is responsible for a generally high level of math anxiety among many elementary school teachers. It has been his life's work to prove that anyone is capable of high achievement in math.