

MATHEMATICS FOR HUMAN FLOURISHING

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The pandemic is forcing us to re-think how and why we teach. What is the purpose of a mathematical education? "Why do I need to learn this stuff?" is the refrain we often hear. That's because people often think of mathematics as a set of skills, like doing arithmetic or factoring a quadratic. But math is much more about building a set of virtues, like persistence, creativity, and a competence to solve problems you've never seen before. I'll discuss how math can (and should) meet basic human desires that all of us share, and how it builds virtues that serve you well no matter what you do in life and no matter what life throws at you. By broadening the purposes of a math education to include human flourishing, we can improve the way mathematics is both received and practiced. An incarcerated man---now my friend---has helped me see these things more clearly than ever before.

References

Su, F. E. (2020). *Mathematics for Human Flourishing*. With reflections by Christopher Jackson. Yale University Press.