

# A Conversation With Peter Liljedahl

## [Learning Through Math Episode 127](#)

### **How did this all start?**

- Something wasn't right in his own high school class. Students were successful on assessments but unable to work through anything that was novel.
- He observed in other classes and started his research which revealed that students were not thinking and maybe the normative structures were causing this.
- How do I disrupt these norms?

### **How are you choosing what to revise?**

- A book is a moment in time, but he never stopped pursuing innovation.
- There were nine practices when he first started his research. Other practices eventually revealed themselves.
- The more time you spend in classrooms, the more things you notice. Everytime you notice something new, it creates a new avenue for pursuit.
- Some things he never felt were completely done. For example, meaningful notes.
- Sometimes revisions reveal themselves as the world works on a practice and micro-moves return to him that make things better. For example, Mild, Medium, Spicy.

### **Do you have videos?**

- After Peter's task books are published, a book will come out with videos.
- What does a lesson look like? It will be organized around a lesson, start to finish.
- What are the practices in the order of a lesson?
- Every practice will be illuminated by video for different grades.

### **What advice do you give a new teacher who wants to try BTC?**

- Just try it.
- It's your data and your stories that will keep you doing it. His data and his stories are secondary.
- You're going to have highs and lows. You'll see your students do things you've never seen them do before.
- There will be new challenges emerge.
- Find your community.

### **What advice do you give someone who's been doing BTC for a while?**

- Go back and read the book again.
- The first time you read the book you'll be struck by the big ideas that will get you started. When you reread, you'll notice things that will solve problems that have emerged for you since you first read it but didn't notice before.
- Listen to podcasts and listen to some of the new research.
- The worst thing that can happen today is that everything goes as planned. If that happens, we're not going to learn anything today. Things are going to go wrong.

**Any advice about the reluctant student?**

- Reluctance comes in different flavors. When first launching, there might be reluctance while kids are waiting for this new thing to pass but they don't know the teacher is committed to a new way of teaching and learning.
- In older kids, there's a reluctance based on their self-assessment of how they learn best. They're most always wrong. It has more to do with how they perform best and now how they learn best.
- There's reluctance based on anxiety.
- Low self-efficacy reluctance is harder to overcome. It's a student's belief in their ability to do something. They have to meet a teacher who believes in them. Students don't listen to what we say. They listen to what we do. What is it you're doing to show students that you believe in them? You're trying to empower them without making them feel less than. They start to believe in the teachers' belief in them.