

Preface to Special Issue

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It is said that “education is the process by which the individual relates himself to the Universe, gives himself citizenship in the changing world, shares the race’s mind and enfranchises his own soul.”

A creative person is accustomed to striking fearlessly into the unknown, accepting nothing on faith, and this is the approach that should be taught to the students. Outstanding research scientists have often remarked that they value teaching because they derive inspiration and new ideas from their exchanges with students. Learning is a multi-sided activity and the best teachers will excite the interest and curiosity of their students, stimulate them to learn for themselves and establish a certain affectionate rapport with them.

No matter how many different ways we describe, we have only one method of acquiring true knowledge. From the lowest mortal to the highest saints, all have to employ the same method, the method of concentration; in doing anything, the stronger the power of concentration, the better the outcome. This is the one key that opens the gates of nature, and lets out the floods of light. Even though the necessary ingredients are there awaiting and offering an exciting prospect, there is no doubt of a great promise for a future development, promise is nothing more than a charming hallucination unless it is realized. We view the truth, get as much of it as the circumstances permit, color it with our own feelings, understand it with our intellect, and grasp with our own minds. This makes the difference between human beings.

In order to understand and appreciate Professor Chris Tsokos’ research, professional and personal activities, it is important to know his varied excursions in life.

It all makes sense to a self-educated man who has gone a long way to educate others. His enthusiasm and energy for learning and research seem endless. His contributions to mathematical sciences have been nothing short of a miracle, knowing that he started somewhat late in life. His dedication speaks of his legacy. Chris is positively a dynamic personality.

As a teacher, an academic friend and a scientific citizen, Chris is clearly outstanding. His work ethic is contagious and his scientific interests are extremely broad. As a scientific citizen, he is virtually unsurpassed. He has an exceptional vision of the future. For example, when I thought of creating the International Federation of Nonlinear Analysts (IFNA) in 1991 and the consequent organization of the first World Congress of Nonlinear Analysts (WCNA-1992), Chris was not only enthusiastic about it but also was completely responsible for conducting everything in Tampa, with an insurmountable zeal, even though many things were in a fluid state. It was an unexpected success, thanks to Chris. In fact, the next World Congress, WCNA-1998 in Athens, Greece, was also handled by Chris effectively.

I met Chris in 1966 in the University of Rhode Island as a colleague and right away we had an instantaneous divine affection, so to speak. He is the only person in my long academic life, who took advantage of whatever little help I could offer, utilized to the fullest and soared like a rocket with phenomenal success. I am immensely happy of this academic friend's accomplishments and express my sincere thanks to Professors G.S. Ladde and M. Sambandham for bringing out the present volume of NPSC honoring Professor Tsokos. May God bless Chris with long and fruitful life.