Thinking about Thinking

In the book, *Discovering and Exploring Habits of Mind* by Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick, metacognition is described as:

“Occurring in the neocortex, metacognition, or thinking about thinking, is our ability to know what we know and what we don’t know. It is our ability to plan a strategy for producing what information is needed, to be conscious of our own steps and strategies during the act of problem solving, and to reflect on and evaluate the productiveness of our own thinking.” (p26)

To be a good problem solver, you need to be able to make a plan or have a strategy in mind. I call this your mental tool box. Knowing that certain types of problems in mathematics have certain words or key ideas is one of those tools to put in your tool box. Problem solving and metacognition can be useful in all subject areas and real life. Our authors’ say:

“Intelligent people plan for, reflect on, and evaluate the quality of their own thinking skills and strategies. Metacognition means becoming increasingly aware of one’s actions and the effect of those actions on others and on the environment; forming internal questions in the search for information and meaning; developing mental maps or plans of action; mentally rehearsing before a performance; monitoring plans as they are employed (being conscious of the need for midcourse correction if the plan is not meeting expectations); reflecting on the completed plan for self-evaluation; and editing mental pictures for improved performance.” (p27)

This habit of mind is one that you will use throughout your life in your chosen field at Del Mar and at work.

You will be writing reflectively for the next four weeks about your individual progress in this course. As part of that assignment each Friday you will evaluate your progress and the quality of your work for the past week and set a goal for the coming week.

This reflection will also include how you can improve and develop other habits of mind you need to be successful as a student. If need be include a schedule for yourself and any learning aids you plan to employ to help yourself learn the material.