

## Re: JSH: Big collapse on surrogate factoring

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2005-03/3469.html>

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jstevh@msn.com wrote:

- > *As far as I'm concerned I've just had a massive collapse in terms of*
- > *getting surrogate factoring working, with a recent result that*
- > *indicates you kind of need to know the factors of  $M$  ahead of time to*
- > *guarantee a factorization.*

There was no collapse. You never built a coherent supporting structure in the first place.

- > *Yuck.*
- >
- > *But it happens.*

You invite it. I know of no other individual who has exposed as many failures to a public forum.

- > *Part of the fun of problem solving is knowing that at the end of the*
- > *process you may just fail.*

I'll bet you're great at a party if you think failure is fun.

- > *Ok, yeah, who am I kidding?*
- >
- > *Total failure is awful. It hurts in the gut, and you feel like just*
- > *crawling into a hole...for a while.*
- >
- > *And then the feeling goes away.*

That happens with bipolar disorders and binge drinking, too.

- > *I learned that years ago when I had FLT "Proofs" that I'd championed*
- > *for months, only to finally accept that the arguments were flawed and*
- > *what I had were not proofs.*

Hmmm... Didn't you recently reaffirm your belief that you *\*do\** have a proof of FLT?

- > *I felt terrible. I felt awful. I berated myself for daring to presume*
- > *to have solved the great problem.*
- >
- > *And then the bad feelings went away and I felt fine.*

Perhaps there was some chemical intervention. Otherwise you are just pathetic.

- > *In life we don't get to solve all the problems in front of us. If*
- > *anybody did, then they wouldn't die, or their family members wouldn't*
- > *die, or even their favorite dog wouldn't die.*

But where would you be without dead raccoons to poke?

- > *But we all die.*
- >
- > *I'll try my best while I'm here to solve a few problems before I keel*
- > *over,*

With the progress you've made so far, it doesn't really matter which comes first.

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There are two things you must never attempt to prove: the unprovable -- and the obvious.

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Democracy: The triumph of popularity over principle.

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