

When did you decide to study mathematics?

I grew up in a family where mathematics was a very natural part of life. My uncle used to give me small mathematical riddles.

Solved it already!

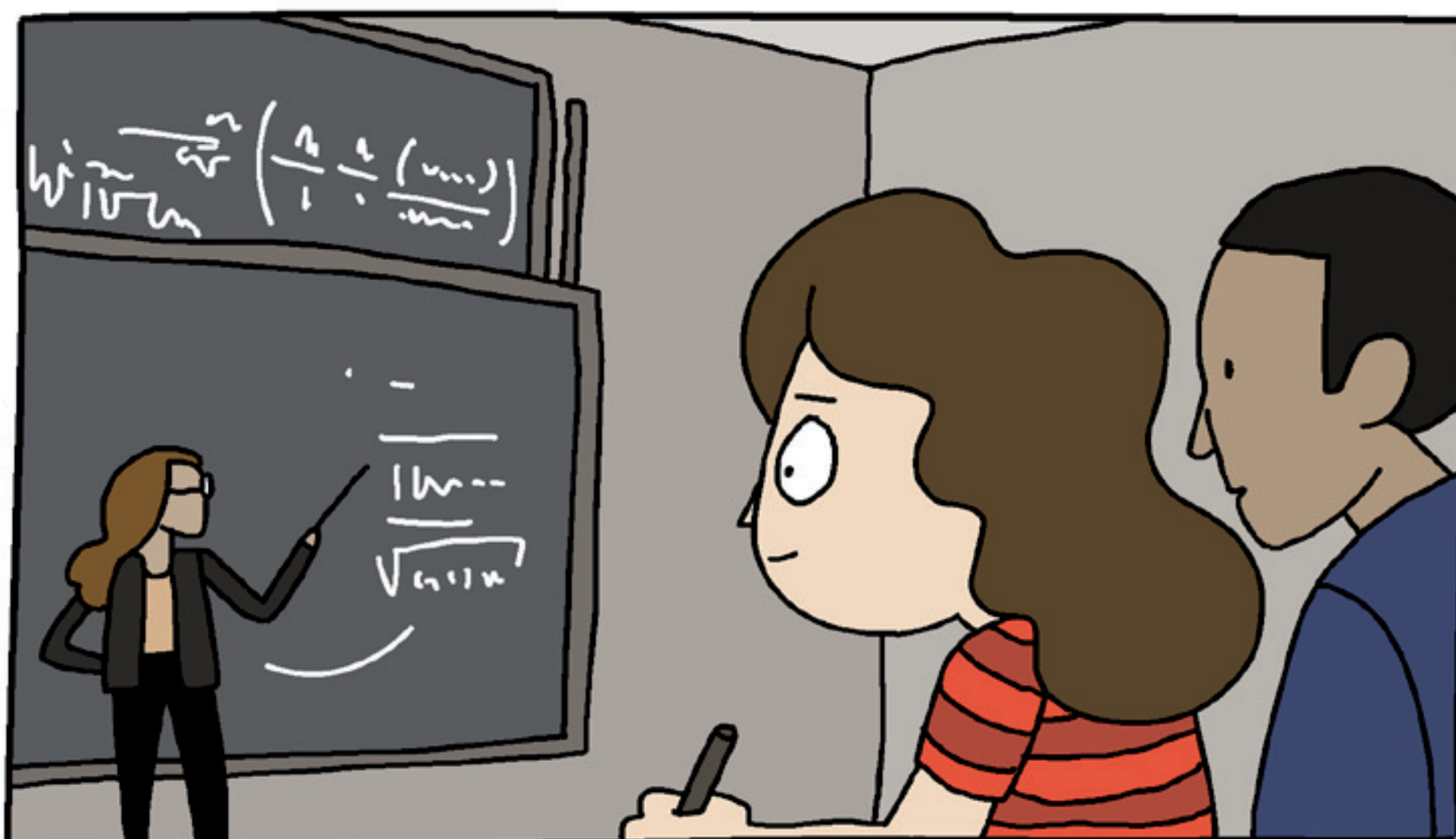
That's great!

This encouraged me to look for and solve new problems.

I was about 12 or 13 years old when I decided to deal with mathematics in the future. At the secondary school, I took part in so-called "corresponding seminars".

Here's your monthly list of mathematical problems.

In a group of friends we solved these problems and sent the solutions to the university. The best of us could meet at the colloquiums. Those were a lot of fun: we made tourist trips and solved funny brainteasers in group competitions.



The corresponding seminars were a very positive action to support a new generation of young mathematicians. It was a funny competition, mathematics and group building all together.

What kind of support did you receive (e.g. mentors, books, events) and which one was the most helpful to you?

You should do your PhD at the Charles University in Prague.



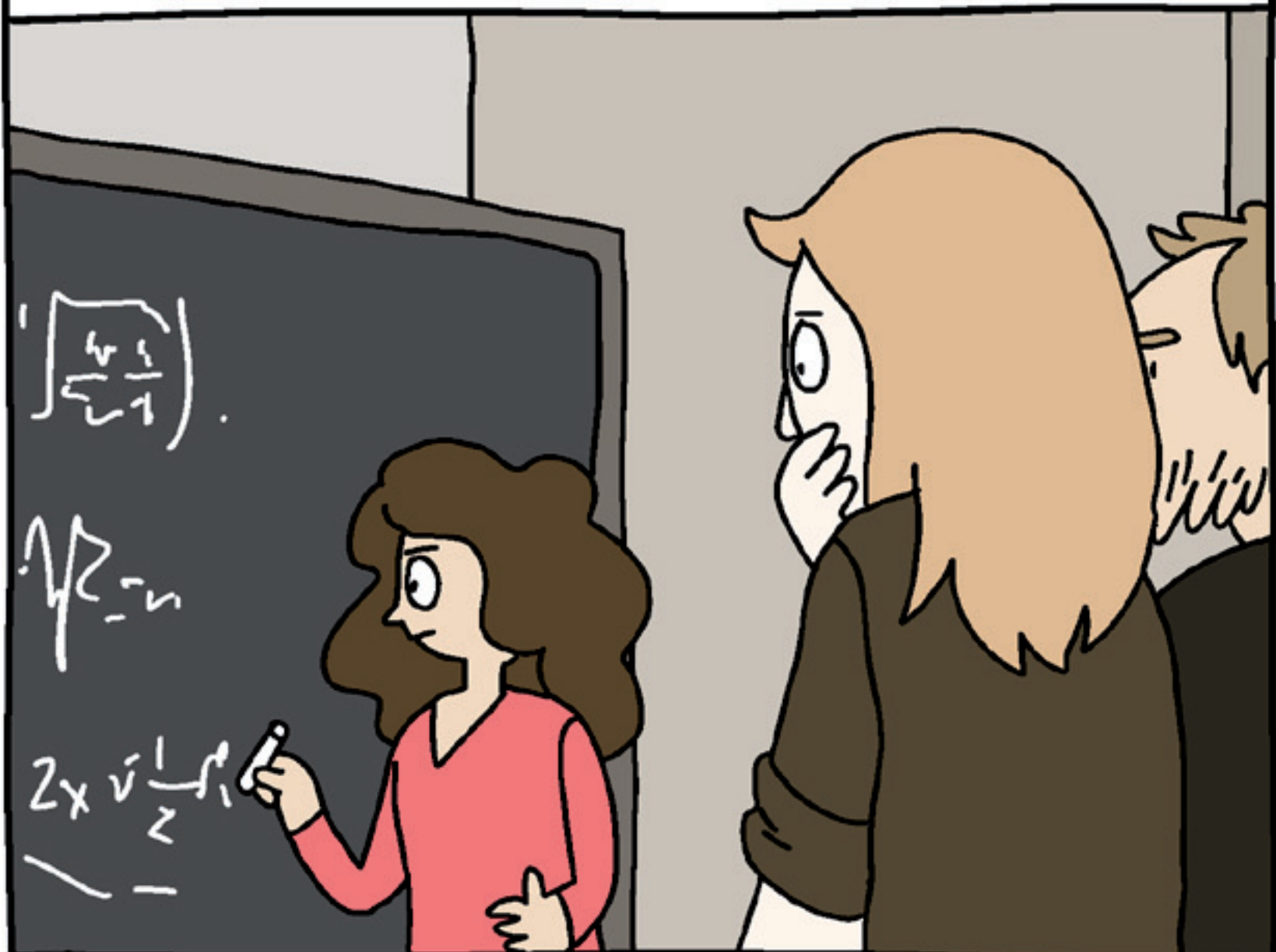
I was lucky to get a lot of support: apart from the special university program, I had a very supportive Master thesis supervisor.

This place had the best experts in the country. As a postdoc in Germany I met my mentor who had a very strong influence on my future career.





I got in contact with well-known experts in my field and got the opportunity to work with them, e.g. at the Oxford University.



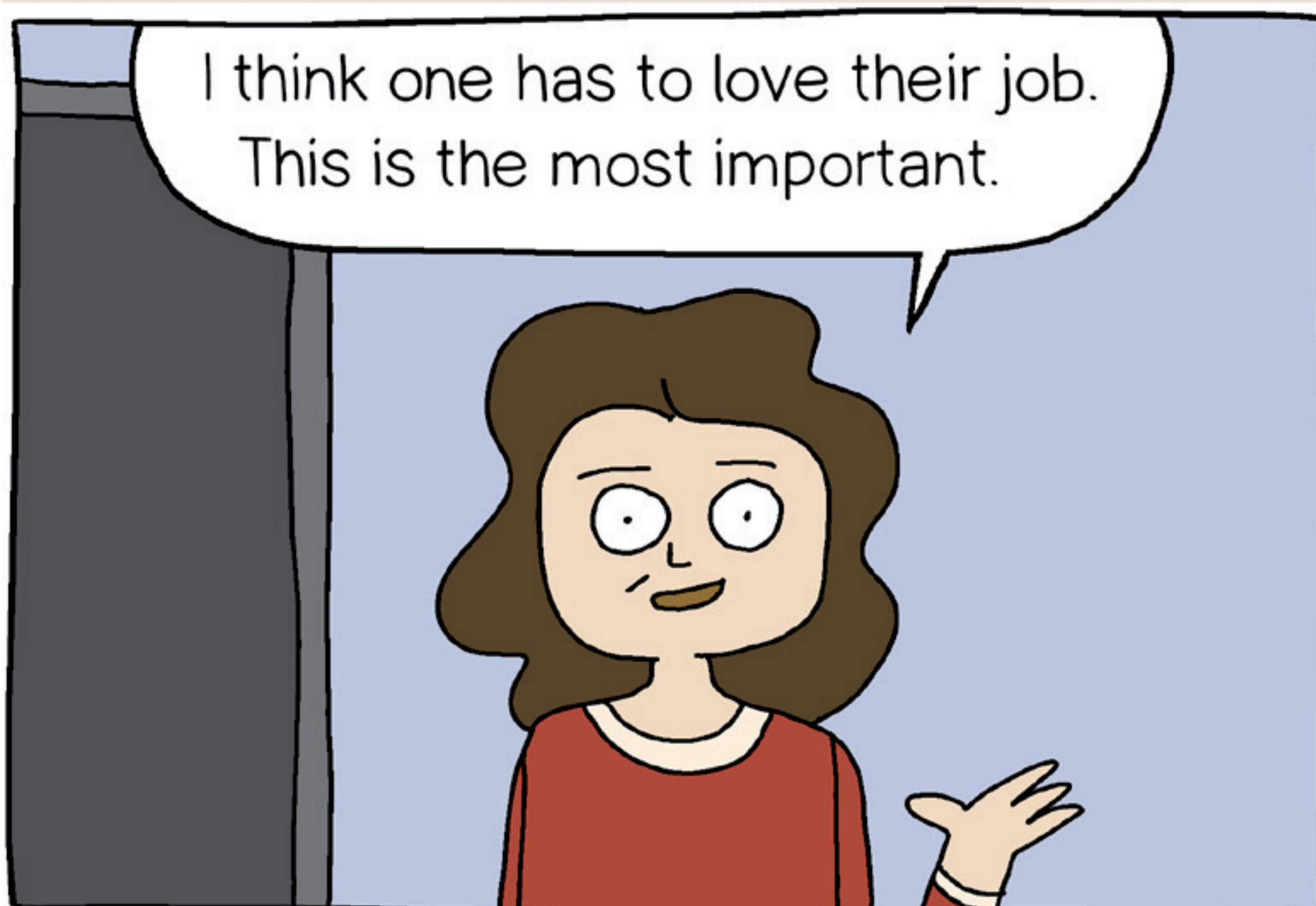
Sure it was hard to combine family and career. I worked partially in Germany and partially in the Czech Republic. Having a small daughter, this would not have been possible without the support of my family.



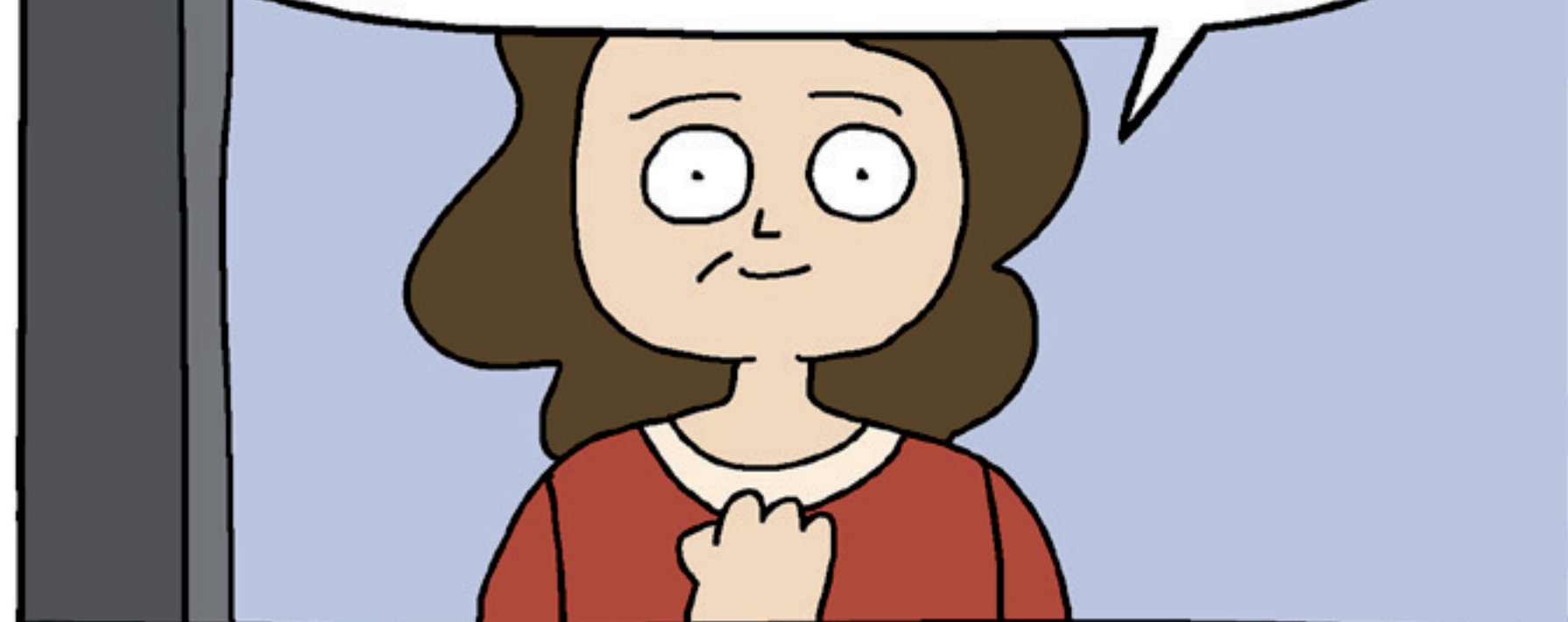
This was also not easy on our budget. The time-for-money tradeoff was worth it though.

What are the qualities and strengths required to have a successful career in mathematics and how can they be trained and improved?

I think one has to love their job. This is the most important.

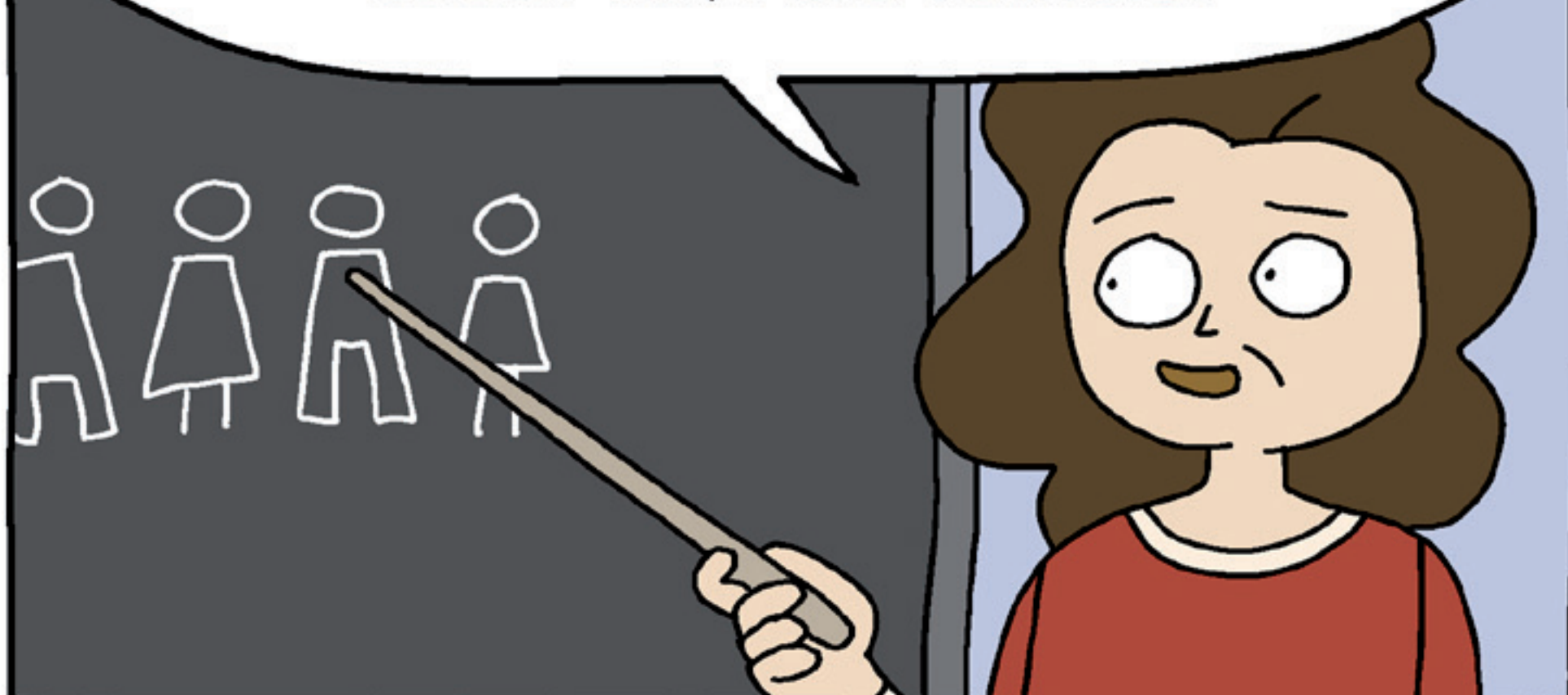


One should also be self-confident, consistent, and not hesitate to ask questions or take part in a discussion. It is good when young students participate in international research groups and conferences: This gives them a broad view, independence and self-confidence.



How does your research group benefit from women researchers?

We have quite a good mixture: There are 3-4 PhD students and 3-4 postdocs plus several Master/Bachelor students of which about 50% are female.



I think that this mixture makes my group quite successful.

