Ramanujan investigated nested radicals. His notebooks may contain proofs of the results below and if so they may be easier to follow.

Consider a sequence formed of radicals, $\sqrt{}$, nested *n* deep:

$$S_n = \sqrt{1 + \sqrt{1 + \sqrt{1 + \dots + \sqrt{1}}}} \tag{1}$$

 S_n satisfies the recurrence:

$$S_1 = 1; \quad S_{n+1} = \sqrt{1 + S_n}$$
 (2)

We can show that $\lim_{n\to\infty} S_n$ exists by induction, proving that it is monotonically increasing and bounded above. By squaring equation (2) and manipulating:

$$S_2 - S_1 > 0$$
 (3)

assume: $S_{n+1} - S_n > 0$ (4) $S^2 - S^2 - S_n - S_n$ (5)

$$S_{n+2}^2 - S_{n+1}^2 = S_{n+1} - S_n \tag{5}$$

$$S_{n+2} - S_{n+1} > 0$$
 and by induction S_n is monotonically increasing (6)
 $S_1 < 2$ (7)

$$assume: S_n < 2 \tag{8}$$

$$a = \frac{3}{2} \qquad (6)$$

$$S_{n+1}^2 = 1 + S_n < 1 + 2 < 4 \tag{9}$$

$$S_{n+1} < 2 \tag{10}$$

Applying the results (6) and (10) with Lemma 1 from this proof of the Bolzano-Weierstrass theorem we have that S_n converges to a limit between 1 and 2. Call this limit ρ . Since $f(x) = \sqrt{1+x}$ is continuous,

=

$$\rho = \lim_{n \to \infty} \sqrt{1 + S_n} \tag{11}$$

$$= \sqrt{1 + \lim_{n \to \infty} S_n} \tag{12}$$

$$= \sqrt{1+\rho} \tag{13}$$

$$\frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \tag{14}$$

Does the following sequence have a limit and what is it?

$$R_n = \sqrt{1 + 2\sqrt{1 + 3\sqrt{1 + 4\sqrt{1 + 5\sqrt{\dots\sqrt{1 + n\sqrt{1 + n + 1}}}}}}}$$
(15)

Consider more general sequences formed by the iterated compositions of radicals:

$$S_{kn} = \sqrt{1 + k\sqrt{1 + (k+1)\dots\sqrt{1 + n\sqrt{1 + n + 1}}}}$$
(16)

and:

$$T_{kn} = \sqrt{1 + k\sqrt{1 + (k+1)\dots\sqrt{1 + n\sqrt{1 + (n+1)(n+3)}}}}$$
(17)

Notice that $0 < S_{kn} < S_{kn}$ and that $S_{kn} < T_{kn}$. T_{kn} has the fun property that $T_{kn} = k + 1$ for all n. Therefore, $\lim_{n\to\infty} S_{kn} \leq k+1$ and exists since S_{kn} is nondecreasing. Define $S_k = \lim_{n\to\infty} S_{kn}$. Note that $S_k \leq k+1$, which will be needed later. A calculation of $S_{275} = 2.999999999999999999999976717...$ suggests that $\lim_{n\to\infty} S_{kn} = k + 1$. So we know what to prove.

Since the limits exist we can write:

$$S_k > \sqrt{k\sqrt{k\sqrt{k\dots}}} \tag{18}$$

$$S_k > k^{\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{8} + \dots}$$
(19)

$$S_k > k \tag{20}$$

$$k+1-S_k = k+1-\sqrt{1+kS_{k+1}}$$
(21)

rationalizing on the right (22)

$$(k+1)^2 - 1 - kS_{k+1}$$

$$k+1-S_k = \frac{(k+1)^2 - 1 - kS_{k+1}}{k+1 + \sqrt{1 + (k+1)S_{k+1}}}$$
(23)

$$k+1-S_k = \frac{k}{k+1+S_k}(k+2-S_{k+1})$$
(24)

using
$$S_k > k$$
 and $S_{k+1} > k+1$ on the right (25)

$$k + 2 - S_{k+1} < 1 \tag{26}$$

$$k+1+S_k > 2k+1 \tag{27}$$

$$k+1-S_k < k/(2k+1) < \frac{1}{2}$$

 $S_k > k+1/2$
(28)

(29)

>
$$k + 1/2$$
 (29)
Repeating these steps with the new lower bound $S_k > k + 1/2$ gives: (30)

$$S_k > k + 1/2 + 1/4... \text{ etc.}$$
(31)

$$S_k \leq k+1 \text{ as noted above}$$
(32)

$$S_k = k+1 \text{ by sandwiching} \tag{33}$$