

A Collective Formula of Feeling Strong against Difficulties

This document is initiated by a narrative practitioner İclal Eskioglu Aydın from Turkey in a group work process that explored the skills, knowledge, and values in response to Covid-19 pandemic. The group work is done with a group of psychologists who are master students at [İbn Haldun University](#) in Turkey.

This group work opened a way for the group members to explore their responses to the effects of difficulties. Then they wanted to share their stories with developing a math formula. The group members have a message for you:

“This document includes both our experiences in hard times and our responses to them. We think that each person has a different way of understanding and every person loves to hear stories in various ways. Based on this, we want to express our stories by developing a formula. We think that it is a brief way of exchanging stories. We hope this document will give you an idea about finding your own and most suitable way of expressing your stories. And also, we wish this formula will build a bridge between you and us to touch our and your stories of responses to difficulties.”

We are really curious about your responses to our collective document. There is a link for some questions below the formula that we wish they may help the readers who want to contribute to our document. If you want to respond one or more of them, please check them out.

The Formula of Feeling Strong against Difficulties

In these days one of the hardest things is feeling that we live in an uncertain condition. One of us, expresses the anxiety of uncertainty as follows: “As if I am on a long way and I encounter such a huge and formidable stone which prevents me from going my way. I feel powerless against the stone. The best way to prevent this stone from appearing in front of me is to get up early in the morning and start the day by doing something I value. For example, reading Quran in the morning or starting the day quietly listening to nature makes me feel that I can start a day that is under my control instead of rushing into an uncertain day. This makes me feel stronger against the formidable stone”. From the moment we come into contact with what we care about, we think that our anxiety cannot find ground to hold on to.

Some of us feel overwhelmingly anxious because of the possibility of losing our loved ones due to increased risk of losing them these days. One of us expresses the emotional confusion that this anxiety has brought into her life as follows: “When my sense of anxiety increases, my feelings are mixed such as the threads of different colours in a mixed ball of yarn, and I don’t know how I feel. In these moments, breathing calmly and noticing my emotions help to sort that yarn of coloured threads out one by one. Looking at the threads one by one, not the entire ball of yarn, allows me to experience my emotions more clearly than being drawn into the ball of yarn.” Although our feelings are upside down as a result

of the anxiety of losing our loved ones, we think it is important to listen to ourselves and notice our feelings.

We have developed a mathematical formula to express the effects of the difficulties we are facing and our values and skills, in a more visual and practical way. This formula gives us an idea about what we get when we multiply and divide certain things in life:

Formula:

1. *Operation:*

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Anxiety } x \text{ (Future Uncertainty + Possibility of losing loved ones)} \\ & = \text{Huge stone preventing us from going our way + mixed ball of yarn} \end{aligned}$$

2. *Operation:*

$$\frac{\text{Huge stone preventing us from going our way + Mixed ball of yarn}}{\text{Beginning the day with a valuable task + Breathing calmly and noticing our emotions}}$$

Results:

$$= \text{Reducing anxiety, inner peace, feeling strong, taking control of our lives}$$

Formula Expansion:

The formula above is containing two operations:

1. Operation: We multiplied anxiety by uncertainty and probability of losing loved ones that we face in these days. The result of the multiplication is sum of the mixed ball of yarn and the formidable stone that we face on our way.

2. Operation: We divided sum of the mixed ball of yarn and the formidable stone that we face on our way into the sum of beginning the day with the tasks we value and breathing calmly and noticing our emotions. In other words, we divided the difficulties we are experiencing into the sum of things that reduce the impact of these difficulties and things help us feel better. We preferred multiple operations rather than singular as a consequence of our collective work.

Results of the operations: As a result of these two operations, we have achieved to continue our way with hope, to feel strong, to feel inner peace, to embrace our values more, and not to overestimate our anxieties.

For Responding to the Questions [Click here](#)