Steve Jobs once said: “Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do”. The trick is to see and experience your research not as a job that you do for external reasons (e.g., tenured position) but rather as something that you do because you simply love to do it. This is of course not always possible and there can be academic and non-academic circumstances and conditions that make it difficult. But on balance it has to go in the direction of loving to do it rather than having to do it. The good news is that this is much more easy in academic research which typically requires creativity than in non-academic work that often is mostly routine. In addition, I have some suggestions that over years have helped me to keep the balance right. I give them in no particular order.

1. Ask the right questions: those that matter, and that are not too simple or too complex.
2. Step out of the ivory academic tower as much as possible. Follow the news, talk and listen to common people, to spokespersons, and to politicians. It is in the social world that the real action is and not in your experimental lab or survey data.
3. Keep on thinking (concepts, theories) rather than only doing (methods and statistics). Make sure that the research is more than applying again and again the same ‘trick’ that you have learned.
4. Be multidisciplinary, at the very least in what you read.
5. Try novel things, learn and use new methods, develop new ideas.
6. Read, listen to, and cooperate with inspiring people.

ECC KUDOS COLUMN



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The idea of finding a useful tool for bringing peace to the earth, understanding the true nature of the conflict between human groups and creating harmony amongst living species seems an almost magical and unrealistic aim for science. Yet, like many other scientific disciplines, the field of political psychology has been accumulating scientific observations and knowledge about individuals and human groups around this magical aim to achieve a better future for all. My name is Ahmet Çoymak (tʃəʊjmɒk, like Choymack), and this goal might be the one sentence summary of my entire Ph.D. story.

When I was asked writing a piece to this column by the Early Careers Committee, my first thought was that I should introduce my works and give some recommendations for prospective Ph.D. fellows as it was explicitly asked from me. However, then I realised what inspired me to do Ph.D. on multiple identity dynamics in an utterly different cultural context could be more important than what my Ph.D.'s introduction meant to be. I always find myself as idealistic and curious. I believe these are all necessary ingredients for a successful Ph.D. and perhaps what inspired me to complete my doctoral research at Queen's University Belfast.

After proudly taking my social psychology MSc degree at Middle East Technical University in my 'home' country Turkey, I had moved to Belfast as a highly confident junior political psychologist who was the only one in psychology field getting a scholarship that Queen's University offered to out of five prospective students. However, soon after arrival in Belfast, all my empty confidence had gone when I realised what I did myself with my PhD proposal. As an international student, possibly you couldn't help yourself to ask many questions that have been raised several times in your mind about the new culture that you are going to go. In the first year of my Ph.D., I kept asking myself why school invested (more likely wasted) such amount money to my research which apparently go nowhere, and I wasn't even capable of differentiating between communities and many paramilitary organisations when I was reading the bloody history of Northern Ireland. As a complete alien, how I could possibly dare to look at the complex nature of multiple social identities and intergroup trust aftermath of the conflict in Northern Ireland. I worked hard, but questions popped up in my mind in every challenge that I have faced. Why did I choose to Northern Ireland context as my Ph.D. topic? Couldn't I understand multiple identity dynamics in my 'own country' where I knew all the politics, groups, language, and history? How there were possibly two majority groups in a divided a society? Should one of them be in a subordinate position while the other be a majority in the conflictual inter-group context? Believe it or not, even I had to challenge the idea when I saw the fist time in my life that people sometimes did not understand each other's accent though they were all native in English.

the thesis have changed throughout the process of Ph.D. and reached a more advanced level, though the core interest area remained the same. I even offered a new model in my research, called Identity Content Theory, which suggests not only the levels of identification with groups are related to individuals' behaviours and mind in an intergroup context, but also the content of the identity has a significant role in these relations. I believe Identity Content Theory will lead much further research in international environments and shed light on many social issues, contrary to the insufficient representations in public debate and psychological fields.

I believe my research contributed and will help the idealistic goals of peace through interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives and systematic research, mainly focusing on the relationship between the dynamics of multiple identity processes, intergroup trust, and constructions of various forms of citizenship amongst adolescents in post-conflict societies. What I recommend the new Ph.D. students through my experiences is that you should believe in yourself, stay curious and idealistic, have fun with your Ph.D., build a friendship with colleagues; and most of all you never hesitate to fail because every failure would become a milestone in your further achievement. Then you will see how strong you have become to stand when you would be called on the dark side of academia, institutionalised publish and perish culture. And I am sure that you will make an ethical choice by looking about the possibility of corporations with your fellows all over the world instead of being agree with an offer by any organising committee which claims you should feel success and accept an achievement over a failure of your colleagues.

SPRING 2016 THEME:

Identity and Diversity

The Roma in Turkey: between Romani Identity and Turkish Identity

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