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08.06.2020

To Whom It May Concern,

I interviewed Umut Ozkirimli on 08.06.2020 and diagnosed his condition as Severe Panic Disorder. I thought that his attacks were exacerbated because of accusations against him. He was in treatment with Sertraline 50 mg and I increased the dosage of Sertraline to 100mg daily and started Alprazolam.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Kültegin Ögel, MD
Psychiatrist
Bilgi University
Chief Medical Consultant, Moodist Psychiatry Hospital
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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Hatice Güneş and I have been working in the psychological trauma field as a psychoterapist and instructor since 1999. I am writing this letter upon the request of Umut Özkırmılı. Umut Özkırmılı has contacted me through one of my colleagues almost a year ago. He was living and working in Barcelona, Spain, for this reason we arranged psychotherapy sessions via internet. During the first sessions, Umut Özkırmılı stated that he lost his 5 year old son Luca due to cancer after a long painful fight. The death of one's child is one of the most devastating events that an adult can experience. And Umut was experiencing an accumulation of feelings of loss from the initial diagnosis of his son, through the progressive deterioration in his condition and eventually to the death of Luca.

Umut was going through an inconceivable and unimaginable experience. He was suffering from extreme loneliness, persistent feelings of pain, anxiety, sleep disturbances, poor concentration, depressive symptoms and significant disruption in major life domains such as pursuing satisfying work and participating in community. Above all, Umut's state was accompanied by troubling ruminations about the process of loss and excessive avoidance of or adhesion to reminders of Luca's memory. He was not able to articulate any memory of his son without feeling of panic and suffocation. Grief following loss through death is a universal, human reaction. In the normal grieving process, reactions tend to decrease over time. Grief process includes grief for the loss and as well as a process of searching meaning and constructing meaning in life without the deceased. It requires painful emotional work, in turn bereaved person tend to avoid memories of the loss. Oscillation between remembering and avoiding takes place until the bereaved person integrates the loss into his/her life. Grief process requires remembering at the cost of extreme pain. In the end, inner relationship with the lost one often continues throughout one's life.

From mental health perspective, emotional work via remembering and integrating the loss into life are key factors for recovery; in other words, grieving is a process of recovery. The allegations of harassment unfortunately interrupted and contaminated Umut Özkırmılı's recovery. Umut was trying to finish his book project which recounted his son's short but meaningful journey from the beginning



to the end. This book was also supposed to be a guide for families and their children who are going through similar challenging and mostly painful experiences. However, the writing of the book, which was a very important part of his process of recovery was interrupted by these allegations and the intensity of the ensuing campaign in professional mail lists and on social media. This emotional and mental burden has prevented him from investing his efforts to reconnect with the memories of his son, to continue his relationship with him, and finally searching and constructing meaning in a life without Luca.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further assistance.

Sincerely,

Hatice Güneş, PhD



October 12, 2020

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