

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



Editorial Note

Dear Readers,

As we turn the page on another impactful week in April, I want to thank you—each voice, each story, each silent nod in the group chat and each contribution on the webinar training. Our theme, “Let’s Talk Mental Health – Breaking the Myths, Embracing the Truth,” wasn’t just a campaign—it was a conversation, a collective unlearning, a brave step into truth. Whether you shared a personal story, responded to questions, stimulated group discussions, or simply participated quietly and reflected, you were part of something powerful!

We’ve learned that myths lose their grips when we speak up. That healing begins with community. And that mental wellness is not a luxury—it’s a right. From WhatsApp threads to weekend reflections, our journey this week reminded us that we’re all in this together.

Looking ahead, we are excited about upcoming programs and partnerships with governmental institutions of learning in different parts of Nigeria, including a workshop for teachers on balancing workload and well-being in Calabar, and a university talk at Kaduna State University to equip students with emotional resilience strategies. These initiatives continue our mission to create supportive spaces for mental health awareness and growth.

It is vital, on a final note, for this conversation to be kept afloat and active. Check on loved ones, challenge stigmas, and give permission to rest, to feel, to grow. Thank you for showing up with open hearts.

**Warm regards,
Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH**

WEEKLY WEBINAR

Sub Theme: Breaking The Myths, Embracing the Truth:

Date of Webinar: April 12 , 2025

Facilitator: Dr. Mfon Bassey

Highlights

Our April Webinar session with Dr Mfon Bassey, an experienced motivational speaker and distinguished academics navigated the audience through some key mental health myths in Nigeria and how to mitigate them. The session was filled with real talk, courage, and community. Members shared personal stories, asked meaningful questions, and challenged harmful myths about mental health.

Among several myths, here are a few and how they were demystified.

Myths Dr Mfon Bassey Debunked:

Myth: **Mental illness is rare.**

Truth: It's more common than you think. You are not alone.

Myth: **People can just “snap out of it.”**

Truth: Mental health struggles are real—willpower isn't a cure.

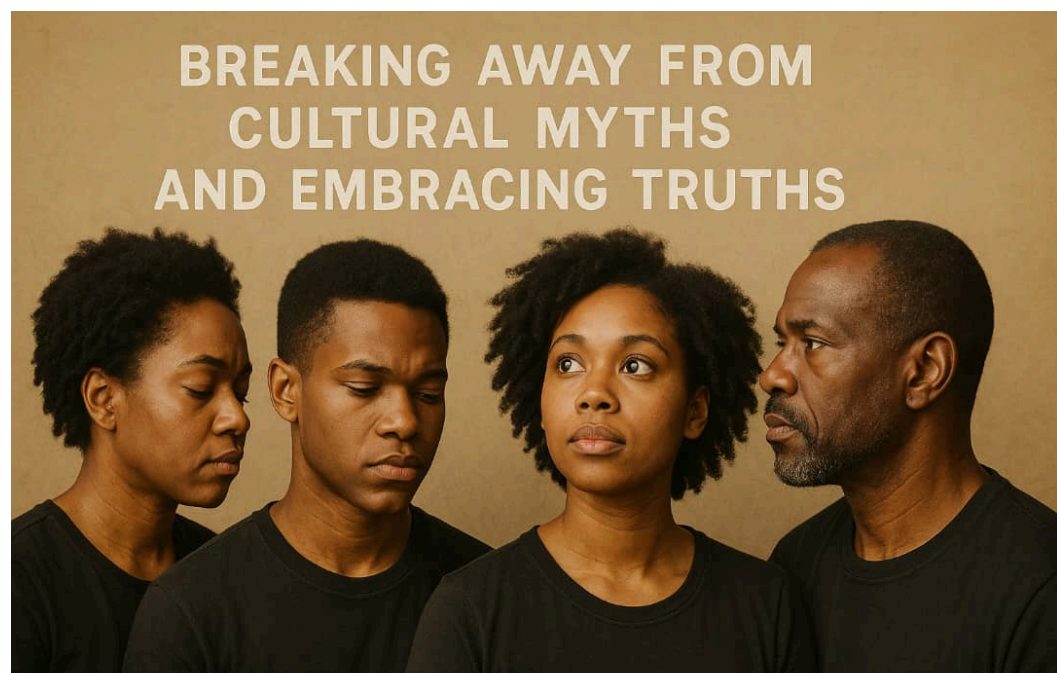
Myth: **Only “very ill” people need therapy.**

Truth: Therapy benefits everyone.

Stories That Stuck With Us

From the Barracks: A member recalled a childhood friend's distress being dismissed as attention-seeking. It reminded us how deep misunderstanding can cut.

At the Hospital: Another shared how whispers followed them when seeking mental health support. Even in healing spaces, stigma persists—but our voices are changing that.



Spiritual Beliefs:

Faith can heal—but misinterpretation can harm. We agreed: our religious leaders must be allies.

In the Home

When parents normalize emotional expression, they raise emotionally intelligent and resilient children.

Signs of Hope

From social media to celebrities and youth advocates, mental health is finally front-page news. And it's making a difference.

A Word from the Moderator

“Mental health matters to all of us. Let's be intentional—check in, speak out, and seek help without shame.”



STAR EVENT OF THE WEEK

ICTMH PREPARES FOR A HUGE TASK AHEAD AS PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP WITH TWO GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING TO PROMOTE AWARENESS ON MENTAL HEALTH TO TAKE OFF THIS MONTH



Strengthening Partnerships for Teachers’ Well-being

We are pleased to share the outcome of a productive engagement with Mrs. Rosemary Bassey, Executive Secretary of the Educational Authority for Calabar South Local Government Area. During our meeting, we introduced the Initiative for Cognitive Therapy and Mental Health (ICTMH), outlining our mission, objectives, and impact-driven programme

Mrs. Bassey expressed deep appreciation for our work and pledged her support. She recommended we formally address a letter to Senator (Assoc. Prof.) Stephen A. Odey, the Commissioner for Education, introducing our proposed workshop: "Balancing Workload and Mental Well-being for Teachers." This workshop is designed to respond to the growing pressures faced by educators, providing practical tools for managing professional demands while maintaining mental and emotional health. A formal letter will be sent seeking the Commissioner’s endorsement and support.

Enhancing Mental Health among Tertiary Institution Students

Upcoming University Mental Health Talk: Mind Matters

We are also excited to announce an upcoming event organized by Hafisat Ajibade Masud of ICTMH, to be hosted at Kaduna State University. The talk, titled: "Mind Matters – Building Resilience and Emotional Well-being in University," focuses on equipping students with strategies to enhance mental resilience, manage academic stress, and build emotional intelligence.



ICTMH’s Hafisat in white poses with he DVC of Kaduna State University Professor Helen in an official mission to pitch a partnership proposal on promoting mental health among students

Intended Outcomes

- To increase awareness of mental health and available support services on campus
- To instill greater confidence in students to manage emotional challenges
 - To improve campus culture around empathy, resilience, and well-being

This event reflects ICTMH’s commitment to youth mental health, ensuring students are empowered to thrive both academically and emotionally. Together, we continue to advance our mission—creating spaces for healing, awareness, and resilience across all sectors of our community.

WEEKLY WHATSAPP INTERACTIVE SESSION

Health Week: A Journey of Myths, Facts & Connection
Theme: The Myths and Facts of Mental Health in Nigeria
Date: April 7 – 13, 2025

ICTMH took the conversation straight to WhatsApp. With honest dialogue, laughter, tears, and hopes—we connected across Nigeria. Here’s What the Week Looked Like:

Motivational Monday

Myth: Mental health struggles = weakness

Truth: They mean you’re human.
“Seeking support isn’t weakness—it’s wisdom.” – Mrs. Lizzie
“It takes courage to heal.” – Latifat

Talk-It-Out Tuesday

Members shared what mental health in Nigeria really looks like. Every “DONE” was a win for awareness.

Wellness Wednesday

Myth: People with mental illness are violent.

Fact: They’re more likely to be misunderstood.
“Saying that’s true is like saying everyone who wears glasses is a wizard.”

Wellness Wednesday

With a little humor, we personified grief as an uninvited guest who overstays its welcome—participants got creative in expressing how they’d “deal” with it.



Thankful Thursday

Gratitude was our anchor.
“Gratitude gives you a sense of achievement.” – Hafisat
“Write your own story.” – Uzo

Fun Friday

Myth: Therapy is for “serious” problems only.
Truth: Therapy is for growth, balance, and breathing room.

A virtual dance party and Dr. Mfon’s energy-filled session capped it off!

Saturday – Self-Care Saturday

Rest is not a reward—it’s essential.
“Even Jesus took time to rest. Who are we not to?” – Lizzie

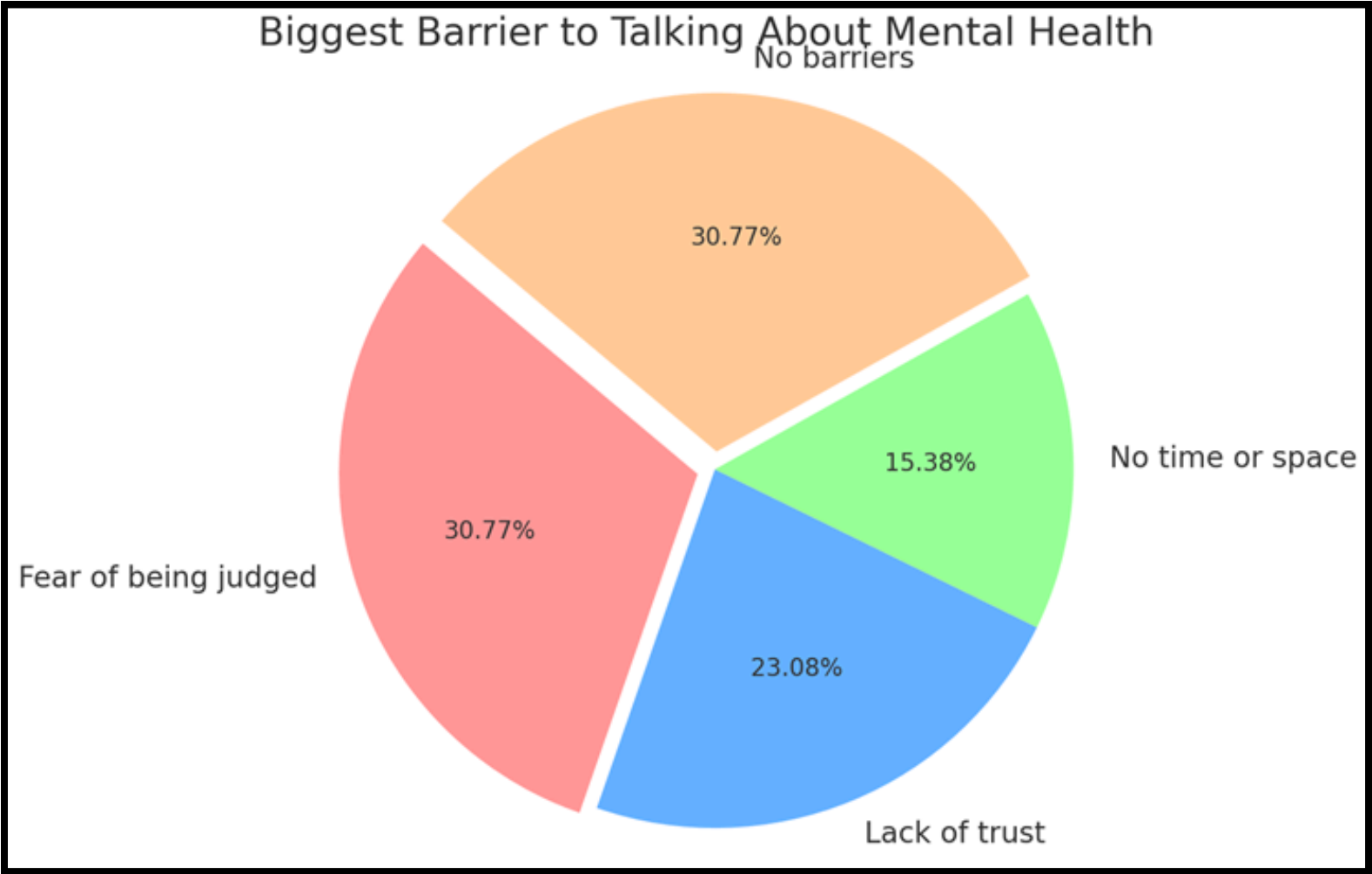
Reflection Sunday

We ended with open hearts and minds. Members shared takeaways, asked hard questions, and left empowered.

Words on Marble

“Sustainable growth begins with a supportive community and a commitment to self-compassion.”

– Dr. Stephanie Okolo, ICTMH President
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Data sourced from ICTMH April 2025 Event Log and compiled by Elizabeth Idowu

RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



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For volunteering opportunities, join our team via social media

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