

WEEKLY

NEWSLETTER



Editorial Note

Dear Readers,

Thank you for your active participation in the recent Mental Health Awareness Sessions!

Over the week, we explored the importance of recognizing depression and anxiety, particularly within the African contexts, with a focus on where these issues are often misunderstood. Through an eye-opening session led by a seasoned Psychiatrist and mental health advocate, Dr Nafisah Hayyatudeen, we tackled the stigma, economic impact, subtle signs and possible panaceas to depression and anxiety.

Our weekly mental health wellness program on whatsAap was explosive!

Each day brought unquantifiable perspectives, from Motivational Monday's focus on early recognition to Self-care Saturday's message of prioritizing mental health especially in relations to management and control of depression and anxiety.

We can't wait to share a milestone outreach with The Canvedish School in Ungwan Rimi, Kaduna State, Nigeria. This availed us more privilege to advocate mental health dimensions as well as breaking the stigma surrounding it within an educational community. Thank you for being an integral part of ICTMH. Let's continue this journey toward greater mental health advocacy and support.

**Warm regards,
Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH**

Weekly Webinar

Theme: *Recognition of Depression and Anxiety within African Contexts*

Date of Webinar: *April 25th , 2025*

Facilitator:

Dr Nafisah Hayyatudeen

Highlights

This session explored the recognition of depression and anxiety within African contexts, highlighting how these serious conditions are often casually referenced or misunderstood. Participants shared perceptions such as "hopelessness" and cultural beliefs like the influence of "village people" on mental afflictions.

Key Discussion Areas addressed by Dr Nafisah Hayyartudeen

Stigma and Misunderstanding

Particularly in Nigeria, mental health issues are heavily stigmatized and often dismissed or misattributed to supernatural causes.

Prevalence and Economic Impact:

Depression and anxiety affect millions worldwide, costing the global economy over \$1 trillion annually.

Causes include genetics, chemical imbalances, trauma, poverty, and societal pressures.

Symptoms of depression include:

Persistent sadness, subtle signs such as irritability, anger, low self-esteem, palpitations, and shortness of breath .

Group Discussion

Group 1: Shared personal experiences with depression and coping without professional help.

Group 2: Differentiated normal stress from clinical depression, highlighting the importance of medical intervention.

Group 3: Explored depression in children, adolescents, and the elderly, noting signs like withdrawal and neglect.

Group 4: Identified overlooked signs like anger, crying spells, sleep disturbances, mistrust, and appetite changes.

- *Types of Anxiety Disorders Covered:*

Social Anxiety Disorder

Panic Disorder

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Takeaway Messages:

- Recognize early signs and seek help promptly.
- Encourage regular mental health check-ins with loved ones.
- Offer non-judgmental support.
- Practice consistent self-care.
- Continue raising mental health



Star Event of the Week

Theme: Emotional Fatigue and Burnout in the Classroom
Date: 24th April, 2025
Facilitators: Hafisat Ajibade, Victor Ogbemor, Latifah Lawal and Sarah Bulus



A cross section of participants including teachers and ICTMH staff at the Cavendish School Outreach

The outreach session, opened warmly by Mrs. Sarah Bulus, set a welcoming and engaging tone.
Dr. Stephanie Okolo, ICTMH Founder, outlined the organization’s vision and mission, emphasizing mental health advocacy in education.

Mrs. Hafisat Ajibade Masud presented "**Compassion Fatigue and Burnout in the Classroom,**" highlighting the emotional challenges educators face, signs of burnout, including, **Physical:** Constant fatigue, even after rest

Emotional: Loss of motivation or satisfaction
Behavioral: Procrastination or taking longer to get things done.

Resilience-building Strategies.
Physical Resilience: Take regular breaks throughout the day.
Emotional Resilience: Practice self-compassion and acknowledge your limits without guilt.



ICTMH’s Hafisat in white {outreach coordinator}, other ICTMH staff and teachers of Canvendish School, Kaduna pose for an after event shot.

Behavioral Resilience:
Set clear boundaries between work and personal time.
Cognitive Resilience: Focus on what you can control and let go of the rest.
Social Resilience: Build supportive relationships with people who energize and understand you.

Interactive group discussion, led by Miss Latifah Lawal, encouraged participants to share practical self-care ideas.
Mr. Victor introduced ICTMH’s social media platforms and coordinated group photographs and short videos.

The event concluded with closing remarks from the Head Teacher, who expressed gratitude and stressed the need for mental health education.

As a special gesture, ICTMH representatives presented branded hand towels to the school staff to reinforce ongoing awareness.



- **Key Outcomes**
 - Enhanced awareness of compassion fatigue and self-care practices.
 - Strengthened school mental health culture and advocacy.
 - Broadened ICTMH’s network and brand visibility.
 - Laid groundwork for future collaborations and sustained engagement

WEEKLY WHATSAPP INTERACTIVE SESSION

The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) once again demonstrated its commitment to mental wellness by hosting a vibrant, week-long event on WhatsApp. Through a mixture of daily themes, interactive discussions, creative challenges, and reflective sessions, participants were empowered to recognize the early signs of depression and anxiety while promoting emotional resilience.

Motivational Monday Mrs. Lizzie kick-started the week by introducing the key topic: Signs of Depression and Anxiety. She emphasized the importance of early recognition, noting that timely awareness is critical to preventing emotional struggles from deepening.

Talk-It-Out Tuesday Participants engaged in a Mental Health Awareness Survey, opening up vital conversations within a supportive, non-judgmental space. The session fostered greater openness and community bonding.

Wellness Wednesday Through a touching reflective story about Mrs. B, members explored the hidden emotional burdens people often carry. The narrative encouraged empathy, compassion, and a deeper understanding of invisible struggles.

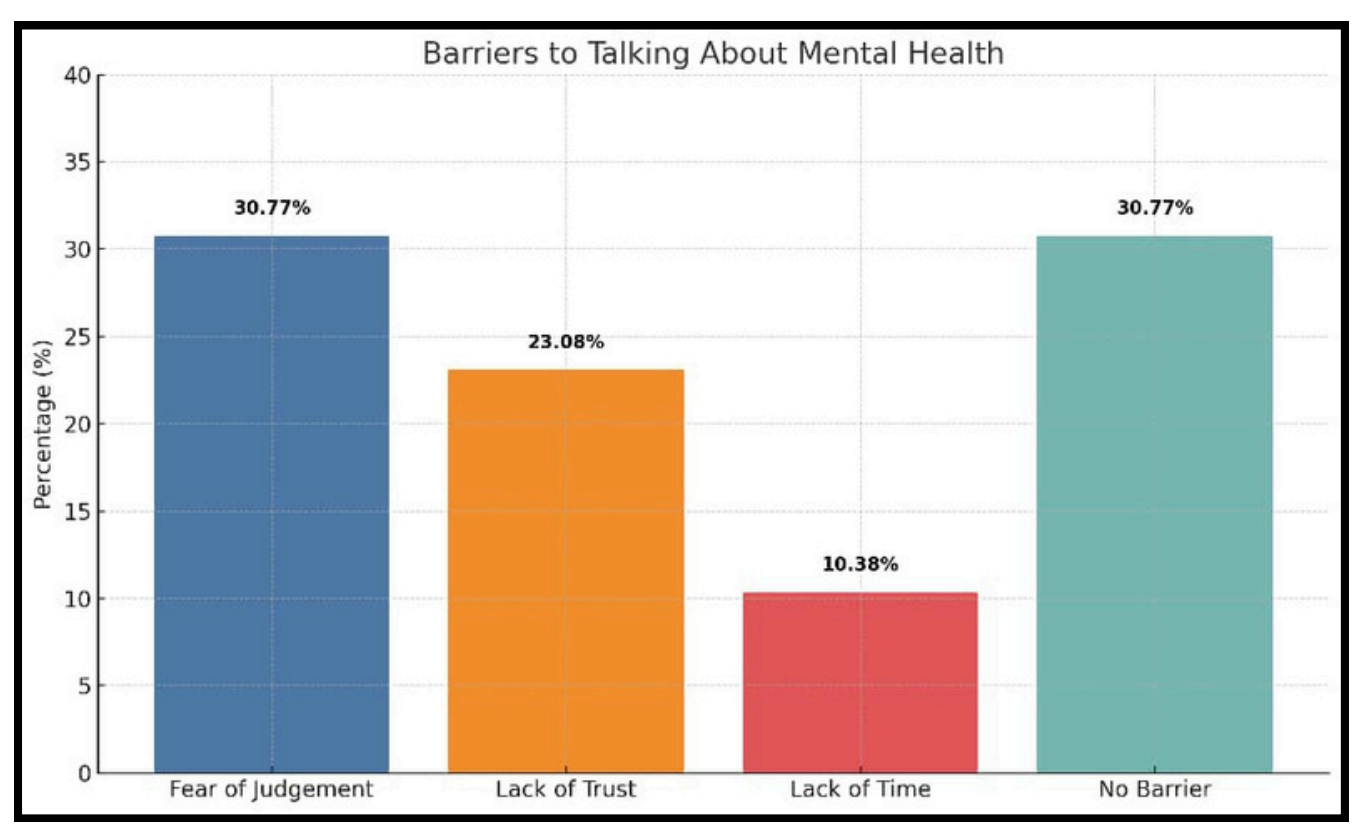


Thankful Thursday The focus shifted to gratitude and intentional outreach. Members discussed the importance of noticing subtle signs of distress in others and the value of offering timely support.

Fun Friday A lively "How Burnt Out Are You?" game brought laughter and introspection, allowing members to assess their emotional exhaustion in a fun, relatable way.

Saturday – Self-Care Saturday Participants celebrated self-care without guilt, choosing personalized activities to recharge. The day's message debunked the myth that self-care is selfish, highlighting it instead as a necessity.

Reflection Sunday The week concluded with reflective exercises, encouraging members to consolidate their learning and commit to continuous personal growth.



Data sourced from ICTMH April 2025 Event Log and compiled by Elizabeth Idowu

RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



The poster is for an online training session. At the top left is the logo for the Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH). The title 'Online Training' is in a script font, followed by 'Managing Marital Stress and Mental Health in Families' in a bold sans-serif font. A portrait of Bridget Byrd, the trainer, is on the right. Below the title, the date and time '02 May, 2025 6:00 PM (WAT)' are listed. A 'ZOOM LINK' is provided: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84451234567>. A 'REGISTER NOW' button is present. At the bottom, social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn are shown, along with the handle '@CognitiveTherapiesng' and the website 'www.cognitiveng.org'.

INITIATIVE FOR COGNITIVE THERAPIES AND MENTAL HEALTH (ICTMH)

Online Training

Managing Marital Stress and Mental Health in Families

02 May, 2025
6:00 PM (WAT)

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REGISTER NOW

Bridget Byrd
Trainer

@CognitiveTherapiesng www.cognitiveng.org

Call for Journal Articles - ICTMH

ICTMH invites submissions of journal articles focused on mental health and cognitive behavioural therapies, especially those offering African-based solutions.

A list of suggested topics is available, but you're welcome to propose your own. Writing guidelines, including word counts and tips, are also provided.

Interested?

Contact Ese (07068487474) or Latifa (07064269139) on WhatsApp.

We're happy to support you through the process.

Thank you!

To get feedback or stories? Email us at enquiry@cognitiveng.org

For volunteering opportunities, join our team via social media

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