

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



Editorial Note

Dear Readers,

Events in the last week of May revolved around public enlightenment and seminars through our dynamic programming that were centered on Emotional Resilience.

In our Friday seminar, Consultant Psychiatrist Dr. Folorunsho Nuhu emphasized that resilience is not a trait but a teachable skill, vital in navigating Nigeria's growing mental health challenges.

During Mental Health Week, our WhatsApp-based sessions encouraged gratitude, humor, reflection, and peer support, uniting participants in powerful dialogues and reminding us that healing thrives in shared spaces.

Physical programs were carried out in three major Nigerian cities. In Calabar, educators gathered to address Compassion Fatigue and Burnout in the Classroom. Through storytelling, guided activities, and honest conversation, teachers found tools to care without being consumed. Similarly, at the Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, students' opinion on the Impact of Social Media on Mental Health were harvested, the outcomes are eye opening! In Kaduna, we recognized Cavendish School for their role on mental health advocacy

As you read this episode, may it inspire renewed commitment to mental well-being in you, your circle, and the systems we're all part-of.

**Warm regards,
Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH**

Weekly Webinar Training

Theme: Building Emotional Resilience in Tough Times

This week, the Initiative for Cognitive Therapy and Mental Health (ICTMH) hosted a vital session on “Building Emotional Resilience in Tough Times.” Delivered by Dr. Folorunsho Nuhu, a leading expert in child and adolescent psychiatry, the session offered insight into how individuals can navigate stress and adversity with strength and adaptability.

Dr. Nuhu defined resilience as the capacity to recover and grow from stress, adversity, or trauma. Resilience is a skill rather than a trait built through consistent habits and supportive environments. Backed by neuroimaging research on brain plasticity, he emphasized that resilience can be taught and strengthened over time.

The five pillars of resilience including *emotional awareness, social connection, purpose, emotional regulation, and gratitude* were explored in depth. In today’s climate, these skills are crucial.

According to the World Health Organization, depression affects over 280 million people globally, with anxiety disorders affecting an additional 30 million. In Nigeria, studies suggest that nearly 30% of the population suffers from one form of mental health issue, often made worse by economic hardship, insecurity, and post-COVID realities.

Dr. Nuhu highlighted concerning trends: rising poverty rates, inflation, and post-pandemic trauma continue to threaten well-being. Over 63% of Nigerians reported increased stress levels since 2020. In such contexts, resilience becomes not just beneficial, but essential.

The session also featured a moving case study of “Rejoice,” a young woman who overcame teenage pregnancy, job loss, and social stigma through resilience, social support, and faith. Her story mirrored the realities of many young Nigerians navigating socioeconomic challenges.

Participants engaged in breakout discussions to reflect on personal resilience and community-based coping strategies. Dr. Nuhu concluded by reiterating the importance of early intervention, spiritual grounding, supportive relationships, and professional help when signs of depression, anxiety, or suicidal thoughts emerge.

Key Takeaways:

Resilience is learnable and essential for mental health.

Daily habits like sleep, nutrition, exercise, and reduced screen time support emotional stability.

Community, culture, and spirituality are powerful buffers against psychological distress.

Seeking help is a sign of strength—not weakness.

Let’s continue building resilient minds, families, and communities.



Weekly WhatsApp Interactive Session



THANKFUL THURSDAY



**ALWAYS
BE
GRATEFUL**

Gratitude turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity... it makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.



ICTMH Mental Health Week Report

Theme: Building Emotional Resilience in Tough Times

Date: May 26 – June 1, 2025

Overview

The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) held a dynamic Mental Health Week to explore Emotional Resilience. This virtual gathering united participants in reflection, humor, gratitude, and connection. With daily activities and heartfelt stories, the group embraced tools to navigate tough times.

Emotional Resilience is our ability to recover and grow through challenges. Participants were encouraged to explore daily habits, faith, community, and gratitude. The week underscored that resilience isn't perfection—it's persistence with compassion.

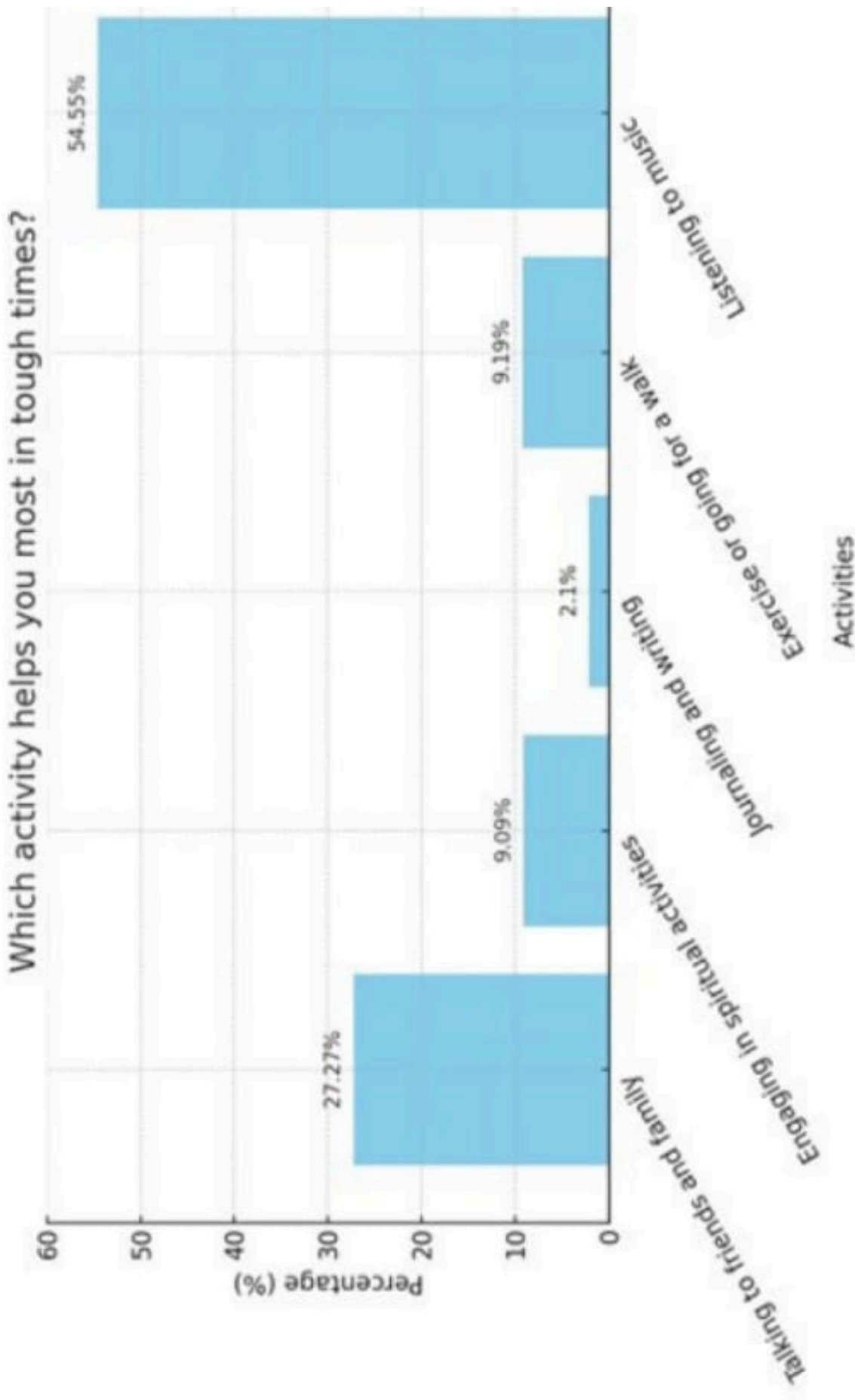
Motivational Monday

"Even A touching story about Sarah, a school administrator, reminded us how simple support can transform a team.

"Helping others rise doesn't diminish your light—it multiplies it." – Hafsat

Tuesday – Talk-it-Out Tuesday

Participants reflected on what keeps them going. A resilience survey prompted sharing. *"Leaning into faith and community is real strength."* – Lizzie



Wednesday – Wellness Wednesday

With humor and heart, Lizzie led a midweek check-in using vibrant Pidgin English to emphasize the power of small daily coping strategies. Laughter, fresh air, prayer, and quiet reflection were among the many tools discussed.

Participant Reflections:

- Hafsat: *“A stroll and fresh air can work wonders.”*
- Uzo: *“Credit alerts dey remove stress pass any therapy!”*
- Latifat: *“Soft life is real wellness ooo.”*
- Beatrice: *“When in crisis, putting God first opens doors.”*
- Emerald & Amina: *“Quiet moments and taking care of myself*

Thursday – Thankful Thursday

Thursday focused on gratitude, even amidst struggle. Lizzie shared a vulnerable reflection, reminding participants that giving thanks does not require perfect circumstances only an open heart.

Participant Responses:

- Uzo: *“This small strength keeping me going? I’m grateful.”*
- Hafsat: *“Thankful for life, even with its challenges.”*
- Amina: *“Grateful for this group it reminds me I’m not alone.”*
- Abby: *“In all things, I give God the glory.”*

Fun Friday

Recognizing that laughter is healing, participants were encouraged to share funny videos, jokes, or memes. Laughter served as a communal therapy session, lifting spirits across the group.

Activity: Participants posted hilarious content that sparked joy and brought the group together through shared laughter.

Saturday – Self-Care Saturday

The focus shifted to practical self-care as a resilience tool. Lizzie narrated a personal moment of decompressing with malt and groundnuts under the open sky a reminder that simple joys can restore strength.

Participant Reflections:

- Uzo: *“I dance without music, laugh for no reason, and speak love over my life.”*
- Hafsat: *“Singing and dancing remind me of God’s goodness.”*

Sunday – Reflection & Questions

Sunday provided space for deep introspection and open sharing. Lizzie welcomed participants to a new month and encouraged everyone to pause, reflect, and ask honest questions about their week’s emotional journey.

Participant Responses:

- Hafsat: *“This week reminded me that solutions exist for every stress.”*
- Uzo: *“I have many questions, but silence often brings clarity. We get better every day.”*



Star Event of the Week

ICTMH Honors Cavendish Schools with Certificate of Appreciation

Kaduna, Nigeria — The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) proudly presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the Proprietors of Cavendish Schools in recognition of their steadfast support in advancing mental health awareness and education.

The presentation took place in Kaduna and was led by Mrs. Hafisat Ajibade Masud, ICTMH’s Representative in the state, as well as Head of the Clinical Team and Outreach Coordinator. The event highlighted a moment of shared commitment to student wellbeing and community mental health.



“We are deeply grateful for the continuous partnership and advocacy shown by Cavendish Schools,”
— **Mrs. Hafisat Ajibade Masud**

The certificate was warmly received by Mrs. Khadija Aliu, Proprietor of Cavendish Schools. In her acceptance, she expressed heartfelt appreciation for the recognition and reiterated her school’s dedication to supporting ICTMH’s mission. She also conveyed her excitement for future collaborations aimed at fostering a more mentally aware school environment.

> *“Thank you, Dr. Stephanie Okolo and the ICTMH team, for this thoughtful recognition. We remain committed to working together for the mental wellbeing of our students.”*
— **Mrs. Khadija Aliu**

The event reflects a growing alliance between ICTMH and educational institutions across Nigeria. It underscores the importance of shared values in creating safe, supportive, and mentally healthy learning spaces.

Project: Voxpop Event Recap: Social Media and Mental Health
Special Edition: Rivers State University, Port Harcourt
Date: Monday, May 26
Facilitators: Emerald Unufi, Emmanuel Essien, Udoma Obot Umoh
Theme: Mental Health and from the Lens of the Street

Event’s Overview
The Voxpop event brought together diverse voices to explore how social media affects mental health. Attendees shared personal experiences, raised important concerns, and offered valuable solutions.

It was a great platform for open dialogue on the intersection of social media and mental health. By acknowledging the challenges and applying the shared strategies, participants can take proactive steps toward digital wellness. Future events will build on these insights to foster even greater impact.

Detailed interview videos can be accessed on our website www.cognitiveng.org or our social media handles.

- Key Takeaways:**
- 1. Set Boundaries**
Limit time spent on social media to reduce stress and avoid emotional burnout
 - 2. Practice Self-Care**
Prioritize offline activities that encourage relaxation, mindfulness, and mental restoration.
 - 3. Seek Support**
Connect with trusted individuals or support groups to share challenges and receive encouragement.



Star Event of the Week

Project: Improving the Capacity of Teachers in Mental Health

Special Edition: Calabar Outreach

Date: 30th May 2025

Location: NYSC Secondary School, Calabar

Theme: Compassion Fatigue & Burnout in the Classroom

Sub Theme:

Supporting Teachers, Strengthening Classrooms

Compassion fatigue—emotional exhaustion from prolonged care for students and burnout, chronic workplace stress can significantly impact a teacher’s performance and well-being. This session aimed to raise awareness and equip teachers with tools for resilience and self-care

In a pre-recorded video, Dr. Stephanie Okolo, Founder of ICTMH, shared the organization’s mission to empower teachers with emotional resilience strategies.



Main Sessions

1. Compassion Fatigue & Burnout in the Classroom

Presenter: Mrs. Grace Effiong

This session explored the differences between compassion fatigue and burnout, signs to look out for, and the effects on both teachers and students.

2. Caring vs. Carrying

Presenter: Mrs. Elizabeth Idowu

A reflective, interactive session distinguishing between caring for students and emotionally carrying their burdens. The powerful activity “What Are You Carrying?” helped teachers identify their own emotional loads and learn boundary-setting strategies.

Real Talk: An Interactive Session

Participants were invited to share openly about stressors—from financial struggles to family and marital pressures. This honest dialogue revealed a strong need for emotional support systems within the teaching profession.

Media & Social Engagement

Mr. Kennedy Iyam covered the day’s events through photos and video. ICTMH’s social platforms were also shared, encouraging participants to stay engaged with mental health resources and future events.



Closing Reflections

Mrs. Emmanuelle (Vice Principal, Academics) offered heartfelt closing remarks, calling the session “timely, therapeutic, and deeply appreciated.” She emphasized the need for follow-up sessions and ongoing emotional support for educators.

Final Word

ICTMH remains dedicated to building emotionally resilient teachers across Nigeria. As our outreach programs continue, we invite schools, stakeholders, and educational leaders to embed mental health education into the core of school development and teacher welfare.



Event of the Week (Picture Collage)



RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Online Training
**MENTAL ILLNESS IS NOT MADNESS:
DEBUNKING MYTHS IN AFRICAN SOCIETY.**

FRI , 6 JUNE
8:00PM (WAT)
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8121212121>

REGISTER NOW

AMINA SHAIBU
SPEAKER

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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