

# WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



## Editorial Note

### Dear Readers,

In this edition, we are reminded that mental health is not an abstract concept but affects every part of our daily lives, whether we work from bustling offices, quiet bedrooms, or vibrant youth communities.

This week's activities at ICTMH powerfully highlights this truth. From the Mental Health for Remote Workers training led by Jerry Nwobodo to the Virtual Wellness Week guided by Elizabeth Idowu, we witnessed how the flexibility of remote work can be both a gift and a burden.

Equally inspiring was the Mental Health Outreach for the Youth Wing at ECWA Church, Sabo Tasha. The event underscored that young people, too, are grappling with stress and uncertainty in a rapidly changing world.

It was heart warming to see faith leaders, mental health professionals, and community members come together to challenge stigma, equip youths with coping skills, and affirm the message that no one has to struggle alone.

As you read, you are encouraged to to pause and ponder: What small steps can you take today to safeguard your own mental well-being? What myths can you help dismantle in your community? And how might you be the voice that says, "You are seen, you matter, and help is here"?

Remember that mental health is everyone's business, at work, at home, and everywhere in between!

**Warm regards  
Ese Ogheneovo  
for ICTMH**



# Weekly Webinar Training

**Theme:** Mental Health for Remote Workers.

The ICTM training session for June, 2025 took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> with a title, Mental Health for Remote Workers. It was facilitated by Jerry Nwobodo a Nigerian health tech expert.

According to the speaker, remote work involves carrying out job responsibilities through virtual platforms rather than being physically present in a conventional office. Statistically, Mr. Jerry noted that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, less than 5% of employees worked remotely. However, this figure rose dramatically to about 45% during the pandemic and has kept increasing. One major advantage of remote work is the sense of freedom and flexibility it provides.

Yet, this benefit can also create a paradox by blurring the line between personal and professional life. For instance, remote employees may find themselves sending emails late at night, working from their beds, dealing with nonstop notifications, and gradually losing clear work-life separation. These patterns can contribute to burnout, feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression



## Introducing the Mental Health Toolbox

Jerry presented practical “Mental Health Toolbox” with five key essentials:

- Quality Sleep: Restorative sleep as the foundation of well-being.
- Movement: Regular exercise and breaks to reset the mind and body.
- Sunlight: Natural light to boost mood and energy.
- Social Connection: Staying engaged with colleagues and friends.
- Emotional Check-ins: Mindfulness and honest reflection on feelings.

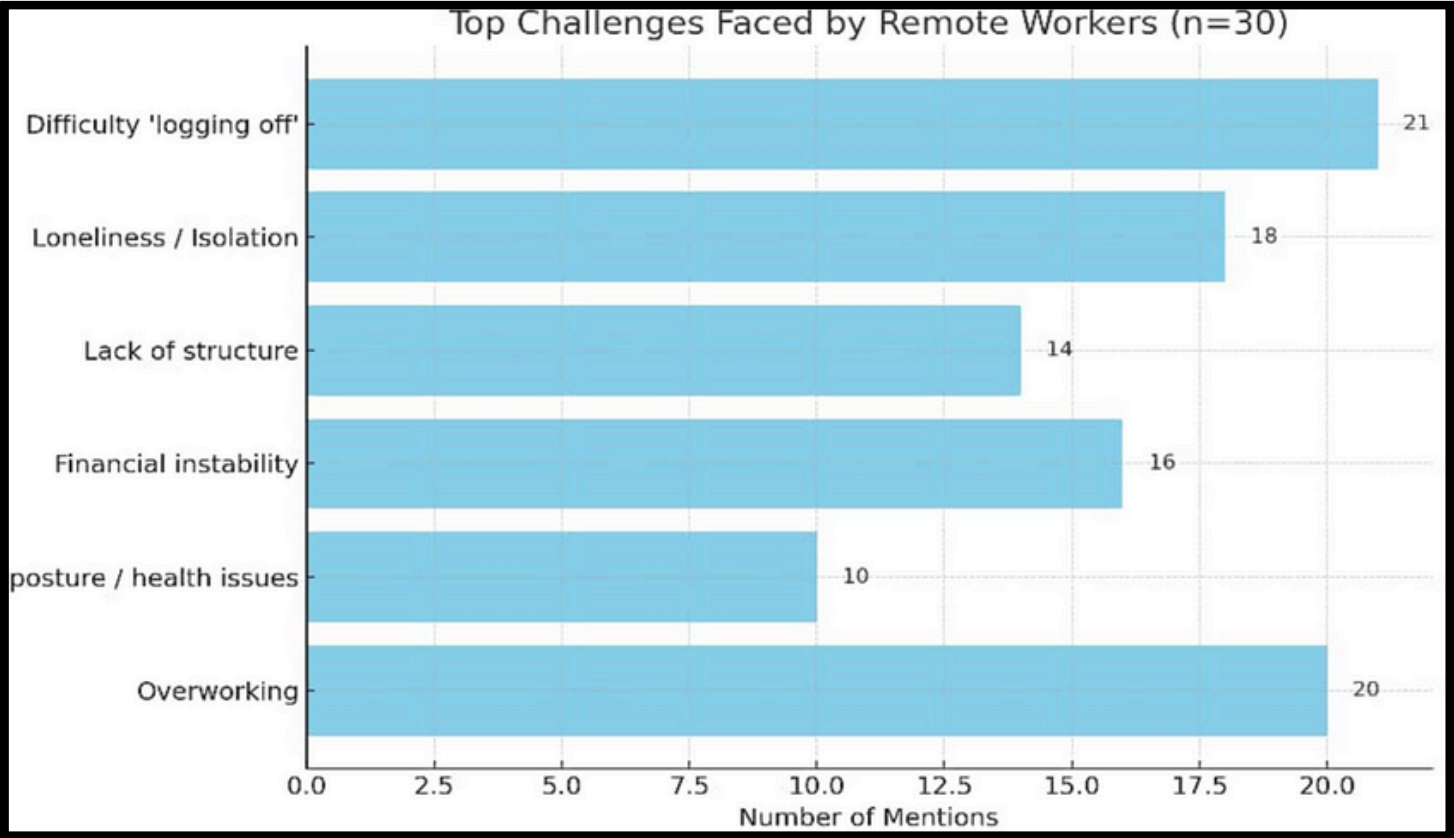
## Breakout Group Discussions

The breakout sessions were a highlight of the training. In smaller groups, participants shared openly about their experiences:

- Isolation: Many described feeling lonely without in-person contact.
- Boundaries: Some struggled to switch off work mode in the evenings.
- Solutions: Ideas included taking short walks, scheduling virtual lunch breaks, and dressing up for work to reclaim structure.
- Digital Detox: Others committed to turning off notifications after hours and keeping laptops out of the bedroom.

These stories were powerful reminders that no one is alone in facing these challenges.

# Weekly WhatsApp Interactive Session



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

## ICTMH Mental Health Week Report

**Theme:** Mental Health for Remote Workers & Freelancers

**Date:** June 21st – June 28th, 2025

### Overview

The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) successfully hosted its Virtual Mental Health Wellness Week from June 21st to 28th, 2025, themed: *Mental Health for Remote Workers & Freelancers*. The week provided a platform for remote professionals to connect, reflect, and prioritize their well-being through engaging daily themes, real-life stories, wellness prompts, and interactive sessions.

The theme addressed the unique mental health challenges faced by remote workers and freelancers ranging from blurred work-life boundaries to social isolation, digital fatigue, and burnout. Through daily reflections, shared experiences, and practical strategies, participants were encouraged to prioritize rest, set boundaries, and embrace intentional self-care.

## Motivational Monday

A Gentle Reminder

We kicked off the week with Tolu’s story, a freelancer who learned the hard way that freedom without boundaries leads to burnout. Her turning point? A simple walk that helped her regain clarity and balance. Her story reminded us all:

- You are your most important project.
- Freedom is only sweet when structure is in place.
- Burnout doesn’t come with alarms it creeps in quietly.

## Tips Shared:

- a, Take that walk
- b, Log off at a decent hour
- c, Rest is not laziness it’s fuel for your next assignment

## Community Voices:

- Dr. Okolo shared how clearing her garden became a healing ritual.
- Ese recounted health issues from poor work habits and how structure brought healing.
- Hafsat expressed renewed commitment to intentional rest.

## ” Talk-It-Out Tuesday:

Share Your Truth

We created a safe space for honest conversations about remote work realities. Participants reflected on loneliness, financial unpredictability, and the struggle to “log off.” An anonymous survey was also shared to collect insights for better support initiatives.





## Wellness Wednesday

### Midweek Reset

Midweek reminded us to pause and check in not just with our to-do lists, but with our bodies and minds.

Prompt Questions:

- Have you stepped away from your screen today?
- Are you scrolling, or truly resting?
- When last did you check your BP or sugar level?

Reflections:

- Uzo: “Little things we ignore are often the real danger.”
- Hafsat: “Small steps truly matter. Thank you for reminding us.”

## Thankful Thursday

### The Power of Gratitude

We paused to give thanks for strength, healing, growth, and even the discomforts that pushed us toward better care.

We celebrated the birthday of our amazing HR Emerald with warm wishes and prayers from the group.

### Key Takeaway:

Gratitude doesn’t erase hardship it grounds us in hope and helps us move forward.

Participant Response:

- Hafsat: “Amin, and thank You, Almighty, for strength, healing, and grace. Gratitude shifts everything.”

## Fun Friday

### Laughter as Medicine

A lighter moment to laugh, connect, and release tension. Participants were asked: If your job or week was a movie or brand, what would it be called?

Funny Submissions:

- Hafsat: “Mission Impossible: Deadline Protocol” / Overthinkers & Last-Minute Ltd.
- Emerald: DEADLINE: Achieve or Long Waka / Mental Health Couture: Sew Your Brain Fast line
- Uncle Bassey: Return of the Pending Files / Stress Confusion Ltd.

We ended the week with giggles and camaraderie because laughter heals.

## Self-Care Saturday

### Just Breathe

The reminder was simple: take care of you.

Self-Care Prompts:

- Take a break
- Take a nap
- Say no without guilt
- Choose kindness toward yourself

We were reminded that self-care isn’t always about candles or spa days sometimes, it’s saying “I need rest” and actually taking it.

## Reflection & Q&A Sunday

### Looking Back with Grace

As the week ended, we reflected on the journey stories shared, emotions unpacked, and rest reclaimed.

Participants were encouraged to journal, pray, and give themselves credit for how far they’ve come.

Reflection Quote: "You are not where you used to be and that’s something to thank God for."





# Event of the Week (Picture Collage)



Hafisat Ajibade , Victor Ogbebor, Sarah Bulus and staff of ICTMH pose with members of the Youth Wing of ECWA Church, Sabo Tasha, Kauna State for after-event shots.



# Event of the week

**REPORT:** Mental Health Outreach Program for the Youth Wing at ECWA Church, Sabo Tasha, Kaduna, Nigeria

**Organization:** Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH)

**Event Date:** June 30, 2025

**Venue:** Blue Roof ECWA Church, Sabo Tasha

**Report Compiled By:** Hafisat Ajibade Masud, Outreach Coordinator, ICTMH

**Report Date:** July 1, 2025

## Introduction

This document provides an overview of the mental health outreach conducted by ICTMH for the Youth Wing at ECWA Church, Sabo Tasha, on June 30, 2025. The initiative was designed to raise mental health awareness and provide participants with actionable coping strategies”

## Objectives

- The outreach program focused on the following aims:
- Enhance understanding of prevalent mental health conditions.
  - Challenge and correct widespread myths related to mental illness.
  - Teach attendees how to identify signs and symptoms of mental health issues.
  - Share effective approaches for managing stress and anxiety.
  - Introduce the concepts of Psychological First Aid (PFA) and grounding methods.
  - Promote proactive help-seeking behaviors.

## Program Implementation and Highlights

Opening Remarks:

The event began with warm greetings from church leaders: Rev. Peter Dantata (Associate Pastor/Christian Education Leader), Pastor Bobai Y. Tanko (Senior Pastor), and Barr. Joshua Goar (Youth Leader), who formally welcomed the ICTMH delegation.

Introduction to ICTMH:

Dr. Stephanie Okolo presented an engaging audio-visual introduction outlining ICTMH’s mission and emphasizing how crucial mental wellness is for personal fulfillment and productivity.

## Engagement Session:

Miss Sarah Bulus led an interactive icebreaker and brain teaser to ease participants into the program and create an open, comfortable atmosphere.

## Keynote Presentation:

Hafisat Ajibade Masud delivered the keynote, referencing the WHO’s definition of mental health as the capacity to realize potential, manage stress, work effectively, and contribute to society.

## Topics covered included:

- The distinction between Eustress (positive stress) and Distress (negative stress).
- Common mental health issues:
  - Anxiety: persistent worry, fear, and related physical symptoms (e.g., rapid heartbeat).
  - Depression: ongoing sadness, feelings of hopelessness, changes in sleep or appetite, and suicidal thoughts.
- A thorough explanation of depression symptoms spanning mood, behavior, sleep, cognition, and physical health.
- The importance of seeking professional care if symptoms persist.

## Stress Management Strategies:

- Participants were guided through a range of practical techniques:
- Relaxation practices such as deep breathing and meditation.
  - Maintaining healthy habits—exercise, balanced nutrition, and proper sleep.
  - Positive self-talk.
  - Building and sustaining social connections.
  - Setting healthy boundaries and managing time effectively.

## Grounding and Psychological First Aid:

- A dedicated session introduced seven grounding techniques integral to PFA for managing acute stress. Participants practiced:
- Deep breathing exercises.
  - Naming and focusing on non-threatening sensory inputs (sights, sounds, sensations).
  - Staying connected to the present moment.

## Community Engagement and ICTMH

**Resources:**

Mr. Victor presented ICTMH’s social media channels and encouraged participants to connect for ongoing resources, educational content, and information about future events.

**Interactive Q&A:**

Pastor Bobai Y. Tanko, also a PhD psychology student, moderated a lively question-and-answer segment. Participants shared experiences and concerns, while Pastor Tanko provided thoughtful insights into mental wellness and addressed misconceptions. Personalized guidance was offered when needed..

## Conclusion

The metal health outreach at ECWA Church, Sabo Tasha, proved highly impactful. Attendees left with greater awareness of mental health, practical tools for stress management, and the confidence to prioritize self-care and support others. The strong engagement highlighted the importance of mental health education within faith-based youth communities. ICTMH remains committed to advancing mental health advocacy and extending its outreach efforts within and beyond religious organizations.



# RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



**VIRTUAL TRAINING ON:**

## How to Support a Loved One with Mental Health Struggle

**FRIDAY  
4 JULY, 2025**

**Start @  
8:00PM (WAT)**

[https://us06web.zoom.us/join/8NvyYOveSua0W4YLE\\_2c4A](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/8NvyYOveSua0W4YLE_2c4A)

**Register Now**

[www.cognitiveng.org](http://www.cognitiveng.org)

**CH. JOHN VIANNEY IJEOMA**  
Speaker

INITIATIVE FOR COGNITIVE THERAPIES AND MENTAL HEALTH

## 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](mailto:enquiry@cognitiveng.org)

For volunteering opportunities, join our team via social media

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