

Editorial Note

Dear Readers,
ICTMH, as a convention, hosted another Mental Health Wellness Week, this time around, the virtual program ran from 29 to July 6, 2025. Focused on **Supporting Our Loved Ones with Mental Health**, the event offered daily sessions to share stories, learn tools, and build a community of empathy. In all journey through marital stress to laughter-filled activities like “Finish the Sentence,” each day showed how openness and compassion can ease silent struggles.

One of the highlights of the episode features Chaplain Colonel John Vianney Ijeoma’s, heartfelt strategies for supporting loved ones while caring for oneself.

His message, that mental illness deserves the same attention as any physical condition, resonated deeply. Participants were encouraged to set healthy boundaries, practice self-care, and seek help without shame.

Beyond the virtual sessions, ICTMH continued outreach with teachers at Adize Brains School and Dafest Standard Academy in Kaduna, addressing burnout and mental health stigma in schools. Together, these efforts reflect a shared hope: to create safe spaces where healing conversations thrive and no one feels alone in their challenges.

Warm regards
Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH

Weekly Webinar Training

Theme: Standing With Our Loved Ones Through Mental Health Struggles

In a heartfelt session, Chaplain Colonel John Vianney Ijeoma shared wisdom and encouragement for families supporting loved ones facing mental health challenges. Drawing on decades as a Catholic priest and military chaplain, he reminded us that mental illness is never a weakness—it's a health condition that deserves compassion and understanding

Recognizing the Signs

Chaplain Ijeoma encouraged everyone to look out for early warning signs, such as:

- Persistent sadness or mood swings
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Trouble sleeping or feelings of hopelessness
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Talking about ending life

Words on Marble

"Just as you'd sit by a loved one's bedside during a fever, stand beside them through invisible pain. Compassion is the medicine every heart understands." Rev. Fr. Ijeoma

Ways to Offer Meaningful Support

- Listen Without Judgement – Be fully present and patient.
- Validate Their Feelings – Let them know their pain is real.
- Offer Consistent Encouragement – Healing takes time.
- Help With Everyday Tasks – Small gestures reduce stress.
- Promote Healthy Habits – Support rest, good food, and connection.
- Keep Learning – Knowledge breaks stigma

Care for Yourself Too

It was also stressed that caregivers must protect their own wellbeing. Setting boundaries and seeking support isn't selfish—it's essential. You can't pour from an empty cup.

When to Seek Immediate Help

If your loved one expresses suicidal thoughts or shows signs of danger to themselves or others, call emergency services or go to the hospital without delay. Early help saves lives.

Weekly WhatsApp Interactive Session

ICTMH Mental Health Week Report

Theme: *Standing with our Loved ones through Mental Health*

Date: June 28– July 06, 2025

Overview

The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) successfully hosted a transformative week-long virtual event titled Mental Health Wellness Week, held from June 29 to July 6, 2025, via WhatsApp. Themed “Supporting Our Loved Ones with Mental Health,” the event was designed to create awareness, foster honest conversations, and empower individuals with practical tools for supporting mental wellness in relationships and families.

Theme Background

Mental health concerns often remain hidden behind silent struggles, especially in close-knit relationships such as marriages and family dynamics. The theme aimed to shed light on these often-unspoken challenges and provide guidance on how to recognize signs, offer support, and maintain emotional balance both for oneself and for others.

Daily Highlights

Motivational Monday – *Marital Stress and Emotional Safety*

We began the week with a heartfelt story about Tunde and Amaka, a couple navigating marital stress behind closed doors. Their journey highlighted how unspoken emotional struggles can deeply affect relationships and family well-being. Through counseling, faith, and communication, they gradually restored peace in their home.

Key Takeaways:

- 1.Marital stress is not a sign of failure.
- 2.Emotional silence can be more harmful than conflict.
- 3.Prioritize self-care, open conversations, and spiritual support.

Participant Reflections:

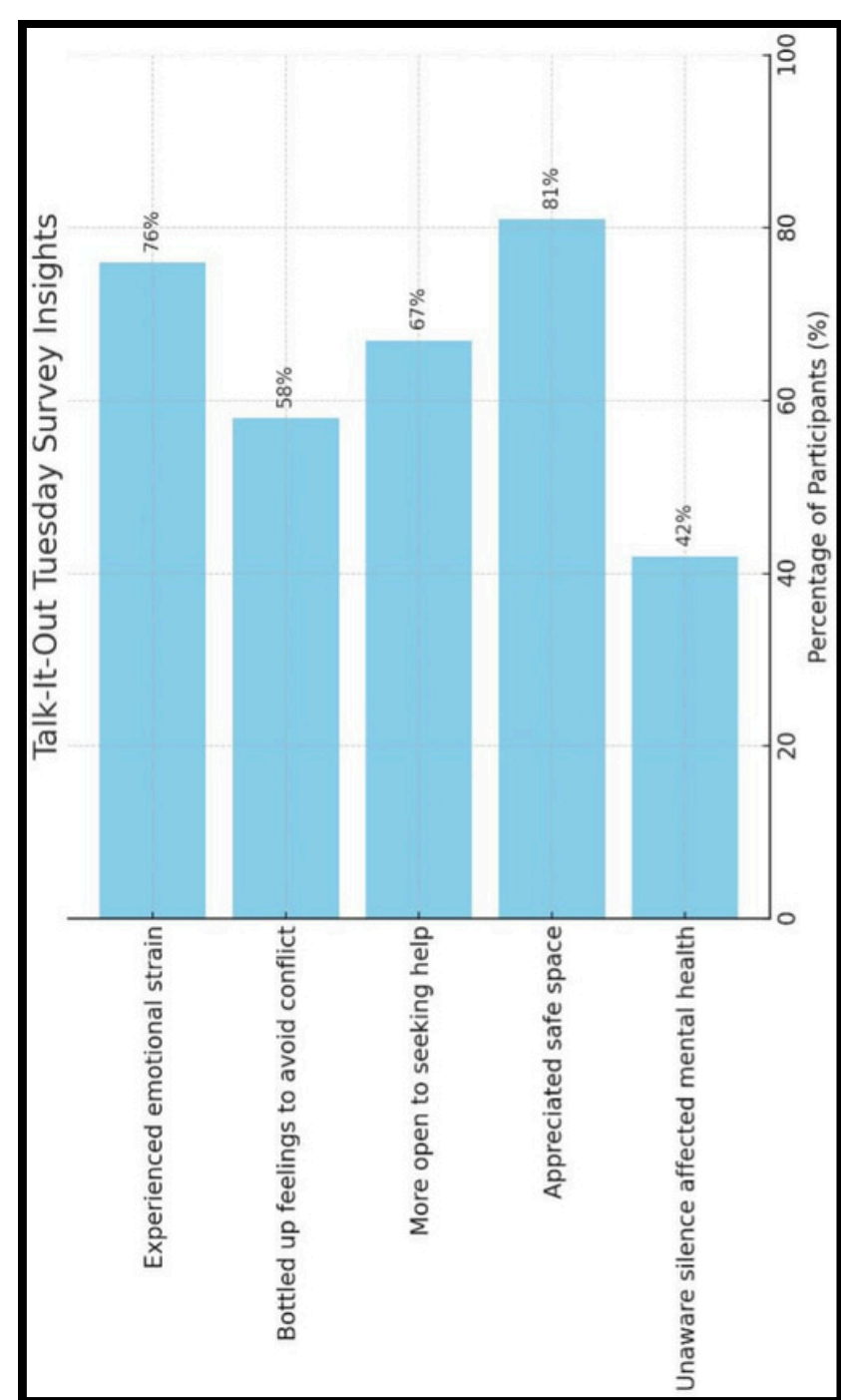
- Uzo: “We all need to heal, take a break, and rejuvenate.”
- Emerald: “Christians must move beyond denial and embrace honest conversations.”
- Hafsat: “Even strong marriages need support. Speaking up brings healing.”

Talk-It-Out Tuesday – *Creating Safe Spaces*

We encouraged members to open up about their personal experiences with mental and emotional stress. An anonymous survey was conducted to foster honesty and inclusion.

Message: Your story matters. Talking about your struggles is not weakness—it’s courage.

Outcome: Active participation and powerful testimonials, with many members responding “DONE” after completing the survey.



Data: ICTMH July 2025 Event Log and compiled by Elizabeth Idowu

Wellness Wednesday – *Being There for Others*

We explored ways to support others without neglecting our own well-being.

Supportive Tips:

1. Be present.
2. Listen without judgment.
3. Offer gentle check-ins.
4. Learn about their struggle.
5. Suggest help softly.
6. Don't forget your own wellness.

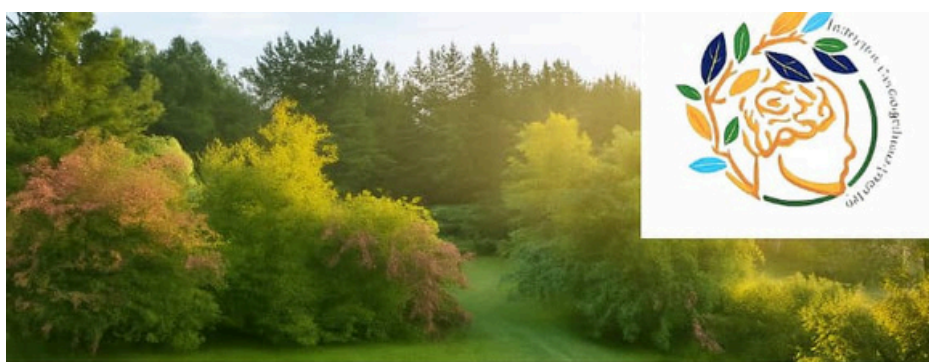
Voices from the Community:

- Victor: "Never underestimate the power of a kind word."
- Vicky: "Sometimes, just being a shoulder is enough."
- Hafsat: "A voice note or prayer can lift someone's spirit."

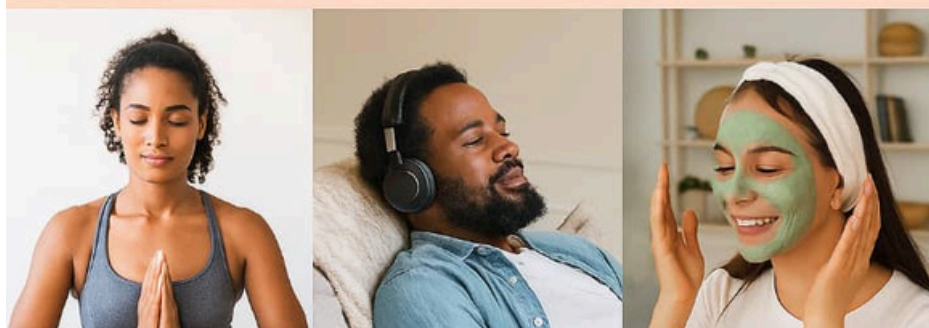
Thankful Thursday – *The Power of Gratitude*

We reflected on the strength it takes to support loved ones battling mental health challenges. Through the story of Blessing and her sister Ada, we were reminded of the power of consistent, gentle love.

Core Message: Be grateful for the opportunity to be a source of hope, and don't give up on those who are struggling silently.



SELF-CARE SATURDAY



Fun Friday – *Laughter as Medicine*

Laughter brought us together through an interactive activity: "Finish the Sentence – Speak Life!" Participants completed prompts with creativity, humor, and inspiration.

Popular Prompts:

- "Today, I'm thankful for..."
- "One thing that makes me smile is..."
- "Kindness is like ___ because ___."

Standout Submissions:

- Emerald: "Kindness is like butter on Agege bread."
- Michael: "If hugs had words, they would say: You're safe."
- Uzo: "Credit alerts... because they soothe the soul!"

Self-Care Saturday – *You Matter Too*

Participants were reminded that they cannot pour from an empty cup. Self-care is not a luxury; it's a necessity.

Member Insights:

- Hafsat: "I forgot to pause and check in with myself. Today, I'll rest."
- Ese: "Self-care is essential it shouldn't be optional."
- Uzo: "I'm sending my phone on exile to prioritize care."
-

Reflection & Q&A Sunday – *A Time to Reset*

We closed the week with a reflective session. Participants were invited to share their biggest takeaways.

Key Messages:

- Presence matters more than perfect words.
- Caring for others must include caring for self.
- Small shifts can lead to meaningful change.

Event of the week

REPORT: Mental Health Outreach Program for Adize Brains School and Dafest Standard Academy, Sabo Tasha Kaduna Nigeria.

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

Date of Event: July, 10th, 2025

Venue: Adize Brains International School hall.

Report Prepared By: Sarah Bulus Daniel, Volunteer, ICTMH

Date of Report: July 13th, 2025

Introduction

This report details the mental health outreach program conducted by the Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) for the teachers at Adize Brains School, and Dafest Standard Academy, Sabo Tasha, on July 10th, 2025. The program aimed to foster mental health awareness and equip young participants with practical coping strategies.

Objectives

The primary objectives were to:

- reduce turnover caused by emotional exhaustion and burnout.
- increase teachers’ sense of professional fulfillment and belonging.
- build a culture where staff can openly discuss stress and access resources.
- reduce stigma around discussing mental health and seeking help.

A warm welcome was extended by the school proprietor, Mr. Adize Joseph, and the principal, Mr. Charles Abu. This was followed by a brief introduction of ICTMH. Miss Sarah Bulus Daniel then gave a short overview of the topic to be discussed. The proprietor expressed his satisfaction with the explanation provided, after which the ICTMH team proceeded to the hall for the event.

Dr. Stephanie Okolo thereafter delivered a compelling introduction via audio-visual presentation, outlining ICTMH's mission and underscoring the critical importance of mental well-being for a fulfilling and productive life.

Keynote Address

Sarah Bulus Daniel delivered an enlightening keynote exploring:

- Definitions: Compassionate Fatigue, Burnout, Caring, Carrying
- Signs & Symptoms: How burnout manifests among educators
- Impact: The toll of compassion fatigue and burnout on teachers’ well-being and performance
- Strategies: Practical coping tools and the importance of healthy boundaries
- Empathy & Balance: How to care without overextending oneself

Activity Session

Mrs. Hafisat Ajibade Masud facilitated an engaging activity while Miss Latifa distributed activity sheets, sparking reflection and participation.

Community Engagement & Resources

Mr. Victor introduced ICTMH’s social media platforms, encouraging everyone to connect for free mental health resources, helpful tips, and updates on future programs.

Interactive Q&A

Teachers had the opportunity to ask questions in an open-floor session. The ICTMH team provided clarifications and shared additional insights.

Conclusion

The proprietor expressed deep gratitude to ICTMH, highlighting how timely and relevant the session was. He encouraged the team to return for more discussions addressing **the impact of teachers’ personal and family challenges on their interactions with students.**

The ICTMH team departed with participants more informed and better equipped to care for their mental health.

Star Event of the Week: Picture Collage



A glimpse of the event in pictures showing staff of ICTMH and teachers , proprietor and principal of host school compiled by Mr Victor Ogbegbor

RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



The poster features a dark blue background with a geometric pattern. At the top left is the logo for the Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH). To its right, the text "Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health" is written in white. Below this, a teal banner contains the title "THE CURSE OF THE COMPETENT MIDDLE: BREAKING FREE FROM THE IN-BETWEEN" in white, bold, uppercase letters. In the center is a circular portrait of Dr. Maureen Salami, a Black woman with short dark hair, wearing a colorful, patterned top. To the left of the portrait, the word "With" is written in a white, cursive font. To the right of the portrait, the date "11TH JULY, 2025" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters. Below the portrait, the name "Dr. Maureen Salami" is written in white, bold, italicized letters. To the left of the name, the time "8:00PM WAT" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters. Below the name, a blue location pin icon is followed by a white box containing the Zoom meeting link: "https://us06web.zoom.us/join/FTIZBk11S5yPU7IK4SktbA". At the bottom left, the text "Powered By: www.cognitiveng.org" is written in white. At the bottom right, there are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn, followed by the handle "@Cognitivetherapiesng" in white.

Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health

**THE CURSE OF THE COMPETENT MIDDLE:
BREAKING FREE FROM THE IN-BETWEEN**

With

8:00PM
WAT

**11TH
JULY,
2025**

Dr. Maureen Salami

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/FTIZBk11S5yPU7IK4SktbA>

Powered By:
www.cognitiveng.org

@Cognitivetherapiesng

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

@www.cognitivetherapiesng

www.cognitiveng.org