THE CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH

ICTMH BI-WEEKLY

www.cognitiveng.org

NEWSLETTER

Mental Health & Wellness Ed. Vol. 40 | 1st - 15th September 2026

RECOVER. RESET. KEEP GOING.

Finding your way back

The small things that help us recover, reset and keep going.

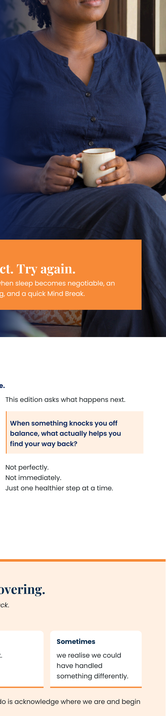
Life can knock us off balance.

Sometimes we recover quickly. Sometimes it takes rest, support, perspective, faith, another attempt, or simply time.

This edition asks one question:

What helps you come back to yourself when life gets difficult?

Finding your way back does not always mean returning to where you started.



INSIDE THIS EDITION

Recover. Rest. Reconnect. Try again.

Building resilience, the recovery we lose when sleep becomes negotiable, an honest Staff Voice on getting things wrong, and a quick Mind Break.

Editorial Note

You do not always bounce back in one piece.

Sometimes recovery is obvious.

You rest. You feel better. You try again.

Other times, it is slower. You may still be disappointed, tired, or thinking about something you wish had gone differently.

That does not mean you are failing at resilience.

Volume 39 asked us to consider **what we were carrying and what those burdens needed from us.**

Warm regards,
Joseph Abang

This edition asks what happens next.

When something knocks you off balance, what actually helps you find your way back?

Not perfectly.
Not immediately.
Just one healthier step at a time.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

After carrying comes recovering.

We often describe resilience as *bouncing back.*

But real life is rarely that neat.

Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
we need support.	we need rest.	we realise we could have handled something differently.

And sometimes the strongest thing we can do is acknowledge where we are and begin again.

Finding your way back does not always mean returning to who you were before.

Sometimes it means returning with a little more awareness than you had before.



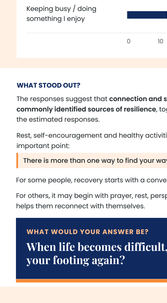
WhatsApp Wellness Highlights

Our WhatsApp Wellness is a standing weekly program — independently designed each week, facilitated by the ICTMH Clinical Team, and structured from Monday to Sunday with daily prompts, interactive polls, reflective exercises, and moderated peer-sharing.

Building Resilience

31st August – 6th September 2026
Compiled by Dr. Elizabeth Idowu

What keeps you going when life does not go according to plan?



That question sat at the heart of our WhatsApp Wellness conversations this week.

Resilience was explored not as the ability to remain untouched by difficulty, but as the capacity to **adapt, recover and continue** while finding healthier ways to respond.

Across the week, four ideas kept returning:

ADAPT

A setback may change the plan without deciding the entire story.

"What can I do from here?"

Sometimes recovery requires giving the mind and body enough room to reset.

LEAN

We are not always meant to recover alone.
Trusted relationships, faith, encouragement and appropriate support can give us somewhere to stand while life feels uncertain.

REST

Constantly pushing through exhaustion is not the same as resilience.

LEARN

Looking back can help us understand what worked, what made things harder and what we may want to do differently next time.

The goal is not to replay every mistake. It is to carry the lesson forward.

When life gets difficult, what helps you bounce back the most?

What Helps Us Bounce Back?

WHAT STOOD OUT?

The responses suggest that **connection and spiritual support were the two most commonly identified sources of resilience**, together accounting for more than half of the estimated responses.

Rest, self-encouragement and healthy activities also featured strongly, reinforcing an important point:

> There is more than one way to find your way back.

For some people, recovery starts with a conversation.

For others, it may begin with prayer, rest, perspective or simply doing something that helps them reconnect with themselves.

WHAT WOULD YOUR ANSWER BE?

When life becomes difficult, what helps you find your footing again?

INTERACTIVE FEATURE

What helps you find your way back?

Pause. Remember. Recover.

Think about the last time something really threw you off balance.

You do not need to analyse the whole experience. Just think about **what helped you begin to feel like yourself again.**

WHO HELPED?

Was there someone who listened, encouraged you, prayed with you or simply stayed close?

WHAT HELPED YOUR BODY?

Sleep? Rest? Food? Movement? A quiet evening? Time away?

WHAT HELPED YOUR MIND?

Perspective? Prayer? Journalling? Music? A conversation? Solving one practical problem?

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

Is there something you would approach differently now?

KEEP THIS ANSWER.

The next difficult day may come before you feel prepared for it.
Knowing what genuinely helps you recover can make it easier to recognise what you need.

When you're not ready to "bounce back" yet

There are days when recovery does not feel inspiring.

You may still be tired.
Still disappointed.
Still uncertain about what happens next.

That is okay.

You do not need to rush your recovery to prove that you are resilient.

Resilience can also look like:

- **Resting before restarting.**
- **Taking one thing at a time.**
- **Letting someone help.**
- **Admitting that something affected you.**
- **Trying again without pretending that everything is already fine.**

When sleep becomes the hour we sacrifice

Sometimes the body needs a chance to recover too.

18 ICTMH screened **18 people.**

6 recorded high blood pressure.

4 recorded high blood sugar.

2 recorded both.

Alongside those numbers, something else kept surfacing:

People are not getting enough sleep.

Extra shifts. Long commutes. Full days. Responsibilities that leave almost no room to breathe.



Why short nights can affect your mood before you notice the fatigue

Sleep gives the body time to recover.

Blood pressure normally falls during sleep, and sleep also plays a role in how the body regulates blood sugar.

But recovery is mental too.

When sleep is repeatedly cut short, we may find ourselves trying to handle the same pressures with less of the recovery we need to handle them well.

> Small annoyances can feel bigger.
>
> Patience can become shorter.
>
> Stress can feel harder to manage.

This is not always simply a mood problem.

Sometimes it is what happens when the body has been asked to keep going without enough time to recover.

ONE SMALL THING BEFORE NEXT WEEK

Tonight, before you sleep, give yourself one quiet minute.

Notice what the day has left behind.

The tension in your jaw.
The weight in your shoulders.
The feeling in your feet.

Just allow the day to end.

Take a few slow breaths.

You do not need to solve anything in that minute.

Mind Break

30 seconds. No Googling.

Who is lying?

Three people are sitting in a clinic waiting room.

The receptionist knows that **only one of them is lying.**

ADA SAYS:	**"Bisi is telling the truth."**
BISI SAYS:	**"Kemi is lying."**
KEMI SAYS:	**"Ada and Bisi are both lying."**

Who is lying? Ada? Bisi? Kemi?

Think you know?

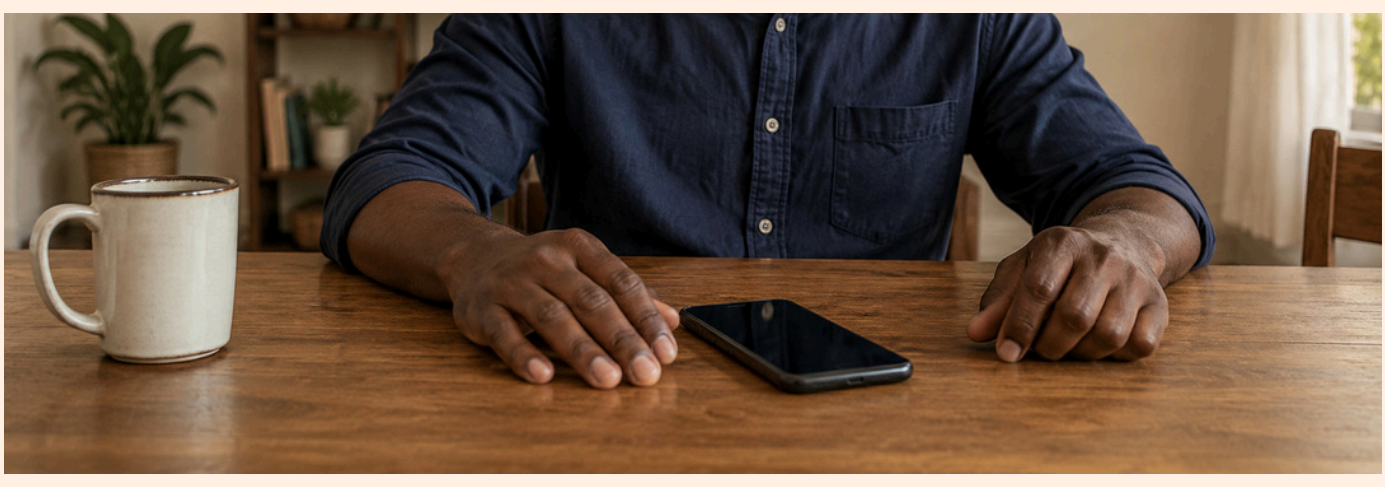
Answer on the final page.

ICTMH STAFF VOICE



Finding My Way Back

by David Idowu



Sometimes, I know I am about to say something I will regret.

There is usually a moment before it happens. A tightening somewhere. A familiar feeling telling me, *you probably shouldn't say this.*

And sometimes, I say it anyway.

I have often wondered what it means to find your way back when life knocks you off balance. I wish I had a simple answer. I don't.

Being thrown off balance can mean different things. Sometimes it is a difficult conversation with family. Sometimes it is disappointment. The job you expected that did not come through. Something you were looking forward to that did not happen. Or waiting for someone you care about to call, and they don't.

For me, the difficult part is not always knowing what would help.

I know about pausing. I practise mindfulness. I have read about the window of tolerance.

The frustrating part is that sometimes I remember all of this **after I have already reacted.**

After I have said too much.
After I have withdrawn.
After I have made something more difficult than it needed to be.

And I am fully aware of the irony. I study this. I practise this.

Maybe that is why finding my way back has less to do with always getting it right and more to do with **learning to notice myself sooner.**

To recognise the feeling before it becomes a reaction.

To take the pause when I can.

> "Finding my way back has less to do with always getting it right and more to do with learning to notice myself sooner."

And when I don't, to be honest enough to acknowledge it, take responsibility and try again.

I am still learning that part.

But perhaps that is what finding our way back looks like sometimes:

Not returning to who we were before we lost our balance, but becoming a little more aware of ourselves each time we do.

Wellness Wednesdays:

Free Health Screenings

Every Wednesday at the ICTMH Kaduna Office, **free blood pressure and blood sugar screenings** are available to all community members at no cost.



WHEN

Every Wednesday
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

WHERE

ICTMH Office
No. 28 Abuja Road,
Kaduna State

COST

100% free
No appointment required

Reaching out is a sign of strength.
Visit us this Wednesday to
give your body the attention it deserves.

Journal Article Call for Submissions

ICTMH invites submissions on mental health and cognitive behavioral therapies, with particular interest in African-contextualized approaches.

- **Submit to:** enquiry@cognitiveng.org
- **Subject:** Journal Submission

Writing guidelines and topic suggestions available on request.

Learn more: ***www.cognitiveng.org/journal/***



Connect with care

ICTMH OFFICE ADDRESS

No. 28 Abuja Road, Kaduna State, Nigeria

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9:00AM - 5:00PM

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Your support helps ICTMH continue community outreaches, mental health education, free screenings, and practical support for individuals and families.

For Naira donations, use:

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Every gift helps care move closer to the people who need it.



ICTMH's One Ask

Notice what helps you recover.

Think about one difficult period you have recently come through.

What genuinely helped?

A person? Rest? Faith? A conversation? Time? A practical change?

A second attempt?

Write it down.

Mind Break Answer

Kemi is lying.

If Kemi is lying, then her statement that **Ada and Bisi are both lying** is false.

Bisi's statement that **Kemi is lying** is true.

And because Bisi is telling the truth, Ada's statement is also true.

That leaves **Kemi as the only person lying.**

Did you get it right?

Yes? Nicely done.

No? The waiting room is still open.

MEDICAL DISCLAIMER
Content in this newsletter is psychoeducational in nature and is intended for general informational purposes only. It does not constitute clinical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you are experiencing a mental health concern or persistent physical symptoms, please seek support from a qualified healthcare professional. In an emergency, contact your nearest hospital or emergency services.