

WEEKLY

Newsletter



Editorial Note

This past week at ICTMH has been a moving reminder of the power of presence, purpose, and partnership. From the vibrant community of WhatsApp Wellness Week to the heartfelt lessons of Friday Training, and the unforgettable impact of our Kazaure Substance Abuse Awareness Outreach, we witnessed mental health education come alive across both digital and physical spaces.

Our virtual series explored the theme “Proactive Interference in Couples’ Relationships”, drawing attention to how emotional residue from the past can sabotage present love.

Participants opened their hearts in reflection, laughter, and healing, proving that safe spaces still matter.

Meanwhile in Kaduna, our outreach at Radar Cinema, Kazaure Road brought over 300 people together, community leaders, youth, and families, to confront the dangers of substance abuse. Medical tests, drama, and faith-based messages all played a role in driving home the message: prevention is possible, and support is available.

**Warm regards
Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH**

Weekly Webinar Training

Topic: Proactive Interference in Couples' Relationships

Date: August 1, 2025

Host: Dr. Stephanie Okolo

In an insightful session, Dr. Stephanie Okolo, an expert in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and the founder of ICTMH, shed light on how past experiences can silently disrupt present relationships. She unpacked the concept of proactive interference, explaining how unresolved emotions, past heartbreaks, and unmet expectations often intrude on current interactions.



Using the metaphor of a mental traffic jam, Dr. Okolo illustrated how emotional congestion from the past can lead couples to misinterpret present situations or project old pain onto their partners. “Not every argument is about today,” she said. “Sometimes, it’s yesterday speaking with today’s voice.”

The session offered practical tools for emotional decluttering, such as journaling, breathwork, therapy, and intentional listening.

Key Takeaways

- Emotional awareness: noticing when the past interferes with the present
- Mindful self-reflection during conflict
- Open, non-defensive communication
- Curiosity over assumption

Participants shared powerful personal realizations, recognizing how unhealed emotional residue shaped their behaviors. The atmosphere was filled with empathy and hope as participants embraced the possibility of healing.

Her message was clear: to grow forward in love, we must first make peace with the past

Words on Marble

*“Not every argument is about today,
sometimes, it’s yesterday speaking with
today’s voice.”*

Dr. Stephanie Okolo

Weekly WhatsApp Interactive Session

ICTMH Mental Health Week
Report Theme: Proactive Interference in Couples' Relationships
Date: July 28th – August 3rd, 2025

Overview ICThis week’s theme, Proactive Interference in Couples’ Relationships, focused on how past emotional experiences particularly from previous relationships—can unconsciously influence present connections. Proactive interference is a cognitive psychology concept that describes how old memories can interfere with the acquisition of new ones. In relationships, this often looks like mistrust, projection, hypersensitivity, and emotional withdrawal caused by unhealed wounds from previous romantic or family encounters.

By unpacking this theme in simple, relatable language and applying it to everyday relationship issues, the ICTMH team sought to help participants identify unhealthy patterns, break cycles of emotional reactivity, and build healthier, trust-based connections.

Daily Highlights

Motivational Monday

The week began by demystifying the term proactive interference through storytelling and simplified illustrations. Participants learned that unresolved pain from previous relationships could be sabotaging present ones without them realizing it.

Key Lesson

“Don’t carry old pain into new blessings. Don’t make the new person pay for what the old one did.”
Reflection Questions:
Are you responding from love or from past wounds?
Are you enjoying what you have or fearing what you had?
Have you healed, or are you still suspicious?

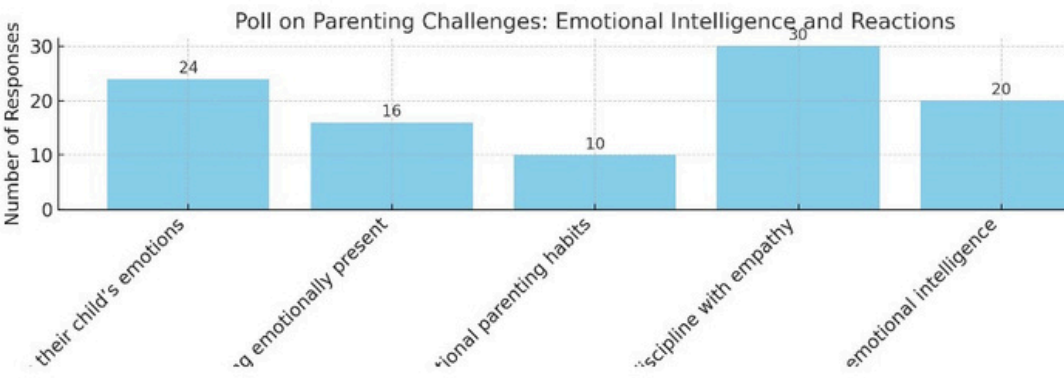
Community Highlight

Abby: *“Na true talk be this. Forward we go, backward never. Na God go help us o.”*
Hafsat: *“This topic na correct one O! E go help plenty people.”*
Mfon: *“We must learn to differentiate red flags from fear.”*
Uzo: *“I dey rock life as e come. Anything wey go disturb my peace delete am!”*

Talk-it-out Tuesday

Tuesday’s focus was on parenting while healing. A poll was introduced to understand the emotional challenges parents face when raising emotionally intelligent children.

POLL TOPIC: What is the biggest challenge parents face today in raising emotionally healthy children?



Wellness Wednesday

This session centered on the lingering effects of past betrayal and the need for inner healing. Participants were guided through reflective prompts:
What pain am I still carrying?
Am I expecting someone new to fix what someone else broke?
What do I need to release today?

Community Reactions

Tony: *“Yes, I matter. Thanks and God bless you.”*
Uzo: *“I love and cherish myself. Self-love is powerful.”*
Mfon: *“Hurt is inevitable, but staying hurt is optional.”*

Thankful Thursday

Participants were encouraged to practice gratitude even for painful experiences that led to wisdom and strength.

Gratitude Reminders

Be thankful for what didn’t work it taught discernment.
Be thankful for who hurt you they showed you what love shouldn’t feel like
Be thankful for tough conversations they built your voice.

Community Reflection

Hafsat: *“I’m thankful for the strength to grow, even when it’s hard.”*
Uzo: *“Even when I don’t feel like myself, I remain grateful.”*

Fun Friday

To ease the emotional depth of the week, participants engaged in fun and humorous self-reflection activities.
Activities Included:
1. Funny emoji combos for past relationship behavior
2. Sharing dramatic or funny relationship memories
3. Dropping a meme to say “I’ve healed!”

Community Reflection

Michael: *“Typed a whole breakup message three times, sent just ‘OK’*
Vicky: *“If no money, waka pass ooo!”*

Self-Care Saturday

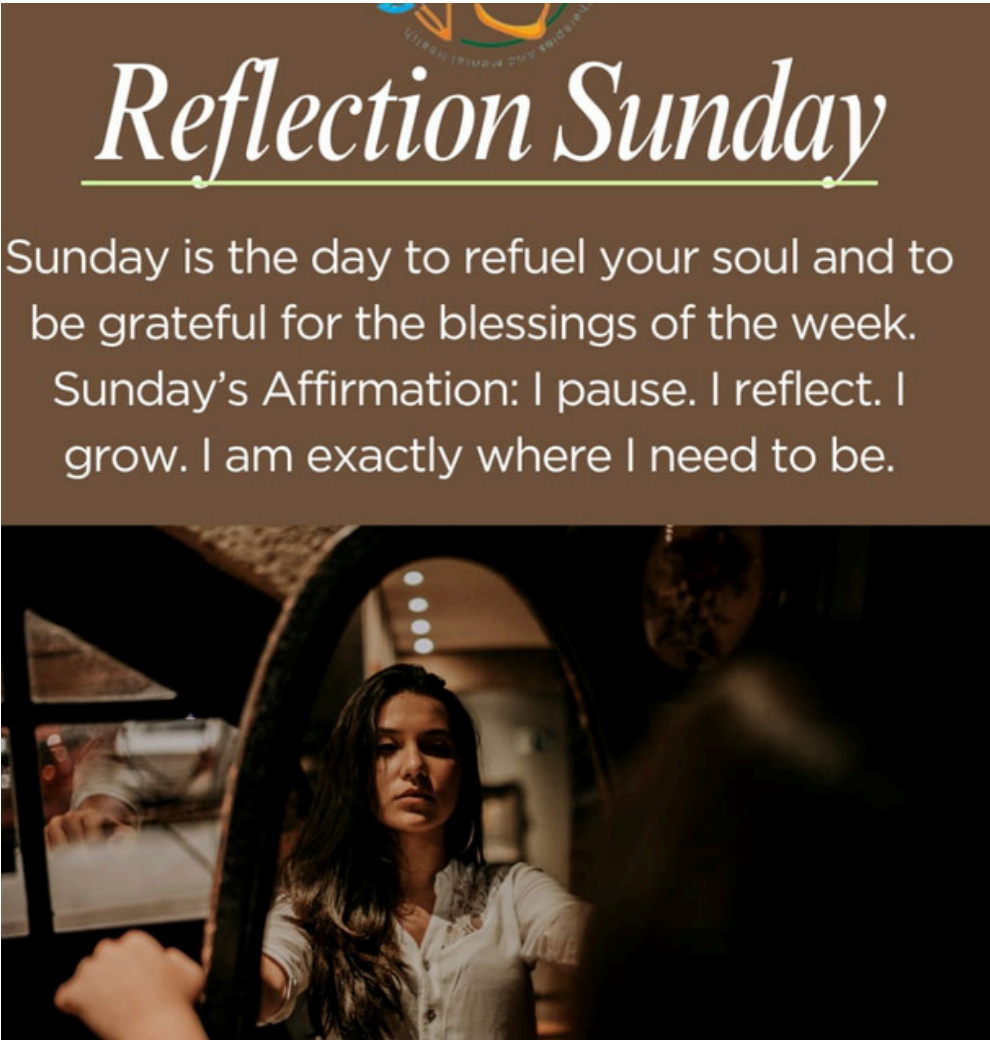
personal release and rest. Participants were reminded that healing often means surrendering pain and regrets to embrace the present.
Practical Suggestions:
Write a letter to your past self
Take a peaceful walk
Pray or journal your emotions
Speak affirmations aloud

Reflection and Q&A Sunday

The week ended with reflection and prayer. Members were encouraged to pause, evaluate their emotional state, and express gratitude or share what they had learned.
Encouragement from Lizzie:
“You are not alone. Even your tears speak. You’ve survived so much already healing is happening. Better days are ahead. You will rise.”

Community Reflection

Mfon: *“I’ve decided to cut off assumptions and trust more intentionally.”*
Uzo: *“This week brought emotional heaviness, but I’m not carrying it into a new week.”*
Hafsat: *“Healing is not always fixing sometimes it’s just feeling. And God already knows.”*



Programme: Mental Health Awareness Outreach on Substance Abuse
Theme: Breaking the Chains
Date: Tuesday, 5th August 2025
Venue: Radar Cinema, Kazaure Road, Kaduna
Participants: 307
Organized by: Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH)

Introduction

The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) successfully organized a community-centered outreach event titled Substance Abuse Awareness Outreach on Tuesday, 5th August 2025, at Radar Cinema, Kazaure Road, Kaduna. With over 300 participants in attendance.

Objective

The aim of the outreach is to educate the public, especially youth and community leaders, on the dangers of substance abuse and its effects on mental and physical health, while promoting preventive strategies and support systems.

Medical Services

Participants arrived and registered with assistance from ICTMH staff and volunteers. Thereafter, ICTMH Staff, Nurse Sarah Bulus and Latifah Lawal accorded participants medical attention by administering diabetics and Blood Pressure Tests to over 200 participants



Dignitaries and Special Guests in Attendance

The event witnessed a diverse and esteemed gathering of individuals from various sectors of society, including political office holders, mental health professionals, members of the royal community, distinguished security officers, spiritual leaders, youth groups, students, the elderly, and other concerned members of the public.

Event of the week



Notable personalities present at the event included:

- Alhaji Umar Bambale – Special Adviser to the Kaduna State Governor on Drugs and Narcotics Control
- Mallam Muhammad Tukur Dandaura – District Head, Kazaure Environs
- Dr. Nafisah Hayatudeen – Head of Clinical Services, Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Barnawa
- Malam Bashir Abubakar – Chief Commissioner, Public Complaint Commission
- Alhaji Aminu Sani Muhammed (Ajiyan Zazzau) – Royal Father of the Day
- Mrs. Betty I. Oyeshola – Proprietress, Betty Queen International School
- Alhaji Shehu Tijani (Chiroman Zazzau) – District Head, Kakuri
- Dr. Hussaini Abdulwahab – Shehu Kangiwa Hospital, Kaduna Polytechnic
- The Divisional Police Officer, Magajin Gari Police Station, Kaduna North
- Alhaji Saidu Abubakar Gwanki – Community Leader
- Alhaji Uba Sani Rimisiwad – Community Leader
- This impressive attendance underscored the collective commitment to addressing the menace of substance abuse and promoting mental health awareness across all strata of society.

4. Impact and Feedback

Participants expressed appreciation for the event's rich and engaging content from Dr. Stephanie Okolo’s welcome speech to Dr. Nafisat’s key note address on substance abuse and breaking the chains, many noted the value of combining medical, religious, and artistic perspectives in driving home the message against substance abuse. Details on these will be shared on our website: www.cognitive.org. The dance drama segment especially resonated with the youth in attendance.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The Substance Abuse Awareness Outreach proved to be a timely and impactful intervention. It is recommended that similar programs be extended to other parts of Kaduna State and Nigeria at large. Sustained community engagement, partnerships with religious and educational institutions, and ongoing mental health education are vital for combating the growing menace of substance abuse

Event of the week



INITIATIVE FOR COGNITIVE
THERAPIES AND
MENTAL HEALTH

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION IN NIGERIAN WOMEN: THE SILENT BATTLES



<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/9tJfKwV7yW>



DR. R. O. ADEYEMI
SPEAKER



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**We're happy to support you through the process.
Thank you!**

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