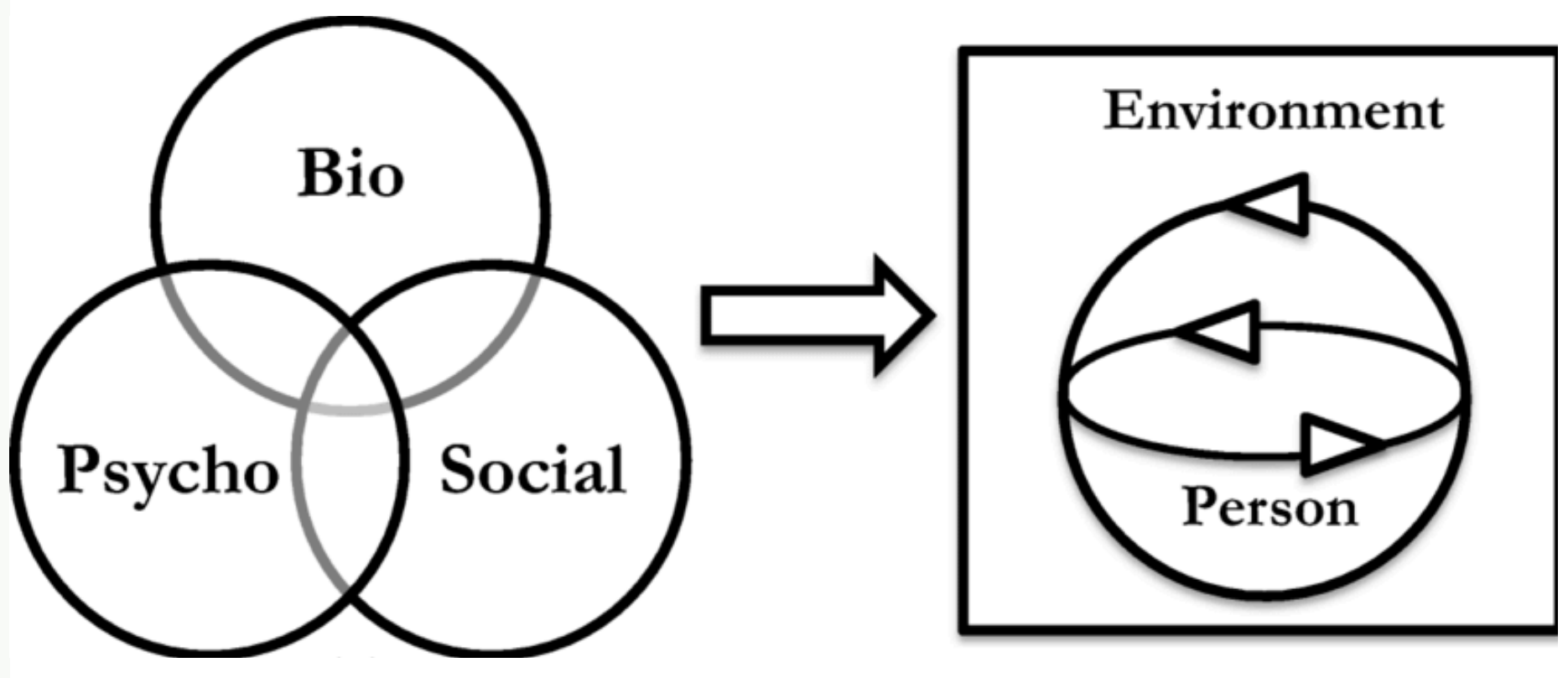


WEEKLY
Newsletter



Editorial Note

Welcome to this week’s edition of the ICTMH Weekly Mental Health Newsletter!

This past week has been a powerful reminder of the importance of community, compassion, and education in the fight against depression. Through our Friday Training Session with Dr. Okechukwu J. Oguizu, members gained deeper insight into the biological, psychological, and social roots of depression, emphasizing its complexity and the need for holistic support.

Our Mental Health Wellness Week (10th–16th November 2025) expanded the conversation beyond theory into daily lived strengths, with reflective activities. These engagements fostered stronger connections, honest conversations, and an encouraging culture of empathy.

In our Campus Wellness Hub, student voices were central. From comfort-food conversations and exercise motivation to discussions on social media and creativity, young people expressed resilience, vulnerability, and openness, demonstrating the value of spaces where mental health can be discussed without fear or judgment.

As an organization, ICTMH remains steadfast in the mission to educate, support, and inspire mental wellness across communities. Depression is real, but so is recovery. With awareness, compassion, and timely support, healing is possible.

Thank you to all facilitators, participants, students, and readers for making this week impactful. Let us continue to be Mental Health Ambassadors—listening, supporting, and encouraging help-seeking behavior.

Together, we can create a future where no one struggles in silence.

Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH

Weekly Webinar Training

Friday Training Session Review

Date: November, 14th, 2025

Venue: Virtual

Topic Highlight: Understanding the Biological, Psychological & Social Causes of Depression

Guest Speaker: Dr. Okechukwu J. Oguizu – Clinical Psychologist & UNODC Master Trainer

Host: Initiative for Cognitive Therapy and Mental Health (ICTMH)

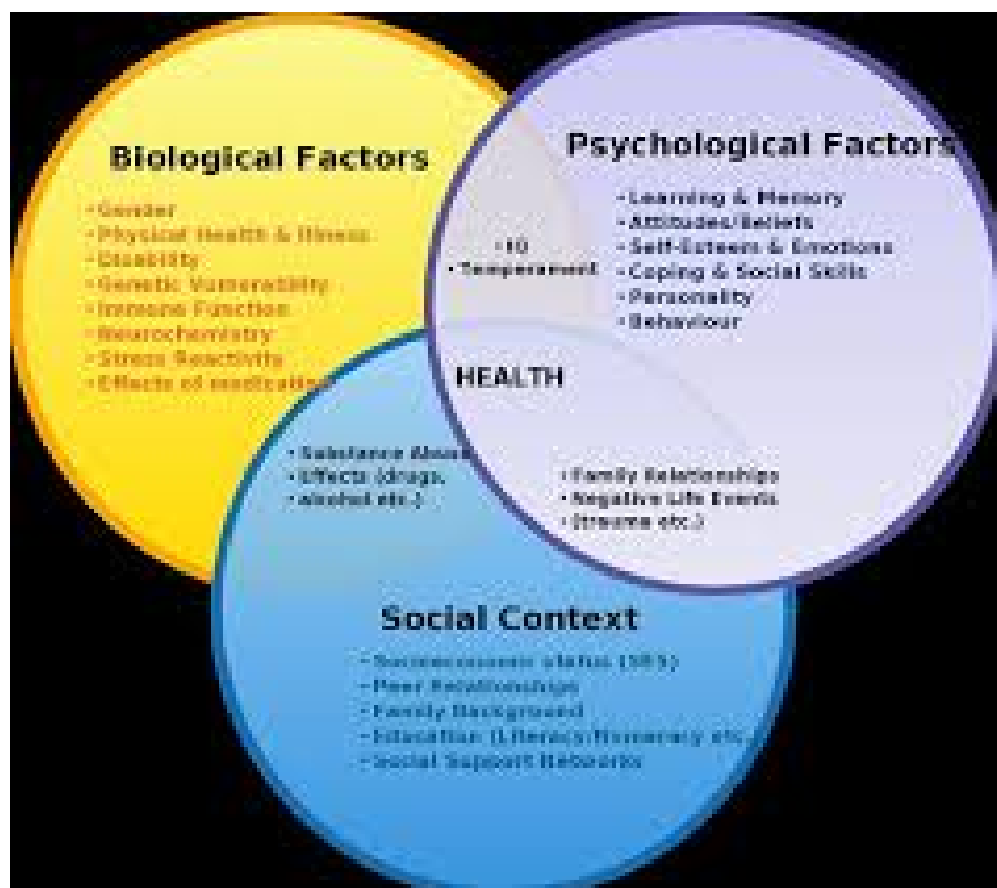
Overview

This week's ICTMH training session offered a deep and insightful exploration of depression, a rising global mental health concern. Current estimates reveal that 1 in every 20 adults lives with depression, affecting functioning at home, school, work, and within communities.

Dr. Oguizu stressed that depression is more than everyday sadness, it is a serious medical and psychological condition that affects thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and overall productivity.

What is Depression?

Depression, also known as Major Depressive Disorder, occurs when a persistently low mood or loss of interest lasts for at least two weeks and interferes with daily living.



Common Warning Signs

- Persistent sadness, emptiness, or hopelessness
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities
- Chronic fatigue or reduced motivation
- Sleep disruption (insomnia or hypersomnia)
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Difficulty concentrating and memory problems
- Withdrawal from social interactions
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide

Early recognition saves lives.

Types of Depression Discussed

- Major Depressive Disorder
- Persistent Depressive Disorder (Dysthymia)
- Bipolar Depression
- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)
- Perinatal & Postpartum Depression
- Menopausal / Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder
- Depression with Psychotic Features

Each requires personalized and professional care.

Understanding the Causes – The Bio-Psycho-Social Model

Biological Factors

- Genetic predisposition and family history
- Neurotransmitter imbalance (serotonin, dopamine)
- Hormonal changes (pregnancy, menopause, thyroid disorders)
- Chronic illnesses such as hypertension or diabetes

Psychological Factors

- Negative thinking patterns
- High stress and limited coping skills
- Personality characteristics (perfectionism, introversion)
- Trauma, abuse, grief, and adverse experiences

Social Factors

- Family conflict and weak support networks
- Poverty, unemployment, and financial stress
- Stigma, discrimination, cultural misconceptions
- Social isolation and community breakdown



Depression

can stem from a blend of *genetic, biological, environmental* and psychological factors.

Key Quotes from Dr. Okechukwu J. Oguizu

“There isn’t a single cause of depression. Instead, factors interlink to create a web of causation.”

“Depression is one of the most common mental-health issues with an estimated prevalence of 5% among adults.”

“Depression goes beyond normal sadness. It affects how a person thinks, feels, and functions in daily life.”

“The ability to cope with stress can make one better. Many people go through stress, but not everyone has coping skills.”

“Mental-health professionals must integrate biological, psychological, and social factors in treatment for effective management.”

Final Note

Dr. Oguizu encouraged participants to serve as Mental Health Ambassadors—observing early warning signs, offering compassionate support, and guiding individuals toward professional care. Depression is treatable, and recovery is possible with the right blend of medical, psychological, and social intervention.



Breakout Session Reflections

Participants discussed practical strategies for community-based solutions. Key outcomes included:

- Promote awareness and early detection in schools, workplaces & faith organizations
- Break stigma through open conversations and education
- Strengthen family and community support systems
- Build resilience through therapy, physical wellness & skill-based coping programs
- Improve access to professional psychological services and referrals

Weekly WhatsApp Interactive Session

ICTMH Mental Health Week Report

Theme: Understanding the Biological, Psychological, and Social Causes of Depression

Date: 10th–16th November 2025
compiled by: Dr. Elizabeth Idowu

Overview

The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) successfully hosted the Mental Health Wellness Week from 10th–16th November 2025, focusing on the theme: “Understanding the Biological, Psychological, and Social Causes of Depression.” The week explored depression as a multidimensional experience shaped by physical health, emotional processes, thought patterns, relationships, and environmental pressures.

Members participated actively through reflective storytelling, interactive conversations, gratitude practices, and community support. Engagement remained strong, deepening awareness and reducing stigma.

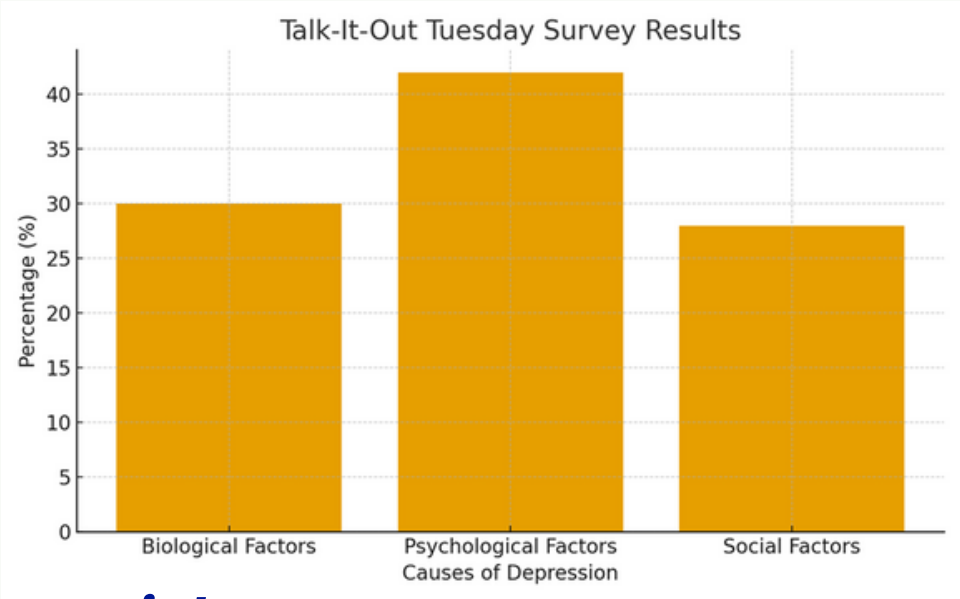
Daily Highlights

Motivational Monday

Understanding the deeper layers of depression body, mind, and environment. Members were encouraged to care for themselves holistically.

Talk-It-Out Tuesday

The community participated in a meaningful survey exploring what they believe contributes most to depression.



Key Insights

- *Psychological Factors (42%) were identified as the most common perceived cause of depression.*
- *This suggests that participants believe internal emotional and cognitive processes—such as negative thinking patterns, trauma, stress, and unresolved emotional issues—play the most significant role in depression.*
- *Biological Factors (30%) came second.*
- *Respondents acknowledge the importance of genetics, brain chemistry, and hormonal imbalance as contributors to depression.*
- *Social Factors (28%) were rated slightly lower than biological*

causes.

- *This indicates that while social conditions (e.g., financial challenges, family conflict, unemployment, relationship difficulties, and isolation) are recognized, they are viewed as somewhat less dominant than internal psychological causes.*



INITIATIVE FOR COGNITIVE THERAPIES AND MENTAL HEALTH

Let’s Talk It Out



Your voice matters.
Share your thoughts,
experiences, or join today’s poll.
Healing begins when we talk.





@cognitivetherapiesng

Wellness Wednesday

A focus on the often invisible nature of depression and the importance of emotional check-ins.

Thankful Thursday

A reflection on gratitude as a tool for emotional healing.

Fun Friday

Participants explored small, intentional ‘seeds of hope’ that promote wellbeing.

Self-Care Saturday

A reminder that rest and emotional release are essential for recovery.

Reflection Sunday

A reflective exercise encouraging members to acknowledge their strength and unnoticed blessings.



Campus Wellness Hub!



Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH)

Campus Wellness Hub Weekly Report

Date: 10th – 16th November, 2025

Platform: WhatsApp (Virtual)

Compiled by: Khalid Musa

Overview

This week at the Campus Wellness Hub focused on emotional awareness, creativity, gratitude, and mind-body wellness. Engagement across the WhatsApp community remained active, with students freely expressing their experiences, preferences, and reflections throughout the week. The content was relatable, balanced, and supportive, helping to build a safe and open space for students.

Weekly Highlights

Monday – Mindful Monday, progress for perfection

The week began with an encouraging message reminding students that growth happens in small steps. Members were invited to share one thing they planned to focus on improving.

Engagement:

Good–Students shared personal goals such as consistency, studying habits, and emotional .

Tuesday – Take Charge Tuesday, comfort food edition

This post explored how comfort foods help students cope with stress. It sparked relatable conversations around food, emotions, and simple ways students self-soothe.

Engagement:

High – Many students shared their favorite comfort foods and discussed why certain meals calm them.

Wellness Wednesday, exercise for the brain

Members were reminded of the cognitive benefits of movement. The post encouraged small activities such as stretching, walking, or dancing for a mental refresh.

Engagement:

Moderate – Students responded with their preferred ways to move when stressed or mentally tired.

Thankful Thursday – “The Cognitive Power of Gratitude”

A gratitude-centered post encouraged students to pause and reflect on things they were thankful for. The psychological benefits of gratitude were highlighted.

Engagement:

Meaningful – Students opened up about the people and moments they appreciated

Group Talk Friday – “Social Media & Mental Health”

The day’s discussion focused on how social media affects mental health—positively or negatively. Students were encouraged to share their honest experiences.

Engagement:

High – Members shared thoughtful insights, with conversations around comparison, motivation, and digital balance.

Saturday – Self-Care Saturday

Students were encouraged to tap into simple, everyday forms of creativity. The post emphasized creativity as a stress reliever, not a talent test.

Engagement:

Moderate – Members shared small creative actions they tried or planned to

RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



The poster is for a free online training session titled "Building Emotional Resilience in tough times". It features a portrait of Dr. Izuchukwu L. G. Ndukaihe, a Chartered Psychologist. The event is held on Zoom at 8:00 PM on Friday, 21st November 2025. The registration link is <https://bit.ly/4pcYFoz>. The poster also mentions "FREE ONLINE TRAINING + Free Certification" and includes the ICTMH logo and social media handles.

Building Emotional Resilience in tough times

Speaker
Dr. Izuchukwu L. G. Ndukaihe
Chartered Psychologist

VENUE
Zoom
<https://bit.ly/4pcYFoz>
REGISTER TO ATTEND

8:00PM
Friday, 21st November 2025

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Call for Journal Articles - ICTMH

ICTMH invites submissions of journal articles focused on mental health and cognitive behavioral 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 Michael (08143296589) 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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