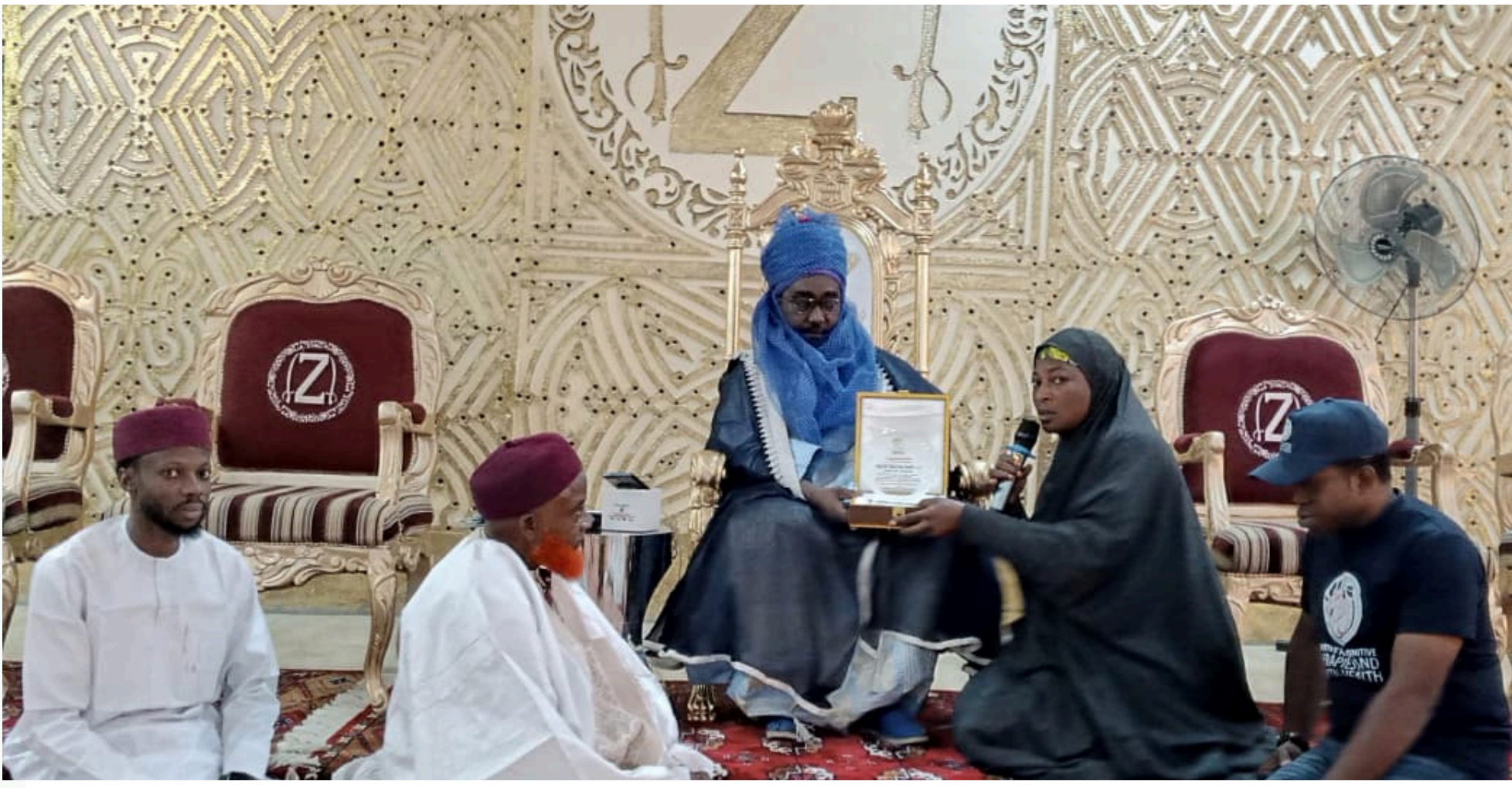


WEEKLY

Newsletter



Editorial Note

In the past few days, our activities have reminded us of an important truth that mental well-being is not a luxury, it is essential for learning, creativity, and personal growth.

From the Workplace Mental Health Training Session on Friday, where Assoc. Prof. Aondoaver Ucho shared practical ways to create healthier work environments, to our Campus Wellness Hub activities that helped students reflect, practice self-care, and understand their emotions better, one message stood out clearly: when people feel seen, valued, and supported, everyone benefits.

This edition also features a significant milestone in our outreach efforts, the courtesy visit to the Emir of Zauzau, which underscores the importance of partnerships in advancing mental health awareness and interventions across communities.

As you read through these reports, reflections, and highlights, we hope you will be inspired to apply these insights in your own environments.

Thank you for joining us in this journey toward healthier minds, stronger connections, and more human-centered workplaces and learning spaces.

Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH

Weekly Webinar Training

Friday Training Session Review

Date: November 28th, 2025

Venue: Virtual

Topic Highlight: Creating a Mentally Healthy Work Environment

Guest Speaker: Assoc. Prof.
Aondoaver Ucho

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

Overview

The training address rising concerns about employee well-being and mental health challenges affecting productivity across sectors in Nigeria and beyond. With increasing reports of burnout, work-related stress, and organizational conflict, the session emphasized the urgent need for responsive and humane workplace systems. Prof. Ucho emphasized that mental health affects every aspect of workplace behavior, including decision-making, conflict resolution, communication style, job performance, and interpersonal relationships. He added that mental illness in workers is often subtle and invisible because many hide personal struggles due to fear of judgment or job loss.

A mentally healthy workplace is where:

- Employees feel physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe
- Work systems support growth and flexibility
- Leadership prioritizes human dignity and empathy
- Policies protect rather than punish

The Changing Nature of Work

“Technology connects us, but it has also increased pressure and expectations.”

The rapid shift toward remote and hybrid work has altered how organizations function.

Key emerging challenges include:

- The pressure to always be online and available
- Reduced personal boundaries and lack of work-life balance
- Emotional disconnection due to reduced physical interaction
- Increased monitoring and surveillance cultures
- Rising loneliness and social isolation
- Prof. Ucho noted that many workers today struggle silently because digital communication makes distress harder to detect.

Benefits of Good Workplace Mental Health

“People perform better where they feel safe, valued, supported, and understood.”

Organizations that prioritize employee mental well-being experience:

- Increased productivity and creativity
- Lower absenteeism and presenteeism
- More loyalty and reduced turnover
- Improved teamwork, innovation, and morale
- Fewer conflicts and disciplinary issues
- Higher service quality and customer satisfaction

Causes of Poor Mental Health in Workplaces

“Long working hours without rest do not increase productivity, they destroy it.”

Major triggers of psychological distress in organizations include:

- Heavy workload and unrealistic expectations
- Poor leadership and hostile supervisory relationships
- Bullying, harassment, and victimization
- Toxic workplace culture and weak communication systems
- Job insecurity, unfair practices, and low compensation
- Lack of professional development or recognition
- Poor physical environment (noise, heat, overcrowding)
- Lack of HR structures and grievance mechanisms

It was noted that untreated stress results in emotional exhaustion, withdrawal, aggression, substance abuse, and burnout.

Foundations of a Mentally Healthy Workplace

“Leadership is the driver of any system. When the driver is weak, the passengers will suffer.”

Elements of a healthy work environment include:

- Supportive leadership and empathetic supervision
- Employee participation in decisions affecting their work
- Fair and transparent policies
- Recognition and reward systems
- Flexible work arrangements and realistic workloads
- Team bonding, social support, and open communication
- Access to mental health services and counseling
- Financial well-being support (loans, advances, allowances)

Recommendation

“Policies without implementation are decorations.”

- Establish counseling and wellness units or partner with mental health NGOs
- Provide financial and welfare support systems
- Conduct mental health awareness training
- ·Review workplace policies regularly
- Encourage peer support structures
- Promote supportive supervision and conflict-resolution mechanisms
- ·Measure mental health outcomes and track employee satisfaction

Breakout Session Highlights Room 1 – Psychological Safety and Rest

“Give people space to rest, speak, and breathe , productivity increases when workers feel human.”

Key suggestions:

- Scheduled breaks and mental rest periods
- ·Safe spaces for expression without punishment

Room 2 – Balancing Performance with Compassion

“A worker struggling emotionally or financially cannot perform optimally.”

Insights:

- Managers should listen more and assume less
- ·Employers need to understand personal circumstances affecting performance

Room 3 – Systems and Policy Structure

Highlights:

- Clear grievance channels and anti-bullying policies
- Workload fairness based on strengths

Weekly WhatsApp Interactive Session

ICTMH Mental Health Week Report
Theme: Creating a Mentally Healthy Work Environment
Date: 17th–30th November 2025
compiled by: Dr. Elizabeth Idowu

Overview
The Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) successfully delivered the Mental Health Wellness Week from 17th–30th November 2025, focusing on the theme “Creating a Mentally Healthy Work Environment.”

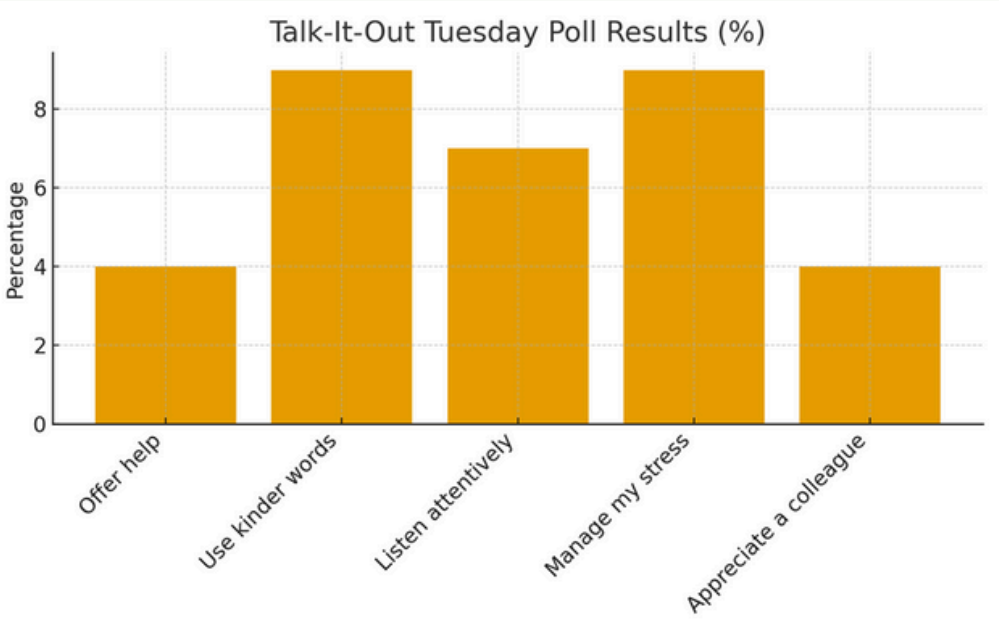
Throughout the two-week period, members participated through reflective storytelling, daily conversations, emotional check-ins, simple gratitude practices, and expressive discussions that strengthened psychological awareness. The level of engagement reflected a community committed to emotional balance, workplace compassion, and healthier relational habits.

The sessions promoted empathy, presence, stress management, active listening, and shared responsibility in building a mentally supportive workspace.

Daily Highlights

Motivational Monday
The week opened with a grounding reflection on the power of people in shaping workplace emotional climate. Members were encouraged to notice one another, practice empathy, and intentionally contribute to a more supportive work environment.
holistically.

Talk-It-Out Tuesday
A short reflective poll guided the conversation on small individual actions that help create a healthier workspace. Members were invited to choose one intentional act they could practice during the day.



Key Insights
The poll shows that participants are most focused on using kinder, calmer words and managing their own stress, both at 9%. This reflects growing awareness of emotional control and positive communication.

Listening attentively (7%) also ranked fairly high, showing value for empathy. However, fewer people chose offering help (4%) and appreciating a colleague (4%), suggesting that outward acts of support still need encouragement.

Overall, the results point to increasing personal responsibility, with a need to strengthen everyday kindness toward others



Wellness Wednesday

Members engaged in inner reflection guided by three grounding questions:

- How am I feeling today?
- What do I need to stay balanced?
- What small action can help lighten my day?

The conversation emphasized emotional awareness, mindful communication, and slowing down to prevent overwhelm.



Thankful Thursday

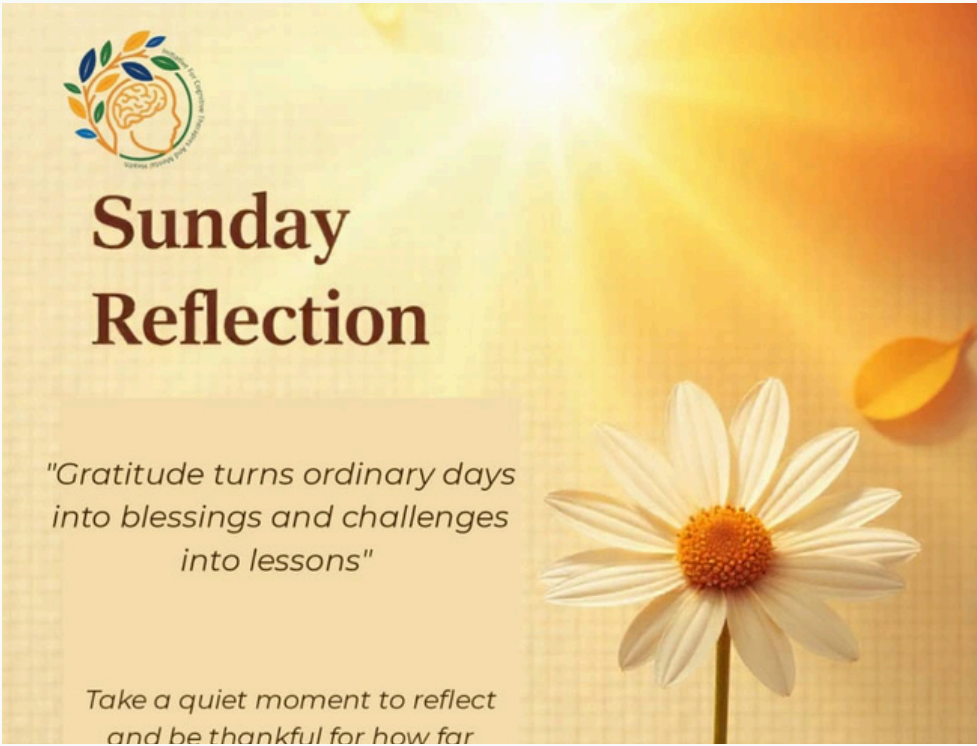
Participants explored gratitude through everyday acts of kindness. A touching story of a nurse supported by a colleague highlighted how compassion can shift workplace atmosphere and improve emotional wellbeing.

Fun Friday

The focus was on joy, laughter, and emotional relief. A light-hearted story about a corps member, Miss Sarah, reminded the group that humor and small moments of fun can soften stress and encourage connection. The day closed by reminding staff of the scheduled training session.

Self-Care Saturday

Members discussed simple, personal ways to rest and reset. The conversation encouraged slowing down, releasing accumulated stress, and embracing activities that restore inner peace.



Reflection Sunday

The week concluded with reflective prompts inviting participants to explore emotional lessons, unnoticed strengths, emerging needs, and subtle inner messages. Members were guided to observe what the week revealed about their emotional state and readiness for a new week

Conclusion

The Mental Health Wellness Week successfully deepened participants’ awareness of how everyday choices, communication styles, kindness, and emotional presence shape workplace wellbeing. The engagement across the week demonstrated a collective commitment to cultivating a supportive, emotionally healthy work environment.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Courtesy Visit to the Emir of Zauzau Strengthening Mental Health Partnerships

Date: 27th November 2025

Venue: Emir's Palace, Zauzau

Compiled by: Hafisat Ajibade

On 27th November 2025, the Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH) had the distinct honor of visiting the Emir of Zauzau. The delegation, led by Hafisat Ajibade Masud, included Alhaji Rimisiwa, Ismail Uba Sani, and Mr. Victor Ogbemor. The visit aimed to present ICTMH's programs and explore opportunities for collaboration in advancing mental health initiatives within the Emirate.

Highlights of the Visit

The ICTMH team shared the organization's core programs:

- Mental Health Advocacy – promoting awareness and reducing stigma
- Cognitive Therapy Interventions – supporting individuals with depression, anxiety, and related conditions
- Community-Based Initiatives – empowering grassroots communities for sustainable mental health support

A plaque was presented to the Emir as a token of appreciation for his leadership and support for community well-being.

The Emir expressed keen interest in ICTMH's initiatives and acknowledged the importance of mental health programs in improving community resilience. He noted that funding considerations would be crucial to any future collaboration.

Next Steps for Collaboration

- Explore potential funding avenues to support joint initiatives with the Emirate.
- Maintain continuous communication with the Emir's office for follow-ups.
- Develop tailored programs for the Zauzau community, ensuring sustainable and impactful outcomes.

The visit successfully laid the groundwork for a potential partnership between ICTMH and the Emirate of Zauzau. The Emir's engagement highlights the increasing recognition of mental health as a vital aspect of community development. ICTMH looks forward to translating this interest into meaningful programs that enhance mental health awareness and support within the region.

Campus Wellness Hub!



Initiative for Cognitive Therapies and Mental Health (ICTMH)

Campus Wellness Hub Weekly Report

Date: Date: 17th – 30th November 2025

Platform: WhatsApp (Virtual)

Compiled by: Khalid Musa

Overview

This week at the Campus Wellness Hub focused on building momentum, strengthening healthy routines, improving student productivity, and promoting emotional balance. Engagement across the WhatsApp community remained active, with members contributing responses, reflections, and personal strategies throughout the week. The daily themes were relatable and practical, supporting students through academic, emotional, and lifestyle challenges. Weekly Highlights

Weekly Highlights

Monday – Mindful Monday, progress for perfection

TI.Momentum Monday –

The week began with a motivational reminder that each new week offers an opportunity for growth. Members were encouraged to identify one habit they wanted to build—such as better sleep, consistent studying, reading more, or slowing down.

Engagement:

Good – Students shared the habits they hoped to strengthen, with common themes around productivity and self-discipline.

Take Charge Tuesday

This post highlighted simple budgeting strategies to help students manage money more intentionally. Five practical tips were shared, covering tracking expenses, reducing small financial leaks, and saving consistently.

Engagement:

Moderate to High – Many students resonated with the financial tips and contributed budgeting habits that help them stay organized.

.Work-Smart Wednesday – “Make the Hours Count”

The midweek post emphasized productivity rooted in balance, not burnout. Students were encouraged to apply strategies like planning their day, using breaks wisely, and completing high-priority tasks first.

Engagement:

Meaningful – Students responded with their preferred study strategies and how they manage their midweek workload.

Thursday Calm – “Slow Down & Reset”

The message focused on anxiety awareness and gentle coping strategies. Students were encouraged to take intentional breaths, reduce overstimulation, and step outside for fresh air.

Engagement:

Good – Members shared grounding techniques and activities that help them stay centered when overwhelmed.

Friday Check-In – “How Do You Reset?”

Friday’s discussion highlighted the different ways individuals cope when overwhelmed moving their body, resting, listening to music, journaling, etc. The prompt encouraged students to share techniques that help them reset.

Engagement:

High – Members shared diverse coping methods, inspiring others within the group.

RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



FREE ONLINE TRAINING

Gender and Depression: Understanding the Male and Female Experience

5th Dec. 2025
8:00pm (GMT +1)

Register Here <https://bit.ly/48ayfy9>

Contact us
+234-706-287-4416

www.cognitiveng.org

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FACILITATOR
Dr. Ayodeji O. Ajayi
Clinical Psychologist

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

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