



# Understanding Muslim Mental Health

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# Objectives

- 1. Learn about warning signs of clinical depression, anxiety, and suicide.**
- 2. Address Muslim Mental Health trends and barriers to treatment.**
- 3. Discuss misconceptions in the Muslim Community that create stigma.**
- 4. Explore strategies for helping others in psychological distress.**
- 5. Discuss resources for Muslims in addressing their own mental health and promoting mental health awareness.**

# What is Mental Wellness?

**“The World Health Organization: "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”**

MENTAL  
WELL - BEING

MILD - MODERATE  
DISTRESS

MENTAL  
ILLNESS

# Signs of Psychological Distress

- **Poor academic performance**
- **Excessive absences from class**
- **Depressed, apathetic or irritable mood**
- **Change in appearance, hygiene or behavior**
- **Disrupted or excessive sleeping**
- **Excessive dependency on others**
- **Use of substances (alcohol, drugs).**
- **Disturbed speech**
- **Suicidal thoughts or actions**
- **Homicidal threats**



# When is anxiety a problem?

- **It interferes with the person's work or relationships**
- **Frequently co-occurs with depression**
- **Maladaptive coping such as substance use.**
- **Avoidance of situations**
- **Obsessive or compulsive behavior**
- **Panic Attacks**
- **Self injurious behavior**

**(National Institute for Mental Health, 2011)**

# Understanding Clinical Depression

- \*Persistent feelings of sadness (2 weeks or more)**
- \*Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities**
  - Changes in appetite resulting in weight loss/gain**
  - Insomnia or oversleeping**
  - Loss of energy or increased fatigue**
  - Restlessness/Irritability**
  - Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt**
  - Difficulty, thinking, concentrating, decision-making**





*Shown here are PET scans of the brain showing different activity levels in a person with depression, compared to a person without depression.*

# Know the Facts!

- **42.5 million (18.19%) of adults in America suffer from a mental illness.**
- **6.2 million children in America suffer from an Emotional, Behavioral or Developmental Issue**
- **Only 41.4 % of individuals with mental illness report getting treatment**
- **70% of those who receive mental health services report that they have improved social connectedness.**



# 10 Leading Causes of Death, United States 2016, All Races, Both Sexes

		Age groups						
		10–14	15–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+
Ranking	1	Unintentional Injury 847	Unintentional Injury 13,895	Unintentional Injury 23,984	Unintentional Injury 20,975	Malignant Neoplasms 41,291	Malignant Neoplasms 116,364	Heart Disease 507,118
	2	<b>Suicide 436</b>	<b>Suicide 5,723</b>	<b>Suicide 7,366</b>	Malignant Neoplasms 10,903	Heart Disease 34,027	Heart Disease 78,610	Malignant Neoplasms 422,927
	3	Malignant Neoplasms 431	Homicide 5,172	Homicide 5,376	Heart Disease 10,477	Unintentional Injury 23,377	Unintentional Injury 21,860	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease 131,002
	4	Homicide 147	Malignant Neoplasms 1,431	Malignant Neoplasms 3,791	<b>Suicide 7,030</b>	<b>Suicide 8,437</b>	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease 17,810	Cerebrovascular 121,630
	5	Congenital Anomalies 146	Heart Disease 949	Heart Disease 3,445	Homicide 3,369	Liver Disease 8,364	Diabetes Mellitus 14,251	Alzheimer's Disease 114,883
	6	Heart Disease 111	Congenital Anomalies 388	Liver Disease 925	Liver Disease 2,851	Diabetes Mellitus 6,267	Liver Disease 13,448	Diabetes Mellitus 56,452
	7	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease 75	Diabetes Mellitus 211	Diabetes Mellitus 792	Diabetes Mellitus 2,049	Cerebrovascular 5,353	Cerebrovascular 12,310	Unintentional Injury 53,141
	8	Cerebrovascular 50	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease 206	Cerebrovascular 575	Cerebrovascular 1,851	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease 4,307	<b>Suicide 7,759</b>	Influenza & Pneumonia 42,479
	9	Influenza & Pneumonia 39	Influenza & Pneumonia 189	HIV 546	HIV 971	Septicemia 2,472	Septicemia 5,941	Nephritis 41,095
	10	Septicemia 31	Complicated Pregnancy 184	Complicated Pregnancy 472	Septicemia 897	Homicide 2,152	Nephritis 5,650	Septicemia 30,405

Source: WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Reports, 1999–2016

# Warning Signs of Suicide

- I-Ideation\* (threatened or communicated)
- S-Substance Abuse (excessive or increased)
- P-Purposelessness
- A-Anxiety
- I-Trapped: Comments\*
- H-Hopelessness\*
- W-Withdrawal\*
- A-Anger
- R-Recklessness\*
- M-Mood changes (dramatic)



# Suicide is Preventable!

**Ninety (90%) of those who end their life by suicide have depression and/or another mental health disorder and/or a substance abuse disorder.**

**Between 80%-90% of people with depression respond effectively to treatment.**



# Islamic Protective Factors

- Islam helps to prevent suicide by two ways:
  1. directly by prohibiting it
  2. Indirectly by lowering the causes of suicide such as substance abuse and maintaining mental/emotional well-being.

In Islam, suicide is considered to be strictly prohibited. The Quran mentions “... *[do not] kill (or destroy) yourselves, for surely God has been Most Merciful to you*” (Quran, 4:29).

(Sarfraz, 2002)

# How can you help others?

- **Express what you are observing.**
- **Be prepared for adverse reactions.**
- **Use 'I' statements**
- **Listen, don't lecture. Avoid being shocked:**
- **Avoid jumping to suggestions**
- **Validate**
- **Offer support and urge the person to seek out resources**



## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Hotline available 24 hours a day, every day.

Free and confidential service.

1-800-273-TALK (8225)

<http://suicidepreventionlifeline.com/>



# Muslim Mental Health Trends

- Identity/Relationship Concerns
- Discrimination
- Depression & Anxiety
- Acculturation and/or PTSD
- OCD
- Addictions (Pornography, Drugs, Alcohol, Hookah)



(Abu-Ras & Abu Bader, 2008).



**Do you believe that Mental Health concerns are stigmatized within the Muslim community?**

# Common Misconceptions

- **Depression is a weakness of faith.**
- **Prayer is the solution to any mental health issue.**
- **People experiencing mental health problems are affected by the evil eye or devil possession.**
- **Going to see a mental health professional is haram (a sin).**
- **Doing well academically is all that matters.**
- **Marriage will make me mentally-well.**

# Other Myths

- **People with psychiatric issues are crazy unpredictable or dangerous.**
- **Psychiatric disorders are not true illnesses like heart disease or diabetes.**
- **People with mental health problems are less intelligent.**
- **People with mental illness never get better.**

# Addressing Stigma

- **Stigma-negative stereotypes or perceptions about mental health that prevent others from seeking treatment**
- **Avoid Labelling (ex: he's OCD, she's a psycho)**
- **Do not say "committed suicide"**
- **Understand that people can lead successful lives.**
- **Attitudes towards help-seeking.**



# Mental Health Providers

- **School Guidance Counselor**
- **College Counseling Centers**
- **Community Mental Health Clinic**
- **Local Health Departments**
- **Social Worker, Psychologist, Counselor**
- **Psychiatrist (prescribes medication)**
- **Physician/Doctor**

# Barriers to Treatment

**Barriers to Seeking Services rooted in:**

- **Mistrust of Counseling Providers—fear of discrimination, respect of faith values.**
- **Lack of understanding therapy process—advice giving**
- **Fear of treatment—confidentiality, medication**
- **CHANGE IS HAPPENING!**

# Muslim Mental Health Resources

- ISPU-search Muslim mental health

- Family Youth Institute-

[www.theFYI.org](http://www.theFYI.org)

- Muslim Wellness Foundation:

[www.muslimwellness.com](http://www.muslimwellness.com)

- Peaceful Families, Inc.:

[PeacefulFamilies.org](http://PeacefulFamilies.org)

- SEEMA-

[Seemamentalhealth.com](http://Seemamentalhealth.com)



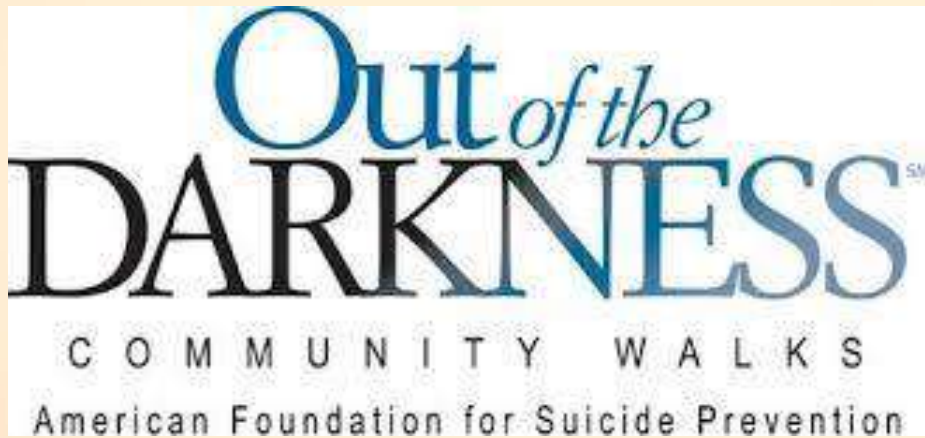
# Resources

- **Muslim Youth Helpline Naseeha in North America: [\(866\) 627-3342](tel:8666273342)**
- **Mental Health First Aid Training – in our centers/Imams**  
**<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org>**
- **ASIST Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training -**  
**<https://www.livingworks.net>**

# Prevention is the Best Intervention!

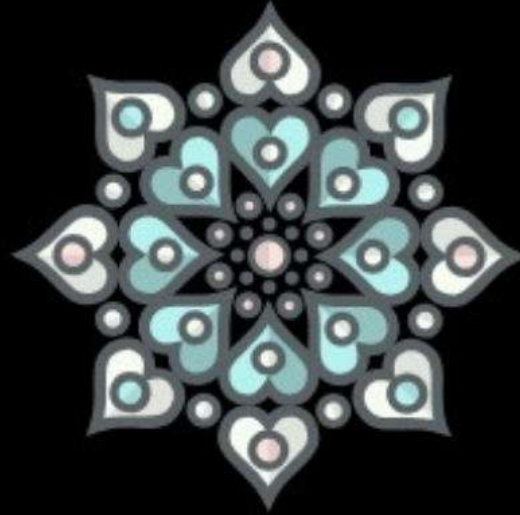


[www.activeminds.org](http://www.activeminds.org)



[afsp.org](http://afsp.org)





Schedule a free consult  
today!

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