



ISLAM AND ITS PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC SIGNIFICANCE

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Kashmir *Corresponding Author**ABSTRACT**

Man is the summation, maintenance and the nourishment of physiological, psychological, spiritual, cognitive, and behavioral health. Religion is considered to be one of the important psycho-social factors in a human life, especially in the religion of Islam. It's day to day obligatory rituals recollect person of being in the complete surveillance of some transcendental force or Allah. Belief is the bedrock of a significant majority of the people in the world, so its relevance in the life can't be underestimated. The present study aims to elucidate the psychotherapeutic significance in the religion of Islam and the efficaciousness of religiosity and spirituality in psychotherapy. Various Quranic verses and the narrations of Prophet (PBUH) have been elucidated from psychological and religious point of view and it argues for its integration into psychotherapeutic processes.

Materials and methods: The research will be qualitative analysis from the main source religious text and the related research articles.

KEYWORDS : Islam, belief, health, psychology, support, therapy, hope, gratitude.

INTRODUCTION

Human beings are not merely a complex integration of muscles, tissues, organs and bones but also an essential summation and heterogeneous compound of thoughts, beliefs, emotions and feelings. While dealing with patients in psychiatry and psychology it is dealing with multifaceted organization of certain unknown, unseen and certain observable wonders. In such setting holistic being of a person is to be taken into consideration. In psychology the psychologist has to evaluate the person not only from his bodily appearance and his behavior but he has to dig deep into the emotions, feelings, that are attached to a person and even everything that patient significantly holds on. In psychology none of the things are taken for granted or considered petty issue. People are defined by their religion, faith, the beliefs they hold, their home, environment, his surrounding, friends, the views, the object of love, the loss of a significant love are too of symptomatic importance.

Religious beliefs are the bed rock of a significant majority of people in our society. It plays an important role in the rituals attached to the stages of life immediately from birth till the funeral of the dead. When confronted with misfortune or the fortune religion plays its significant role and part. Faith, spirituality, beliefs, and religion are words which are often used interchangeably. However, each word has a unique meaning. Faith is the inner search for purpose or meaning in life. It is a strong unquestioning conviction that "there is something more than just me". "Religion generally implies adherence to a communally defined set of beliefs in supernatural and superhuman creatures, with written or non-written traditions forming certain rituals, worship or ceremonies. More over the emotions attached like hope, trust, fear, worship and deviations are related."

In 1910, Sir William Osler, extolled the many virtues of faith, especially in relation to a putative salutary role in health, healing, and medicine. He writes, "Nothing in life is more wonderful than faith. Faith is the cement which binds man to man in every relation in life. Faith is indeed one of the miracles of human nature which science is as ready to accept as it is to study its marvelous effects. And faith has always played a strong role as a popular measure of cure" (1470-72).

Dr. Jerome D. Frank, preeminent Johns Hopkins psychiatrist, revisited these themes in a seminal paper named, "The Faith that Heals." He argues faith "is an important topic that is conspicuously absent from the medical school curriculum, and explained that the concept has significant connotations for healing besides its obvious religious context. For Frank. The most powerful single stimulator of the patient's expectant faith is, of course, the physician himself." (127-131).

Faith has various connotations in various theistic traditions of the world. It may vary somewhere but some common threads can be observed. For Muslims, *imaan* (faith) is intimately tied to *Islam* (submission) and *ihsan* (doing good). These concepts "converge in worship of God and service to others." For rabbinic Judaism, *emunah*

(faith or trust in God) or can more accurately be described as an innate conviction, a perception of truth that transcends reason is most completely expressed through a combination of *torah* (learning), *avodah* (worship of God), and *g'milut chasadim* (acts of loving kindness) in pursuit of and in service to *emet* (truth), *shalom* (peace), and *din* (justice). In Christian faith professes an unreserved belief in the Bible, God's word to mankind. "but without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that he is rewarded of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

The meaning of faith (IMAN) in Islamic sense is beautified in brevity along with its spiritual exaltation of IHSAN [excellence]. In one of the famous prophetic hadiths popularly known as hadith-e- Gabriel Umer Ibn Khatib narrates:

We were with the Messenger of God (God bless him and grant him peace) when there came to us a man wearing dazzling white clothes, with jet black hair; there were no marks of travel on him, and yet not one of us knew him. He sat by the Prophet (God bless him and grant him peace), knee to knee, placed his hands on his thighs, and said: "O Muhammad, tell me about surrender (**Islam**). The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: "Surrender is to testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's Messenger (PBUH), to perform the prayer, bestow the alms, fast Ramadan and make, if you can, the pilgrimage to the Holy House." He said: "You have spoken truly", and we were amazed that having questioned him he should corroborate him. He then said: "Tell me about faith (**IMAN**)." He said: "To believe in God and His angels and His books and His messengers and the Last Day, and to believe in Providence, the good of it and the evil of it." "You have spoken truly," he said, and then: "Tell me about excellence (**ISHAN**)." He said: "To worship God as if you saw Him; for if you see Him not, He assuredly sees you." ... Then the stranger went away, and I tarried a while. He then said to me: "O Umar, do you know who the questioner was?" I said: "God and His Messenger know best." He said: "It was Gabriel. (The Angel). (Al Bukhari and Al Muslim).

Ibn Taymiyyah writes "it is understood that faith is affirmation and not merely belief. Affirmation includes the words of the heart, which is belief and the actions of the heart, which is compliance." (Majmu'Al Fatawa 7/638) He also writes that among the principles of the people of the sunnah and the community is that the religion and faith consists of sayings and actions: the sayings of the heart and the tongue, and the actions of the heart, tongue, and the limbs. (sharh Al Aqida Al-Wastiyya).

RELIGION AND THE HEALTH:

Religious commitment may influence health through promotion of healthy behaviors. Religious fellowship may impact health through facilitating social support. Religious worship may produce positive emotions with preventive or therapeutic benefit. Certain religious beliefs may be consonant with healthy beliefs that foster preventive healthcare practices. It may create positive expectations that prevent or

ameliorate psychological distress. Expressions of religiousness thus mobilize personal and congregational resources that may foster better healthcare use, health practices, and health status (Levin J, 1168).

One possible mechanism for religion's protective effects is via the enhancement of psychological well being. Researchers propose that individuals with strong religious identification may have greater resilience in coping with stressors, and have shown increased life satisfaction among those involved in private religious activity. Furthermore, studies of religious coping have found higher rates of depression among older individuals with poor religious coping strategies. A subsequent study in a medically ill elderly cohort demonstrated greater mortality among patients who exhibited religious struggle. A by-product of these studies was the development and validation of a standardized assessment tool designed to measure religious coping. Studies on Muslims that used spiritually modified cognitive therapy for anxiety and depression showed faster results as compared to the therapy that is not Islamically modified. Similarly, a study conducted on Muslims with bereavement showed significantly better results with cognitive-behavioral therapy that had been modified to incorporate Islamic beliefs and practices. (A. Hamdan, 2008)

Islamic approach to psychotherapy

Psychotherapy is not new concept to Islam and Muslim population. It existed since ages for example, Abu Bakar Muhammad Zakaria Al-Razi (925 CE) is the first Muslim physician who introduced the methods of psychotherapy and he had achieved a lot of success in discovering the definition, symptoms and mental health. The discussion on mental health was published in his book entitled "Al Tibb ar-Ruhani" (Book of Spiritual Medicine) Abu Zayd Al-Balkhi who devoted his life to write an important psychological book entitled Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus (substance for Body and Soul) in which he discussed comprehensively on the body and the soul. He argued that since man's construction is from both ...his and his body, therefore human existence cannot be healthy without the interweaving of body and the soul. According to Balkhi, if the body gets sick, the Nafas loses much of its cognitive comprehension and fails to enjoy the desirous aspects of the life. In other words if the Nafs gets sick, the body may also find no joy in the life and may eventually develop a physical illness. Hence, psychological health or condition is considered as one of the main factors contributing to physical health. Abu-Ali al Husain ibn Abdullah ibn-Sina the pioneer in the field of psychosomatic medicine, in his most celebrated work, the Canon of Medicine (Al Qanun fi al Tibb) provided description and treatment for depression, mania, paralysis etc.

Islam is the code of conduct for living. It is psyche oriented, social oriented, community oriented and biological oriented. It is acquainted with phenomena of humans nature both inner and outer. It writes in brevity yet in comprehensive way about living in society, the types of people in community, duties, rights and all other worldly affairs from which humans go through in living process.

SUPPORTIVE THERAPY

Supportive therapy is the form of psychotherapy that has a great significance in the psychotherapeutic setting. Supportive sessions are of paramount importance and is dynamic treatment that uses initial and direct measures to rehabilitate the problematic symptoms and to regain the ego functions, goal setting, encouragement, positive reinforcement, and adaptive skills that restores person or the patient's morale and improves self-esteem and his skills that help them to accept, work and improve the quality of the life, which begins in the clinical sessions for every person especially those of panic attacks, generalized anxiety disorder and crises intervention.

Supportive therapy or Supportive session are accustomed and not novel thing to discuss. Islam emphasized on it 1500 years ago and is the binding agent of every Islamic culture and ethos. Islamic tradition puts emphasis on universal brotherhood and strong bondage in humanity which emphasizes support to fellow human's beings in a manner as if for one's own self. In this regard one of the prophetic narration bespeaks "None of you has complete faith until he loves for his fellow brother what he loves for himself" (Al Bukhari and Al Muslim). This narration is very profound in explaining the universal brotherhood in the Islam. Leaving apart all biases of caste, color, creed, region and other social divisions.

Supporting the sick in particular and visiting to pat (embrace, mollycoddle) him is not only encouraged but mandatory for Muslims,

and it is duty of a Muslim towards other fellow, in this regard there is a narration of Prophet Mohammad pbuh which says:

God will say on the Day of Judgment: "O son of Adam, I was sick but you did not visit me." "My Lord! How could I visit you when you are the Lord of the whole world," we will reply. God will say: "Did you not know that so-and-so from among my servants [i.e., human beings] was sick, but you never visited him or her? Did you not know that if you had visited, you would have found me there?" God says: "O my servant! Health unites you with yourself but sickness unites you to me" (Al-Muslim, Hadith 896).

In another narration Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "Visit the sick, feed the hungry, and release of captive." (Al- Bukhari, Hadith 897) This narration clearly motivates and encourages the believers to support the ill person which is his duty towards him and gives moral upliftment to the ill or disordered person by saying that sickness unites him to me and the pinnacle of happiness for this person is that Allah says that you would have found ME there. Prophet Muhammad also said that when "you visit an invalid tell him to make supplication for you, for his supplication is like that of the angels" (*Sunan of Ibn Majah*).

The above mentioned hadith is significant because it can boost the morale of the patient as the Allah says that I am with the person who is ill and visiting the person is visiting HIM. Speaking the words of love, kindness, togetherness and goodness is a form of charity and the person earns a reward in lieu of that. The supplication of the ill person in Islam is equivalent to that of angels. These narrations lift the position of sufferer from the victim mentality to the transcendental stage which saves the person from psychological chaos and conflict.

It is mentioned in Quran - even Good words are charity. Just as in charity people earn reward in a similar way speaking good words also earns reward. Even the good intentions are rewarded in the religion of Islam.

Jawziyyah (1999) defined good words as prayer, words of hope, good news, or advice and all these relieve the anxiety of the sick person and bring relief to his or her heart. Good words also add strength to the spirit of the sick person, further encouraging the body to fight disease (p. 109) Supportive session can be regarded as the first aid of psychotherapy in the medical terms and saves the person of greater psychological damage.

HOPE

Hope has been identified as character strength which falls under the virtue of Transcendence and the common theme running through transcendence is that it allows individual to forge connections to larger universe and thereby provide meaning to their lives (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Hope represents a cognitive, emotional, and motivational stance towards future (Snyder & Lopez) Cognitive Hope Theory is particularly important for performance (Snyder, Rand & Sigmon). According to this theory, hope is comprised of two aspects i.e., 'way power' and 'willpower'. The 'way power' is the process that involves identifying the goals, and findings ways to achieve goals despite obstacles. Willpower involves a general belief in one's own ability to achieve goal. (i.e., agency belief, Snyder). Hope inhibits handicapping and self-deprecatory thought, as well as negative emotions. It also provides academic achievements

Hope is the important element in the positive living which is the key to motivation and success, if accompanied by will-power along with careful planning. Hope and positivity is secret to success. The message of hope is not only for those who suffer or are in need but for those who do have resource to facilitate. As reward is guaranteed towards those who are hopeful. Hopefulness in the life is linked to happiness and satisfaction. Research suggest that people who are hopeful tend to be happier than those who are not (Park and Patterson, 2009).

Islam encourages people to stay hopeful, even if someone has committed the worst sin or faced with most troublesome life event there is always God's mercy. Following are some of the verses in the Quran that substantiates the importance of hope:

1. "And never give up hope of Allah's soothing Mercy: truly no one despairs of Allah's soothing Mercy, except those who have no faith." (Quran, 12:87)
2. "So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief: Verily, with every difficulty there is relief." (Quran 94,-5-6)

3. "And for those who fear Allah, He always prepares a way out, and He provides for him from sources he never could imagine. And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is Allah for him. For Allah will surely accomplish His purpose: verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion."(Quran, 65: 2-3)
4. "There is no disease that God has sent down, except that He has also sent down its treatment" (Sahih al-Bukhari, p. 1232).

Research and evidences links hope with a variety of health indicators. These include studies implicating hope in the primary prevention of both physical and psychological morbidity, as well as research pointing to secondary-preventive effects—that is, the elimination, reduction, or containment of existing medical problems. People rated as "high hope, according to existing measures, have been found to take part in more cancer preventive activities, to participate in greater physical exercise, to engage in fewer high-risk sexual behaviors, and to cope better with severe arthritis, major burn injuries, spinal cord injuries, fibromyalgia, and blindness". Findings also link hopefulness with greater pain endurance, better medication compliance, lower rates of affective disorders, and a more successful response to psychotherapy.... According to a research by a former student of Snyder, among religious individuals, prayer is associated with higher levels of hope. More recent findings confirm that religious faith contributes to the agency component of hope through engendering use of prayer as a coping strategy.

Research has shown that promoting positivity can help prevent relapse of depression during the residual phase, where the risk of relapse is particularly high. And hopeful and resilient individuals are often characterized by the positive attitudes and optimistic outlooks, which in turn are associated with better mood states as well as decreased occurrences of stress related illness.

GRATITUDE THERAPY

Researches have shown that through our thoughts and emotions, we emit powerful signals; these signals have ability to attract signals of same frequency. Being in state of gratefulness or ungratefulness effects our mind positively or negatively, with positivity inviting more positive signals and negativity inviting more negative signals or energy.

Gratitude is the central theme of Islamic literature and culture. The first chapter of the holy Quran begins with the words of "Al-Hamdu." thanksgiving and it frequently uses the word "Hamud." Or the concept with the opposite to it as kufur. Islam encourages its followers to be grateful and express thanksgiving to the God and people.

It is not merely the words spoken, it is the feeling of being in state of contentment for things and blessings we have, the bounties we share under the canvas of universe. It opens the door to more relations, improves physical health, psychological health, self-esteem and components to optimal performance.

In Islam the concept of gratitude is of necessary importance that helps an individual to realize the bounties that Allah bestowed upon HIS creation Allah says in Quran that I have made the earth spacious for you people I have made days and nights for the creation so that you may give thanks to Allah.

It is also mentioned in Quran that, "if you are grateful, I will add more favours unto you." (Chapter: 14, V-07)

Therefore gratitude has the greater significance in Islamic tradition, and it adds to the therapeutic value for people.

CONCLUSION

Keeping in view the Human Psyche Islamic tradition throws light upon the ways that makes the travel of life easy and smooth. Quran discusses many different topics of living in the society, personality types, developmental stages, dealing with others, spirituality, belief and many more concepts. Quran mentions the word Nafs (psyche) many times and elaborates way of keeping it pure and sound for smooth running or functioning of body. It is argued in this article that Islamic injunctions have therapeutic values as elucidated in its emphasis on the importance of support, hope and gratitude from Islamic view point for the therapeutics usage and benefits. There is further more scope in the Islamic injunctions form therapy point of view.

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