

THE DELICATE MIND

a mental
health
magazine

INSIDE • Terms & Jargon • Stereotypes of Mental Health • Western Treatments • Eastern Treatments • Incorporating Islamic Practices • How the NHS Can Help • Self Help Tips • Meditation & Mindfulness • Resilience

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WELCOME FROM THE TEAM



The Delicate Mind is an award-winning mental health C.I.C that supports the Muslim community with managing their mental health, but we hope that whether you are Muslim or not, you are able to learn something from this magazine and that it can help support you on your mental health journey.

What does mental health mean to us?

To start things off, we thought it would be a good idea to share what mental health means to each of us, the TDM team!

We know mental health is deeply personal and everyone will have their own interpretation of what it means.

So here's ours!



Tom

My natural instinct is to tell you what mental ill-health is and say mental health must be everything that isn't. But upon closer introspection, mental health is the way I speak to myself inside. I'm accepting of who I am, I'm searching for my potential and I'm letting my feet walk instead of telling them where not to go. I'm aware of what I can do to help myself be positive. The more I can be okay with myself, the more I can be okay with everything else in the world.



Nikhvat

To me, mental health means to know yourself. It means to understand all of the complexities that make you the wholly unique person that you are. At its core I think mental health is about balance and resilience, and knowing how to navigate life's ups and downs without losing sight of who I am. It's also about connection. The relationships I build, the empathy I offer, and the understanding I receive from others. It's knowing that I am not alone in my struggles and that reaching out for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.



Sara

Good mental health is a sense of clarity. I'm in control over my choices, and they have purpose and logic. When I do something positive, I feel good and can appreciate and build upon it; when I make a mistake, I feel remorse but learn from and correct them. Everything feels close and interconnected. Mental ill health is a fog that prevents me from seeing clearly. I struggle to do the things I want, can't do basic tasks, and even small choices feel painful to make. Everything feels distant and hopeless.



Saima

Many of us encounter daily obstacles in maintaining our mental health, and these obstacles can be exacerbated by various facets of our lives, including our professional commitments, personal relationships, familial responsibilities, financial obligations, and more. Attaining optimal mental well-being involves harmonising our mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions. Practice self-compassion and refrain from self-criticism. Allocate time for your hobbies and cherished projects.



Helena

For me, mental health is everything we experience in life. From how we treat ourselves to how we treat others, from how we behave, how we react, and how we experience and live life. It is the inner compass that guides our self-worth, self-esteem, and self-compassion. The state of our mental health determines whether we are our own best friend or harshest critic, and it moulds our ability to nurture a positive self-image. It's the hidden hand behind our choices, moulding our behaviour and responses to life's challenges.



Maria

To me, mental health is something that needs constant awareness and intentional work. It's having the right work- life ratio, daily effort towards self-care activities enhance your physical and psychological health, a support system that can listen to you without judgement, learning coping mechanisms to deal with your triggers, and a routine that supports all of the above. When my mental health declines, it's hard to fight the urge to self isolate and spend time alone, which is easier than explaining to my loved ones how to help.



Zu

Healthy mental health feels like a balance of my mind, body and spirit between/despite the positives and negatives around me. It feels like that I am stable and resilient. It feels like I can weigh pros and cons of a problem in a focused and effective manner even under pressure or when I am faced by unhealthy urges. It feels like inner peace and total acceptance.

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Mental Health Terms and Jargon

you should know By Maria

MENTAL HEALTH

Your emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It combines your thoughts, feelings, and behaviour, and plays a crucial role in how you cope with stress, relate to others, and make decisions.

MENTAL ILLNESS

Also known as mental disorder or psychiatric disorder, is a medical condition that affects a person's thoughts, feelings, emotions, or behaviour and often impacts their ability to function in daily life.

STIGMA

The negative stereotype and discrimination that is associated with mental health conditions. It can lead to shame, fear, and social isolation, making it difficult for people to seek help or talk openly about their mental health.

PSYCHIATRIST

A medical doctor who specialises in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses. They can prescribe medication and provide therapy.

PSYCHOLOGIST

A mental health professional who assesses and treats mental health issues through psychological testing, counselling, and therapy. They do not prescribe medication but can work together with psychiatrists.

THERAPIST/COUNSELLOR

Professionals trained to provide talk therapy or psychotherapy. They can help individuals with various mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, and relationship issues.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

Also known as talk therapy, psychotherapy is a treatment approach that involves conversations between a trained therapist and an individual or group to explore and address mental health concerns.

TRAUMA

An emotional response to a distressing event or series of events that overwhelm an individual's ability to cope.

DEPRESSION

A mood disorder that impacts $\frac{1}{4}$ people, this is marked by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a lack of interest or pleasure in activities.

BIPOLAR DISORDER

A mood disorder characterized by extreme mood swings, including periods of depression (low mood) and mania (high mood and excessive energy).

SCHIZOPHRENIA

A severe mental disorder that affects a person's thinking, emotions, and behaviour, often leading to hallucinations, delusions, and impaired social functioning.

BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER (BPD)

A personality disorder characterized by unstable relationships, self-image, and emotions. Individuals with BPD may have intense mood swings and a fear of abandonment.

SELF-HARM

Involves intentionally hurting oneself as a way of coping with emotional pain or distress. It is not a healthy coping mechanism and often requires professional intervention.

MENTAL STRENGTH

Is a psychological attribute that enables individuals to effectively cope with challenges, adversity, and stressors in life. It involves a combination of attitudes, behaviours, and strategies that contribute to one's ability to maintain well-being and perform at their best, even in difficult circumstances.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

The ability to recognise, understand, and manage emotions effectively. This involves not letting emotions overwhelm or control you and instead finding constructive ways to cope with and express feelings.

RESILIENCE

The ability to bounce back from setbacks, failures, and adversity.

ADAPTABILITY

The capacity to adjust and thrive in changing circumstances, whether those changes are personal, professional, or environmental.

SELF-BELIEF

Confidence in one's abilities that allows individuals to set and pursue goals, even when faced with self-doubt or criticism from others.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Healthy coping mechanisms, relaxation techniques, and time management to reduce and manage stress.

SELF-DISCIPLINE

The ability to control impulses and stay focused on long-term objectives.

Mental Health is stigmatised in the South Asian Culture

By Saima

A story about the stereotypes and misunderstanding of mental health

A culture of shame is all too familiar for many South Asians suffering in silence with mental health problems, and discussing psychological health is seen as taboo within the community.

People from South Asian communities are less likely to access mental health support due to stigma and a lack of awareness. Traditional cultural values and expectations mean that mental health problems might be perceived as a sign of weakness by others.

I grew up in a conservative Muslim family. We were raised with strong ethics and values, respect for elders, and high regards towards our religion and culture. However, sadly, like most South Asian families, there was a lack of mental health awareness. The acceptance of a family member experiencing any sort of mental disorder was unbearable and seen as a weakness.

More than 15 years ago, my eldest brother went through a Tumultuous time in his marriage that

ended up in a divorce. He was deeply affected by this trauma. He started suffering from depression, social withdrawal, persistent hallucinations and severe paranoia. His condition deteriorated in a short space. Unfortunately, my mother who was aware of his situation decided to hide this from everyone in the family. However, as his illness got worse, it became evident that there was something wrong.

At this point, my sister and I started our journey to seek help for our brother, not knowing how difficult it was going to be for us. Despite spending 14 years of my NHS career in mental health setting, studying for a degree in Psychology and completing various Mental Health diplomas, it was one of the hardest things I ever experienced.

My brother's mental health declined day by day. He became agitated and distant as he began experiencing intense paranoia. He became a

danger not only to himself, but others around him. He would speak to himself, behave unpredictably, and see things that weren't there.

One day he attempted to attack my mother with a knife. At this point, we had no choice but to get him sectioned. It wasn't an easy decision for us. As a family we felt broken, shattered into pieces,

but we knew that we had to keep going for him and for his recovery. My sister and I didn't give up and we put all our effort toward

making sure our brother recovered fully. We wrote letters to the GP, contacted local mental health services and hospitals. Back then, facilities were not as accessible as they are now. Thankfully, one of my dad's cousins was a chartered clinical psychologist, she worked very closely with my brother to keep him and those around him safe.

I still remember the day they came with the police to take my brother.

Do not let your difficulties fill you with anxiety, after all it is only in the darkest nights that stars shine more brightly
- Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib (AS)

I Accept

By Zu

I accept my uneven eyebrows,

I accept my awkward glare,

I accept my frizzy hair,

I accept my large physique,

I accept my indecision,

I accept myself.

I accept poverty in the world,

I accept that rivers flood,

I accept that people die,

I accept that people lie,

I accept the cold and damp,

I accept the earth.

I accept the dark times,

I accept the ups and downs,

I accept the frowns,

I accept seeing no way out,

I accept depressive bouts,

I accept my mind,

I accept my love for canines,

I accept a ray of sunshine,

I accept the flow of time,

I accept my life as mine.

He looked at me and said "I trusted you, why you doing this to me?" It felt like I betrayed him, but I could only pray for him and his recovery, and hoped one day he'd understand.

He was in hospital for a few months before he was discharged. He was getting support from community services and had an assigned case worker who I would meet on a regular basis. Over the years, the support from the NHS staff that he received was incredible. With the right care plan, medication, therapy and family support, my brother's mental health has improved massively. He's still on meds, and under community care, but he's more stable now. He volunteers as a football coach. Football has always been his passion.

One of the things we all should learn from this experience is that if you, or someone you know, is suffering from with their mental health, there is nothing to be ashamed of. Do not see this as a weakness. There is strength in accepting help.

How mental health is treated

IN THE WEST

By Zu

PSYCHOTHERAPY

1. COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT)

CBT is one of the most widely used therapeutic approaches. It focuses on identifying and changing negative thought patterns and behaviors that contribute to mental health issues.

2. DIALECTICAL-BEHAVIOR THERAPY (DBT)

DBT is particularly effective for individuals with borderline personality disorder. It combines cognitive-behavioral techniques with mindfulness and acceptance strategies.

3. PSYCHODYNAMIC THERAPY

This approach explores unconscious processes and unresolved conflicts that may contribute to mental health symptoms.

4. INTERPERSONAL THERAPY (IPT)

IPT focuses on improving interpersonal relationships and communication, which can be especially helpful for depression and anxiety



MEDICATION

1. PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATIONS

Antidepressants, antipsychotics, anxiolytics, and mood stabilizers, are often prescribed to alleviate symptoms of various mental health conditions.

2. MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

Typically overseen by a psychiatrist or other qualified medical professionals.

HOSPITALIZATION

In cases of severe mental illness or acute crisis, hospitalization may be necessary to provide a safe and structured environment for stabilization and treatment.

SUPPORTIVE AND GROUP THERAPY

1. GROUP THERAPY SESSIONS

Offer individuals the opportunity to share their experiences and learn coping skills from others facing similar challenges.

2. SUPPORT GROUPS

For specific mental health conditions, like depression or substance abuse, can also provide valuable peer support.

SELF-HELP AND LIFESTYLE INTERVENTIONS

Encouraging healthy lifestyle choices, including regular exercise, balanced nutrition, adequate sleep, and stress management, can complement other treatment approaches.

How mental health is treated IN THE EAST

1. PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL HEALING

Muslims often turn to prayer (Salah) and seeking solace in their faith as a means of coping with mental health challenges. Many believe that connecting with God through prayer can bring peace of mind and emotional relief. Recitation of specific verses from the Quran (known as Ruqyah) is also considered a form of spiritual healing for various ailments, including mental health issues.

2. COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Islamic communities can provide a strong support network for individuals facing mental health challenges. Friends, family, and members of the community often come together to offer emotional and practical support to those in need. This sense of belonging and social support can be crucial for individuals struggling with mental health conditions.

3. ISLAMIC COUNSELLING

Some Muslims seek help from counsellors or therapists who understand both mental health and Islamic principles. Islamic counselling combines psychological techniques with Islamic teachings and values to address mental health issues. These counsellors may use Quranic verses and Hadith (sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad) to guide their therapy sessions.

4. MEDICAL AND PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT

Islam encourages the pursuit of knowledge and the use of medical and psychological treatments to address mental health conditions. Seeking help from mental health professionals, such as psychologists and psychiatrists, is considered acceptable and encouraged. Islam does not discourage the use of medication or therapy to treat mental health disorders when necessary.

5. SELF-CARE AND MINDFULNESS

Islamic teachings often emphasize self-care and mindfulness. Engaging in acts of worship, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and adhering to a balanced diet and sleep schedule are all considered important for overall well-being, including mental health.



6. SUPPLICATION AND DU'A

Muslims are encouraged to make supplications (Du'a) to seek help and guidance from Allah (God). Du'as for mental health, strength, and patience are common and can provide comfort to those facing difficulties.

Sorry, I Didn't Know

By Sara

A story about
incorporating Islamic practices &
shared decision making



Too many times, these words have been spoken to me:

"Sorry, I didn't know."

When I was an inpatient on a mother and baby psychiatric unit, a female psychiatrist poked her head in the room to ask if she could speak with me. When I agreed, she opened the door to reveal two men behind her. I scrambled for my headscarf. "You need to give me a chance to put on my headscarf," I told her.

"Sorry, I didn't know."

At a therapy support group I attended, the lead psychologist brought food in for the last session. "I got the vegetarian option," she told me, pointing to a box of mince pies. I took a glance at the ingredients and noticed alcohol was second on the list. "Thank you, but I can't eat this since it has alcohol in it."

"Sorry, I didn't know."

While speaking with my psychiatrist, I mentioned how a medication I took in the evening left me groggy and struggling to wake for the morning prayer. "You don't need to change the medication," she said. "Rest is more important, and you can pray when you wake up." I looked at her in disbelief. "There must be another option. I want to wake up for the prayer."

"Sorry, I didn't know."

It can be discouraging when a person trying to help you doesn't understand the beliefs and behaviours that make up your identity. Or, worse, a clinician thinks you need to give up part of yourself to receive good care. Fortunately, personalised care is part of the NHS' Long-Term Plan. Everyone has the right to include what's important to them (values, hobbies, family, and even culture and religion) in their healthcare, according to the NHS Constitution.

I was sometimes met with scepticism and frustration by people who didn't see why my religion was relevant to my healthcare. So, I explained that being Muslim was important to me, and any care I received wouldn't help unless it took that into consideration. Unless my beliefs were actively harming me (which it never was), we needed to include it in care planning.

Thus, I requested female clinicians (or a chaperone if one wasn't available). Food, medication, and vitamins were screened for alcohol and non-halal sources before being recommended. And I changed the schedule of my medications so I could wake up early for the fajr prayer. I worked with healthcare providers to figure out ways to make my treatments easier and more accessible. While it was sometimes exhausting to explain what I needed, it was a worthwhile sacrifice to make sure I got the best care possible.

HOW CAN THE NHS HELP WITH MY MENTAL HEALTH?

By Zu, Sara and Helena

If the situation is URGENT

Text SHOUT on **85258**

Call **111**

Call the Samaritans **116 123**

Call **999**

Or visit – www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline

If you are over 18, the NHS might be able to help you with a form of therapy or counselling.

If the situation is not urgent

Visit – www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services

a) Select **NHS therapy and counselling services**

b) 'Start Now' - 'Continue' – Enter the name of your GP surgery and select from the results. – You can now refer yourself for therapy.

Therapy and counselling services available

- CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy)
- Guided self-help
- Counselling
- Behavioural activation
- IPT (interpersonal therapy)
- EDMR (eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing)
- MBCT (mindfulness-based therapy)
- Psychodynamic psychotherapy
- Couples therapy

Conversation with your GP

Once you have been referred, the service will contact you and recommend a therapy. (1-2-1, group, online, over the phone, with family or with your partner).

HOW YOU CAN BUILD

SELF-CARE AND SELF-HELP

By Zu

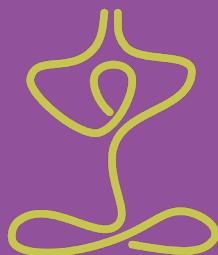
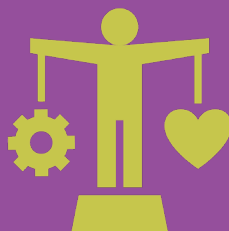
Self-help and self-care are like mental health superheroes. They're your secret weapons to feeling better. Self-help means doing things on your own to improve your mental well-being, while self-care involves taking time for yourself.

Think of it like this: just like we eat healthy food and exercise to keep our bodies strong, self-help and self-care are ways to keep our minds healthy.

When you practice self-help, you might do things like talking to a friend, writing in a journal, or setting small goals. These actions can help you understand and manage your feelings.

Self-care is like a mental spa day. It's about doing things that make you happy and relaxed. This could be reading a book, taking a bath, or going for a walk. Self-care gives your mind a break from stress and worry.

Together, self-help and self-care create a powerful duo. They reduce stress, boost your mood, and help you handle tough times. They're like your mental health buddies, always there to support you. So, don't forget to make time for self-help and self-care—they're your keys to a healthier, happier mind.



MEDITATION AND MINDFULNESS

WHAT IS MEDITATION?

Meditation is a bit like giving your mind a vacation. You sit quietly, focus on your breath or a calming word, and let go of your busy thoughts. It's like pressing a reset button for your brain.

HOW DOES MEDITATION HELP?

Less Stress

Meditation helps calm your racing thoughts and eases tension in your body. When you're less stressed, you feel better.

Happier Mood

It's like a mood booster. Regular meditation can make you feel happier and more positive.

Better Focus

Your concentration gets stronger. You can pay attention to what's happening right now, without getting distracted.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is all about being fully present in the moment. It's like savoring the taste of your favorite ice cream without worrying about tomorrow.

HOW DOES MINDFULNESS HELP?

Less Anxiety

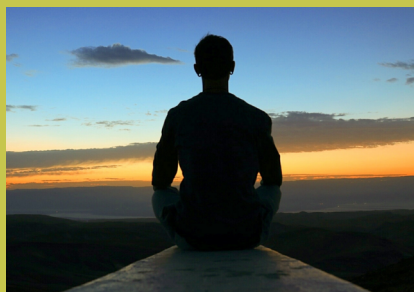
When you're mindful, you worry less about the future and regret less about the past. You stay calm and focused on today.

Improved Relationships

Mindfulness helps you listen better and understand others, making your relationships better

Boosted Self-Esteem

You start to believe in yourself more. It's like giving yourself a pep talk.



Resilience

By Sara

We all experience difficult situations: leaving our home country, language and cultural barriers, the loss of a friend or family member, or the breakdown of a relationship. Some experience situations that are traumatic, such as witnessing a war, abuse, or severe illness.

The Qur'an provides numerous examples of righteous people experiencing trials.

Here are a few:

- **Hajar was abandoned in the desert**
- **The prophet Musa had a stutter, a fear of public speaking, and Pharaoh wanted to kill him**
- **The prophet Yusuf was enslaved and unfairly imprisoned**
- **The prophet Yaqub lost his son Yusuf and his eyesight**
- **The prophet Muhammad witnessed the death of his wife, uncle, and all but one of his children**
- **Muhammad's wife Aisha was falsely slandered by her community**

Even when faced with trials and loss, these people were able to bear the burdens placed on them. For many of us, we struggle to have resilience. We may rely on coping strategies that are healthy, but also others that are harmful. Bad coping strategies trade long-term health for short-term pleasure, or they harm others. They also may develop into or worsen mental illnesses such as anxiety, depression, addiction, an eating disorder, or a personality disorder.

Mental illness is one way our minds try to protect us from the bad in the world. Anxiety looks out for threats, depression protects us from disappointment, addiction numbs us to pain, and a personality disorder prevents rejection.

This might be particularly true if we've had a bad or traumatic experience in the past that we don't want to relive.

Living and recovering from mental illness is a lifelong process—one that goes up and down as you react to even everyday changes in

your life. There are many resources available to people who need help during this process—you can find a list of these by following the QR code at the back of this

Do people think once they say, "We believe," that they will be left without being put to the test?
- **Qur'an 29:2**





magazine. But we can look at the stories of those mentioned above to see how they were resilient.

Hajar was abandoned in the desert—and she used all her strength to seek help until the well of Zamzam appeared

The prophet Musa had a stutter, a fear of public speaking, and Pharoah wanted to kill him and — and he relied upon the support of his brother Harun and that of his community

The prophet Yusuf was enslaved and unfairly imprisoned — and he practiced forgiveness rather than focusing on his anger

The prophet Yaqub his lost son Yusuf — and he wasn't afraid to cry and speak openly about his grief.

The prophet Muhammad lost many family members and was attacked by non-believers — and he sought solace in prayer and created a safe city for him and the believers to stay

Muhammad's wife Aisha was falsely slandered by her community — and she refused to engage with gossip and was patient until her good character and the Qur'an revealed her innocence

Of course, what they all have in common, as well, is trust in Allah and his plan. No matter what happens in our lives, they have faith that Allah will rescue them from pain and reward them with something better—in this life or the next

Thanks so much for reading!

Seeking knowledge and bettering ourselves is an important trait, no matter what community or culture you belong to, so be sure to thank yourself for taking the time to improve your own mental health, wellbeing and learning.

Would you like access to the following?:

- Extra mental health resources
- Access to support
- More information about how The Delicate Mind is evolving and supporting communities.

Scan the **QR code** below to visit our website!



Take good care of yourselves!



The Delicate Mind



@thedelicatemind_uk



@Tweet_TDM



The Delicate Mind

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