

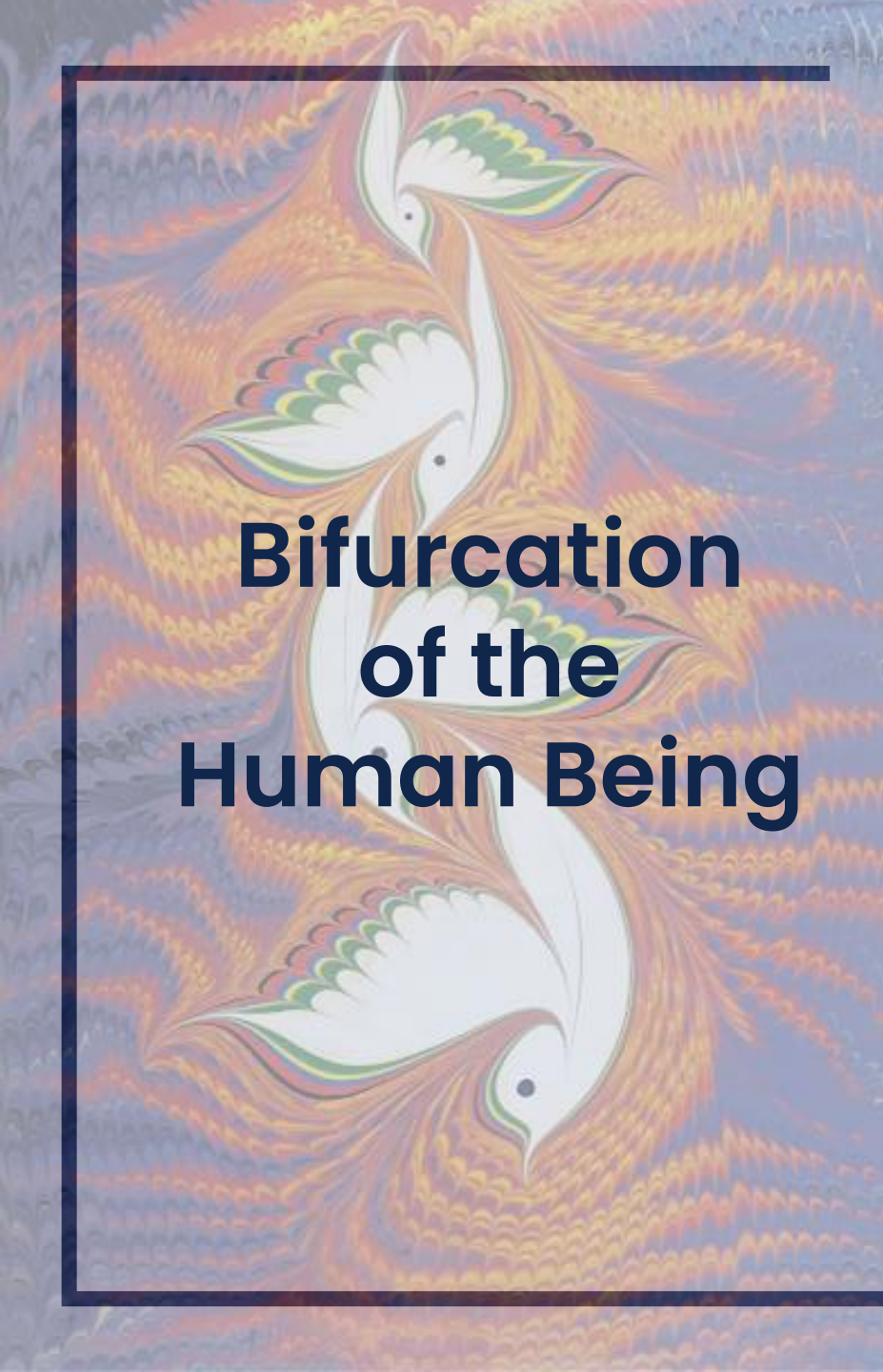


Spiritually Oriented Interventions



Culturally Relevant Exercises

- Islamic spiritual exercises could be viewed as merely: specific culturally- or religiously-framed forms of therapy that work – perhaps via the creation of a theologically constructed ‘emotional safe-space’ in which to **cognitively reframe one’s difficulties** – to alleviate the distress caused by negative cognitions and emotional states.
- Studies that would indicate such findings are numerous and well-known (Rausch, Gramling & Auerbach, 2006), and congruent with the explanatory model adopted in mainstream psychology in regards to spiritual therapies.



Bifurcation of the Human Being

The scholars of tasawwuf (Islamic spirituality), endorse the view that the human being is comprised of both body as well as non-physical or metaphysical elements.

The background of the slide is a collage of brain MRI scans. On the left, there are several axial slices showing the brain's cross-section. On the right, there are sagittal slices showing the brain's profile. The scans are in grayscale and have a slightly faded, artistic look. A dark blue border frames the entire slide.

Neurobiology of Mystical Experiences

- Spiritual practice of meditation up-regulates activation in the ventro-lateral pre-frontal cortex, which then reduces activity in the amygdala, improving emotional regulation in response to negative thoughts (*Schaefer S.M et al (2002)*)
- Both spiritual techniques and psychotherapy can thus have empirically demonstrable effects on brain function and structure similar to – or more powerful than – those observed with psychotropic medication.



Neurobiology of Mystical Experiences

Long term meditation mitigates against precisely the brain changes seen in severe, treatment resistant depression – the type that is least susceptible to both medication and psychotherapy – increasing the gray matter volumes and activity in the right orbito-frontal cortex and hypothalamus (Luders et al., 2009)



The Ruh

- The spirit's most central feature is its psychological predisposition or *fitric* need for the Divine. Due to this longing, it has a predilection for the sacred, for that which transcends the temporal.
- However, the spirit's activity can be down- or upregulated just as the body can. Just as the latter requires appropriate exercise and nutrition for the maintenance of its healthy, homeostatic state (*i'tidal*), so does the former.
- A functional spirit is a well-nourished spirit, and this healthful spirit manifests temporally as the attainment of gnosis of the Divine, and eternally as being in the Divine presence itself.



The Ruh

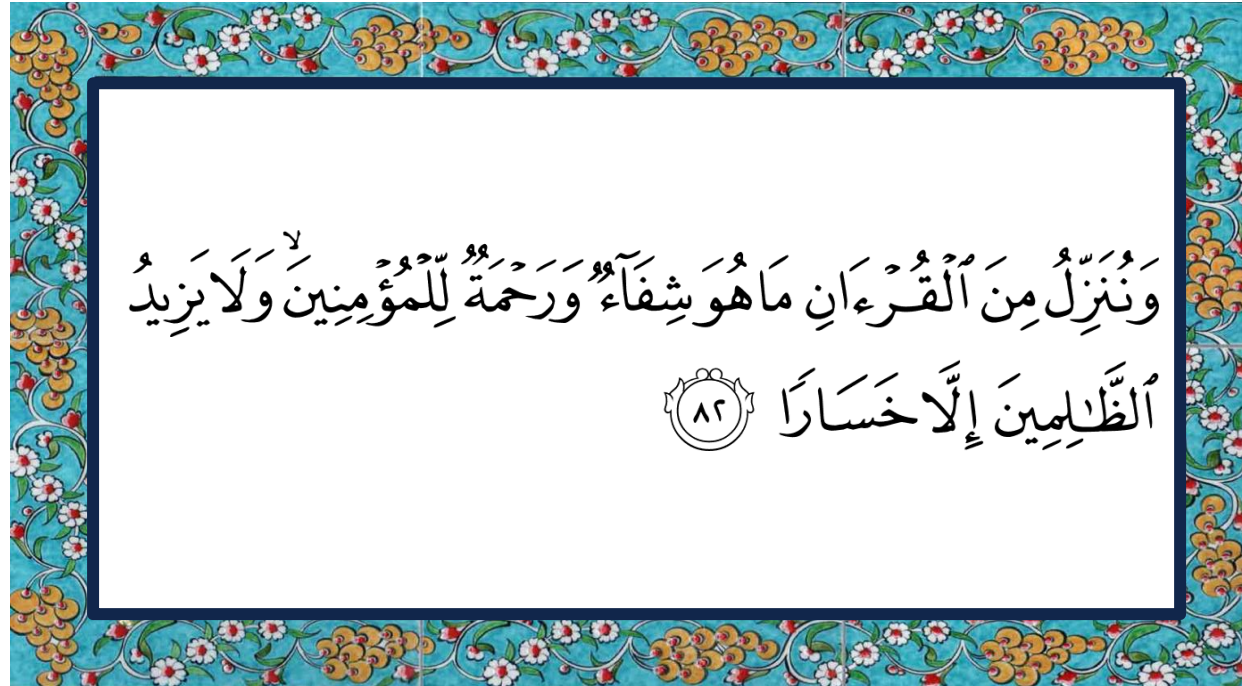
The spirit, says Shāh Walī Allāh, operates at three levels:

1. The lowest level is the airy spirit (*ruh hawa'i/hayati*) and constitutes the life force at its base level.
2. The middle level is the reflective or cognitive spirit (*ruh al-natiqah*) which has the capacity to engage in reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving.
3. The third level is the angelic spirit (*ruh al-malakuti, ruh al-rabanni, ruh al-'ulwi, or ruh al-samawi*) which is nourished by the remembrance of the Divine. This last one is the level humans are supposed to aspire to and to try to reunify the different diffused *ruh* back into the *ruh al-malakuti* (Hermansen, 1988).



Power of Prayer

- Islamic psychological explanation goes beyond the physical to include metaphysical explanatory strategies rooted in Islamic cosmology
- *Sunnatul Allah* (order of God based on cause and effect, or system of Allah) does operate in a mechanistic fashion
- Muslim prayer can change behavioral outcomes through Divine intervention which does occasionally interrupt the system



Qur'anic recitation can be linked to a reduction of withdrawal symptoms in Tobacco consumers (Zainudin, Ahmad, Ishak, & Yusoff, 2018) or lowers anxiety symptoms in athletes before competition (Mottaghi, Esmaili, & Rohani, 2011).



Dhikr

Remembering Allah

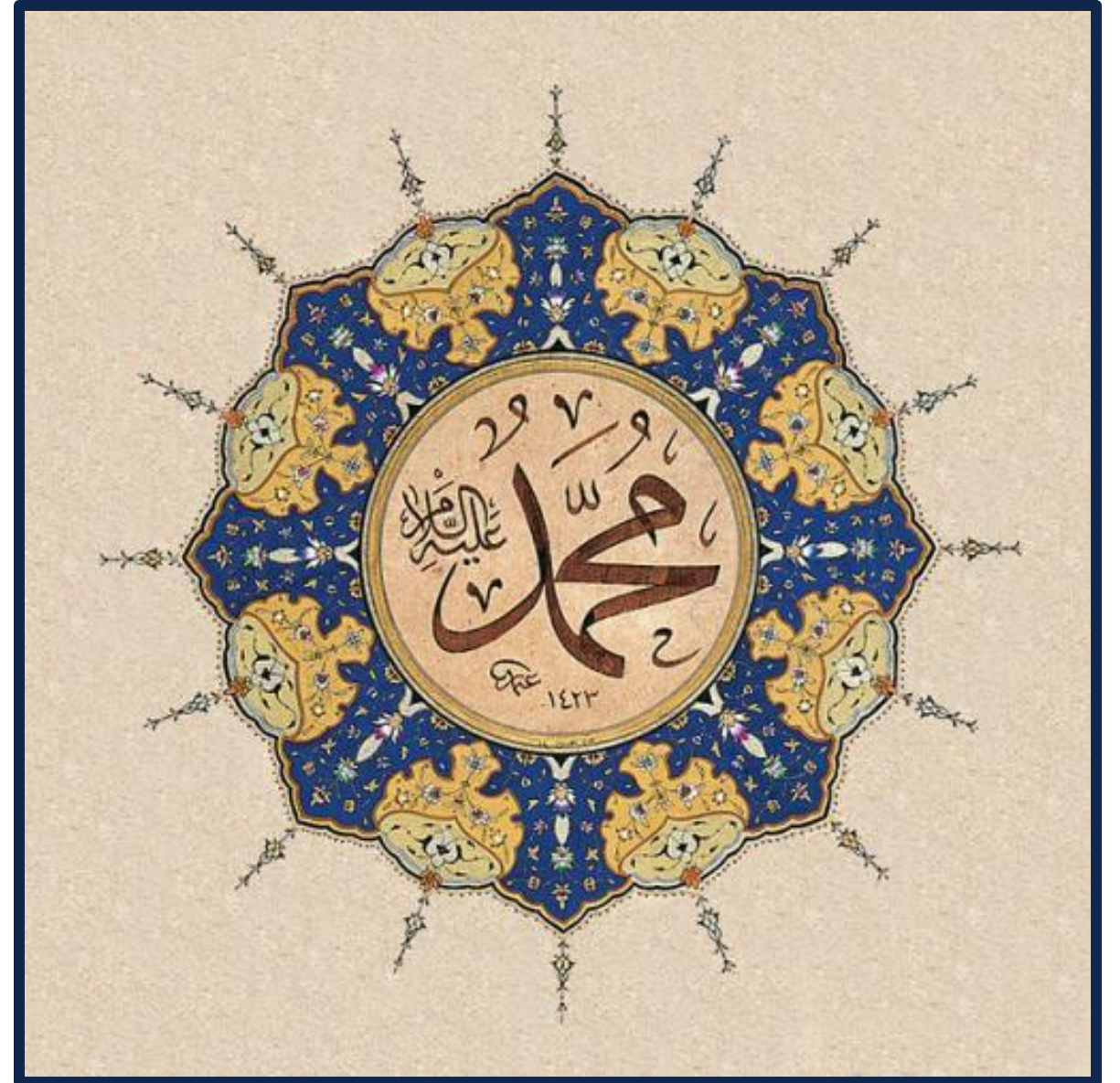
Dhikr

- *Dhikr* is the key spiritually-based practice that acts directly on the spirit and that forms one of the four core interventions of TIIP
- How to render these mechanisms into potentially reproducible psychotherapeutic applications

Dhikr Modalities

- Salat wa Salam: sending salutations upon the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)
- Tawakkul: handing control over to Allah, letting go and trusting His Will that the outcome will be in your best interest
- Istikharah: seeking Allah's guidance when making choices (2 rak'ahs and a specific du'a)
- Tawbah and Istighfar: repentance and seeking forgiveness

Salat and Salām (salutations on the Prophet)



Leaps of Faith (tawakkul)

Handing over control to Allah, letting go and trusting in His Will that the outcome will be in your best interest.



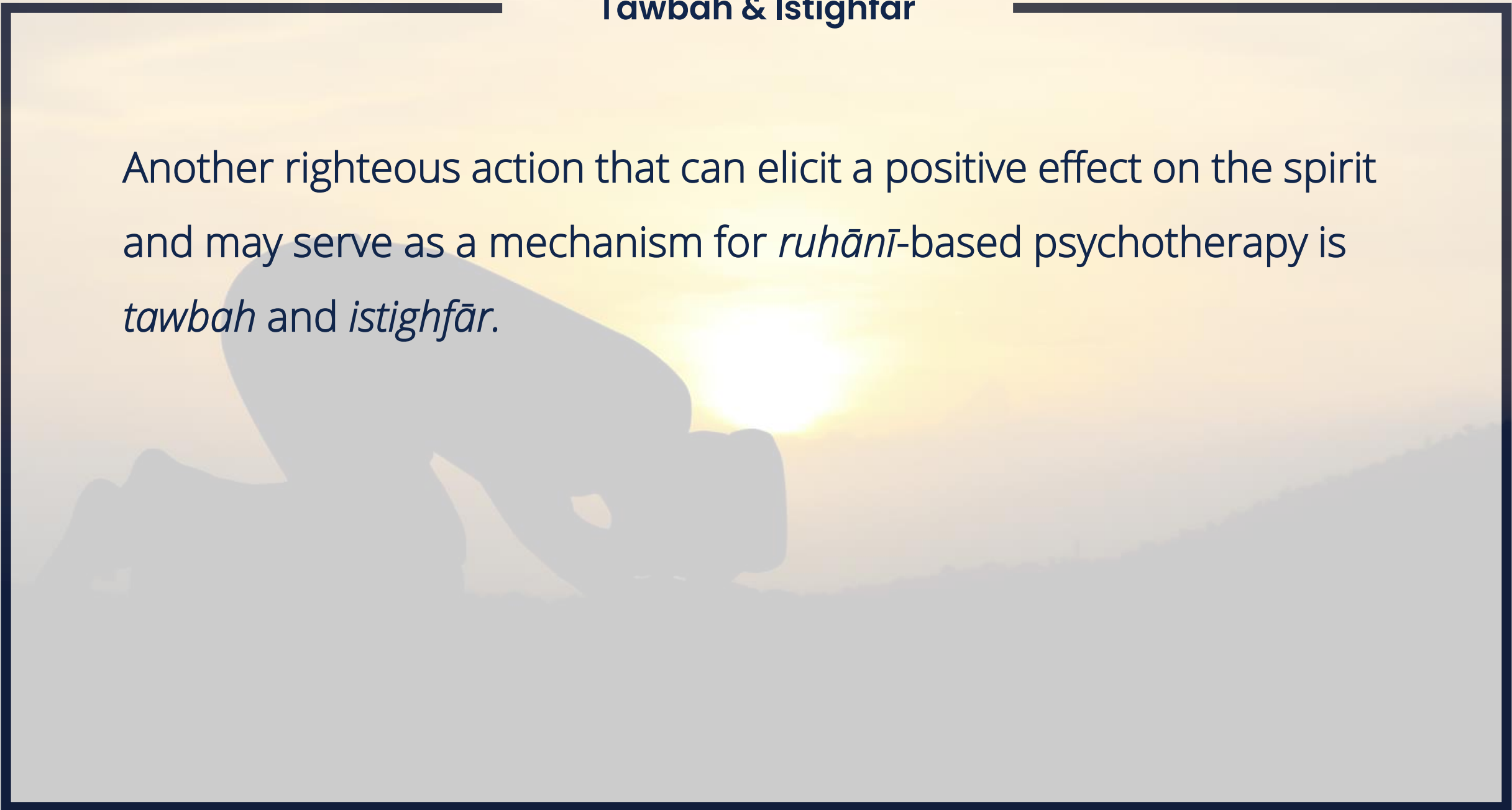


Istikhara

- *Istikhāra* linguistically means seeking what is good or seeking the best course of action.
- Technically, *istikhāra* is an Islamic prophetically-sanctioned practice of seeking the guidance of Allah in choosing the best course of action in a given matter.
- The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is reported to have taught the Companions to practice *istikhāra* in all matters.
- *Istikhāra* entails praying two *rak'āt* (2 units of prayer) followed by a specific *du'ā* (supplication) invoking the names and attributes of Allah and seeking guidance in regards to the matter at hand.

- O Allah, I ask You to show me what is best, through Your knowledge, and I ask You to empower me, through Your power, and I ask You from Your immense bounty, for You have power, and I am powerless, and You have knowledge and I know not, and You are the Knower of the unseen realms.
- O Allah, if You know that this undertaking is good for me with regard to my religion, my livelihood, and can yield goodness in the long term, then decree it for me, facilitate it for me, and grant me blessing in it.
- And if You know that this undertaking is bad for me with regard to my religion, my livelihood, and in the long term then turn it away from me and turn me away from it; and decree for me better than it, wherever it may be, and make me content with it.

Another righteous action that can elicit a positive effect on the spirit and may serve as a mechanism for *ruhānī*-based psychotherapy is *tawbah* and *istighfār*.





Prophetic Duas

اللهم إنا عبيدك، بنو عبيدك، بنو إماءك، نواصينا بيدك، ماض فينا حكمك، عدل فينا
قضاؤك، نسألك اللهم بكل اسم هو لك، سميت به نفسك، أو أنزلته في كتابك، أو علمته
أحداً من خلقك، أو استأثرت به في علم الغيب عندك؛ أن تجعل القرآن العظيم ربيع
قلوبنا، وجلاء أحزاننا، وذهاب همومنا وغمومنا

Whoever is afflicted with grief or anxiety, then he should pray with these words, 'Oh Allāh, certainly I am your slave, the son of your male slave and the son of your female slave. My forehead is in Your Hand. Your Judgment upon me is assured and Your Decree concerning me is just. I ask You by every Name that you have named Yourself with, revealed in Your Book, taught any one of Your creation or kept unto Yourself in the knowledge of the unseen that is with You, to make the Qurān the spring of my heart, and the light of my chest, the banisher of my sadness and the reliever of my distress.'

اللهم إني أعوذ بك من الهم والحزن والعجز والكسل
والبخل والجبن وضلع الدين وغلبة الرجال

- مَنْ رَأَى مُبْتَلًى فَقَالَ : الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَافَانِي مِمَّا ابْتَلَاكَ بِهِ ،
وَفَضَّلَنِي عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقَ تَفْضِيلًا ، لَمْ يُصِبْهُ ذَلِكَ الْبَلَاءُ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

كان الرسول ﷺ

إن ضاقت دنياه يُرَدِّد ، يا حي يا قيوم برحمتك استغيث
أصلح لي شأني كله ولا تكلني إلى نفسي طرفة عين .



Spiritual Care Approach & Objectives



Pastoral Care

Definition

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا
عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

There certainly has come to you a messenger from among yourselves. He is concerned by your suffering, anxious for your well-being, and gracious and merciful to the believers. 9:128

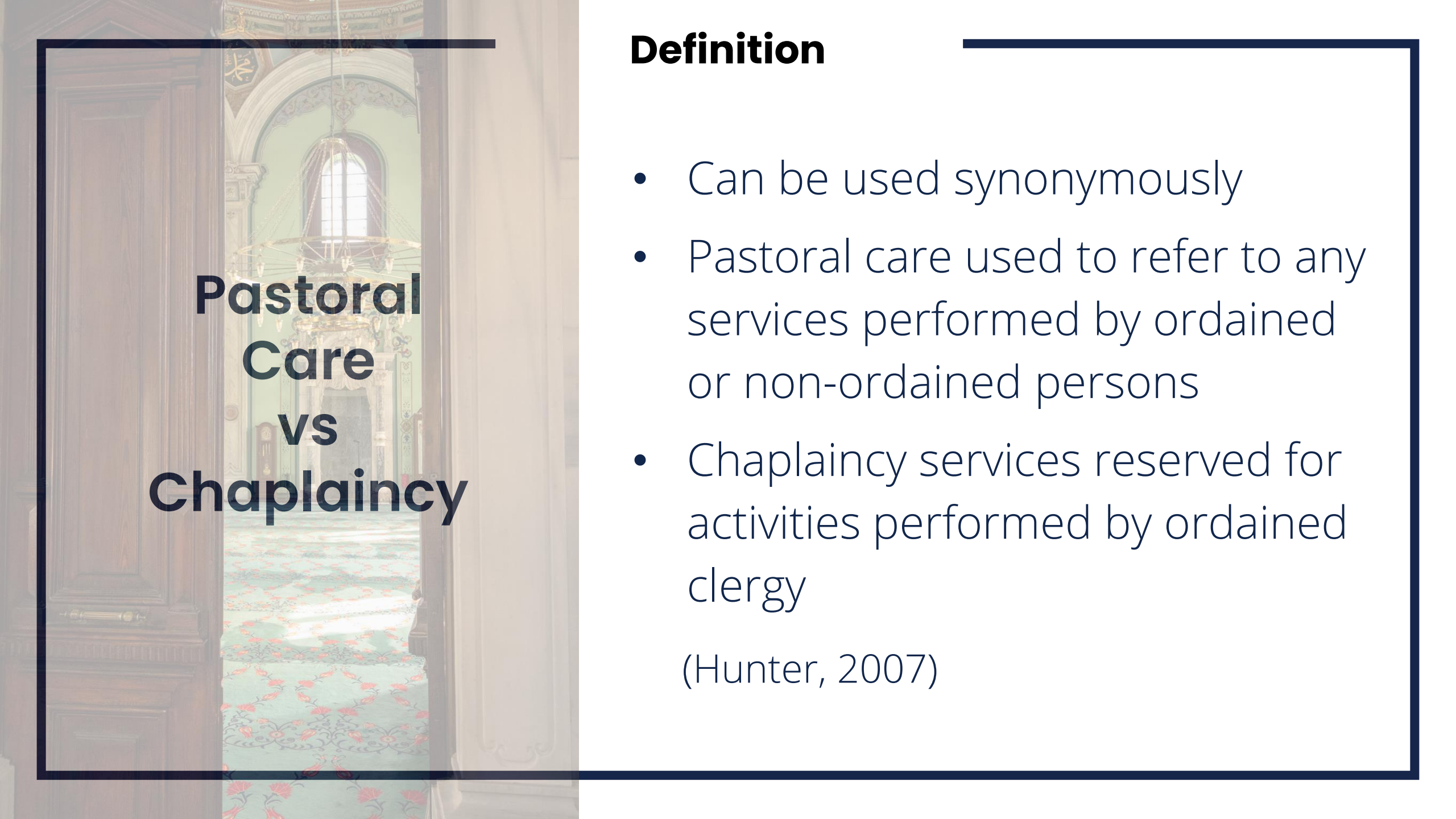


Pastoral Care

Definition

- “Consists of helping acts done by people of faith directed toward the healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling of troubled persons whose troubles arise in the context of ultimate meanings and concerns”

(Clebsch & Jaekle)



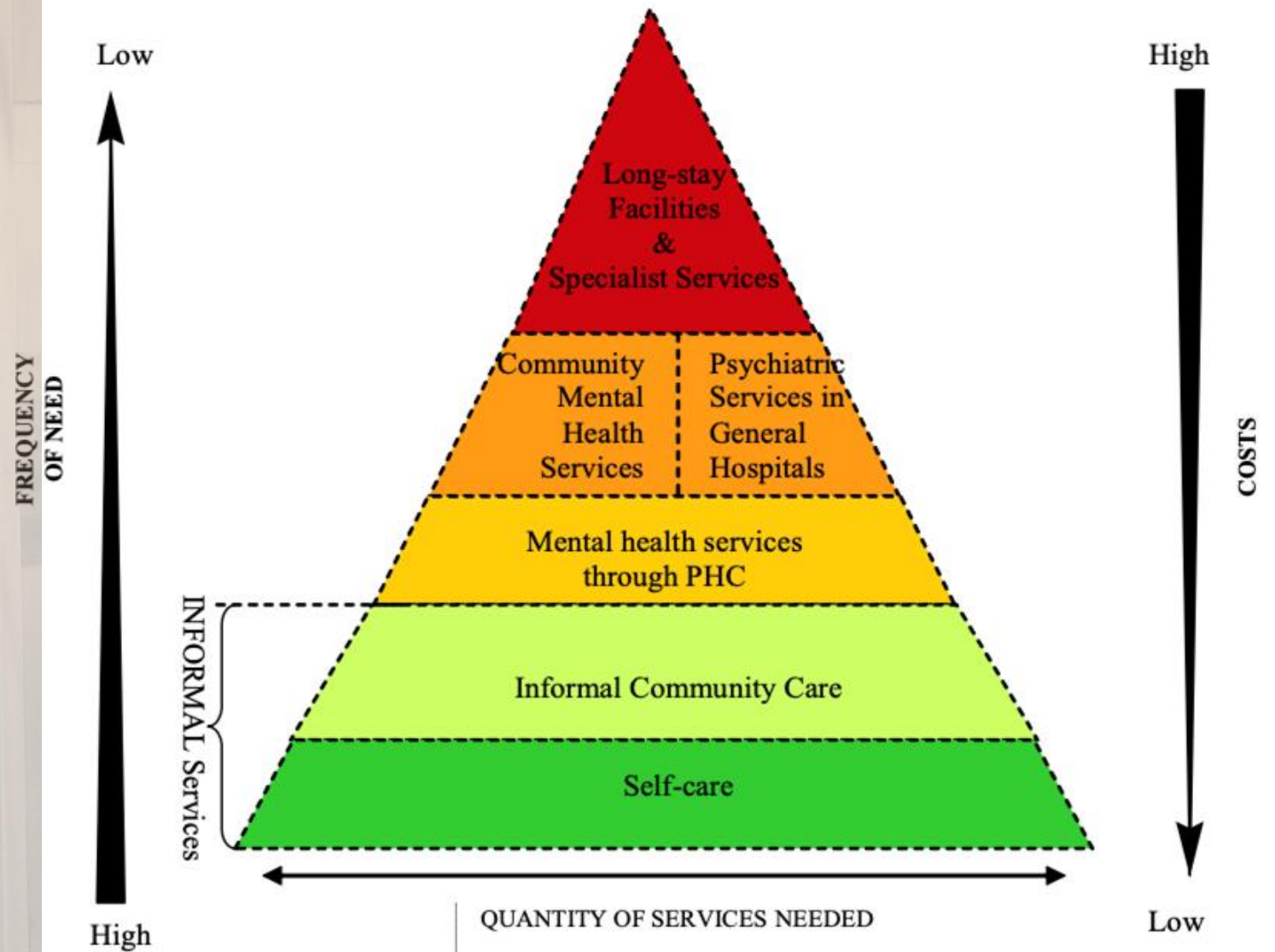
Pastoral Care vs Chaplaincy

Definition

- Can be used synonymously
- Pastoral care used to refer to any services performed by ordained or non-ordained persons
- Chaplaincy services reserved for activities performed by ordained clergy

(Hunter, 2007)

The WHO's Pyramid for an optimal mix of mental health services





Pastoral Care Functions

- Healing
- Guiding
- Sustaining
- Reconciling
- Nurturing
- Liberating
- Empowering

(Lartey, 2003)



Pastoral Care Functions

Healing

- Aims to overcome some impairment by restoring to wholeness and by leading him to advance beyond his previous condition.
- Not necessarily with the physical body (although possible). The focus is on social, emotional and spiritual aspects of the patient.



Pastoral Care Functions

Guiding

- Imparting wisdom when faced with making a decision/navigating between various courses of action
- Not necessarily giving advice (although appropriate at times), rather, helping patient draw out from their own experiences/values in decision making process - “eductive guiding”



Pastoral Care Functions

Sustaining

- Preservation - seeking to maintain a troubled person's situation with as little loss as possible
- Consolation - to communicate that actual losses could not nullify person's opportunity to achieve her destiny with God
- Consolidation - of the remaining resources available to the sufferer to build a platform from which to build a deprived life
- Acceptance - by embracing the loss and God's will



Pastoral Care Functions

Reconciling

- Healing of relationships
- Either with oneself, with God or with others



Qualities of a Spiritual Counselor

- Humility
- Compassion
- Patience
- Professionalism



Qualities of a Spiritual Counselor

- Spiritual understanding is the cornerstone



Humility

A humble heart is at the core of an effective counselor. In order to effectively care for people who come to them from places of vulnerability in the midst of struggle, a posture of humility becomes of utmost importance.



Compassion

Counselors must have compassion as they encounter the “true selves” of their clients—the good and the bad. When seeing the worst elements of a person, or uncovering their deeply held shame, counselors must exhibit overwhelming compassion for “broken people.”



Patience

Patience with Muslims is more important
with Muslims than with others



Professionalism

- Good appearance
- Appropriate dress
- Punctuality



Spiritual Care Approach

- Directive vs non-directive
- Instill hope
- Spiritual direction
- Promote dignity



Directive vs Non-Directive

Two approaches:

Directive - The counselor directs or advises the client/patient as to what to do. Present choices, don't force solutions.

Non-Directive - The counselor guides the client in coming up with his/her own solutions to problems by reflecting on what the client says and feels.



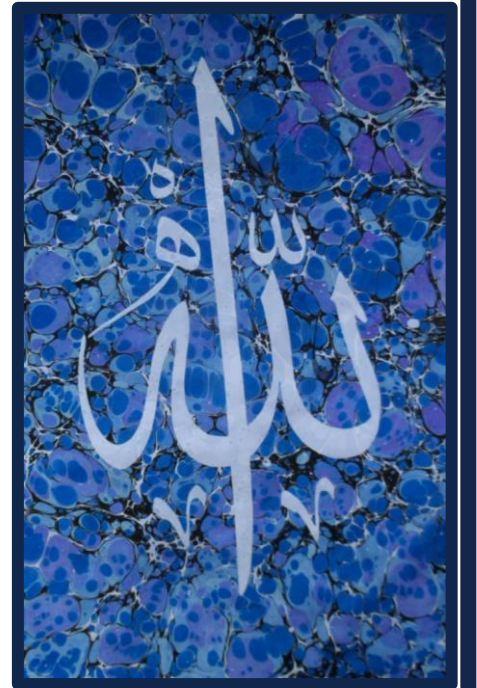
Instill Hope

- “My mercy encompasses all things” (7:156)
- “And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me – indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.” (2:186)
- “After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief.” (Quran 65:7)
- “Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful’” (39:53)
- “And whosoever fears Allah...He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. (65:2-3)
- “Do not lose heart nor fall into despair! You shall triumph if you are believers. (3:139)



Spiritual Direction

- Assessing where the client is at and engaging accordingly
- Initiating salat, dua, reading the Qur'an, salawat
- General encouragement to turn towards Allah





Promote Dignity

- In times of difficulty/vulnerability, preserving people's honor/dignity must be given first priority
- Helping to restore a sense of dignity when it has been lost



Working with Clients

- Start Where the Client is at
- Acceptance
- Establishing Connection
- Understanding Countertransference



Start Where the Client is

- Don't try to change your clients to suit your own needs.



Acceptance

- Put your feelings and judgements aside
- Non-judgmental acceptance is a must!
- Unconditional positive regard



Establishing Connection

- Warm Greeting/Smile/Shake Hands
- Offer Water
- Proper Introduction
- Client likely to be nervous/Doesn't know what to expect
- Build Rapport
- Therapeutic Alliance
- Solid Foundation



Counter- transference

Counselors who have not successfully dealt with their own issues may try to force clients to change based on their own internal, unmet needs



The Session

- Create a safe space
- Duration
- Establish connection
- Information gathering
- Discussion/counselor input
- Conclusion



Create a Safe Space

- Place
- No interruptions
- Discuss Confidentiality



Duration

- Should be defined



Establish Connection

- Warm greeting/smile/shake hands
- Make eye contact
- Offer water
- Proper introduction
- Define purpose



Information Gathering

- “Tell me what brought you in today”
- “Start anywhere you feel comfortable”
- Engage in active listening
- Some give coherent stories/some will give you a laundry list of issues
- Some coherent issues should come up
- Take discreet one-two word notes
- Successful 1st visit – the client should do all the talking



Discussion/ Counselor Input

- Repeat back to client the issues that they outlined
- “Did I hear you correctly?”
- Ask them to prioritize the order of what they would like to engage in



Conclusion

- Assure client that “you can do this”
- If you honestly feel that client can’t, this is a sign you need to refer.
- End on a positive note
- Give them some “homework”
- Ask them what they look forward to this coming week
- If the client seems to have nothing to look forward to, this is a red flag for suicide. You will need to ask her/him, “Are you thinking of suicide?” If a noticeable pause before answering “Maybe” or “Yes” - protocols
- Set the next appointment time and date.