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HEART CENTRED SPIRITUALITY AND MENTAL HEALTH: A 3As DA'WAH FRAMEWORK FOR MEANING AND RESILIENCE

SPIRITUALITI BERPUSATKAN HATI DAN KESIHATAN MENTAL: KERANGKA DAKWAH 3A UNTUK MAKNA DAN KETAHANAN DIRI

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a conceptual synthesis paper that proposes an integrative framework for the Da'wah Approach based on the 3As Transformation Model (Awareness–Awaken–Action), rooted in Islamic psycho-spiritual principles. It argues that da'wah is not merely the act of delivering religious messages but a holistic process of inner transformation that begins with awareness of one's relationship with Allah, oneself, others, and the natural world. This awareness then awakens the qalb (heart) to divine meaning and life purpose, culminating in conscious action guided by ethical and compassionate values. The 3As Model situates the heart as the center of intention, wisdom, and moral health, echoing the Prophet's saying that "in the body there is a morsel of flesh; if it is sound, the whole body is sound." Through this framework, da'wah emphasizes purification of the inner self as the foundation of resilience and strength, employing sabr (patience), shukr (gratitude), prayer, and remembrance (*dhikr*) as core psychospiritual therapies that cultivate emotional balance and faith awareness. Integrating philosophical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of Islam, the model highlights da'wah as a transformative process of self-awareness and divine connection rather than external persuasion. Practically, this framework can inform Islamic psychospiritual counselling and resilience education. Ultimately, the 3As Transformation Model offers a holistic paradigm for da'wah, harmonizing the inner and outer dimensions of human development, and fostering a balanced, resilient, and meaningful life anchored in the pursuit of Allah's pleasure (redha Allah).

Keywords: Da'wah, 3As Transformation Model, heart-centered spirituality, self-transformation, Islamic wisdom

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membentangkan satu kerangka konseptual bagi Pendekatan Dakwah berasaskan Model Transformasi 3A (*Awareness–Awaken–Action*), yang berakar pada kerohanian Islam yang berpusatkan hati. Artikel ini menjelaskan bahawa dakwah bukan sekadar tindakan menyampaikan mesej keagamaan, tetapi merupakan satu proses holistik transformasi dalaman yang bermula dengan kesedaran tentang hubungan seseorang dengan Allah, diri sendiri, orang lain dan alam semula jadi. Kesedaran ini kemudiannya membangkitkan hati kepada makna ketuhanan dan tujuan hidup, yang akhirnya membawa kepada tindakan sedar yang dipandu oleh nilai etika dan belas ihsan. Model 3As mengintegrasikan prinsip-prinsip spiritualiti berpusatkan hati dalam Islam, di mana hati (*qalb*) dianggap sebagai pusat niat, kebijaksanaan dan kesihatan rohani, seiring dengan sabda Nabi bahawa "dalam tubuh manusia ada seketul daging; jika ia baik, maka seluruh tubuh menjadi baik." Pendekatan dakwah melalui Model 3A menekankan penyucian hati sebagai asas ketahanan dan kekuatan dalaman, dengan menggunakan sabar, syukur, solat dan zikir sebagai teras terapi psikospiritual yang menyuburkan keseimbangan emosi dan kesedaran rohani. Kerangka ini mengintegrasikan dimensi falsafah, psikologi dan spiritual Islam, menonjolkan dakwah sebagai satu proses transformasi kesedaran diri dan hubungan ketuhanan, bukan semata-mata usaha mempengaruhi pihak luar. Pendekatan berasaskan hati ini meletakkan dakwah sebagai suatu bentuk pendidikan dan penyembuhan spiritual yang menyuburkan tindakan bermoral, empati dan ketahanan berasaskan keimanan. Model Transformasi 3As sekali gus menawarkan satu paradigma holistik bagi dakwah, yang mengharmonikan dimensi dalaman dan luaran pembangunan insan, serta membina kehidupan yang seimbang, berdaya tahan dan sarat makna, yang berpaksikan pencarian keredaan Allah.

Kata kunci: Dakwah, Model Transformasi 3A, kerohanian berpusatkan hati, transformasi diri, hikmah Islam

INTRODUCTION

Spirituality and mental health are deeply interconnected, yet research in Islamic contexts remains limited. Most existing studies emphasize coping strategies or adopt Western psychological models, but there is a clear gap: the absence of conceptual frameworks rooted in Islamic spirituality to address resilience and meaning. This gap highlights the need for a structured model that integrates Qur'anic guidance with psycho-spiritual practices.

Islam teaches that resilience is anchored in trust in Allah, supported by patience (*sabr*), prayer (*salat*), and gratitude (*shukr*). These practices nurture emotional balance and strengthen faith, offering Muslims a way to face life's challenges with confidence. The Qur'an reminds believers to "seek help through patience and prayer" (2:45), underscoring the spiritual foundation of resilience.

This article aims to build a conceptual framework that integrates the 3As Transformation Model (Awareness–Awaken–Action) with Heart-Centred Spirituality (HCS). This framework situates the *qalb* (heart) as the locus of intention, wisdom, and moral consciousness, and demonstrates how Islamic psycho-spiritual principles can foster resilience and meaning in contemporary mental health contexts.

By drawing upon the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Islamic intellectual heritage, this article contributes to filling the research gap. It offers practical insights for Islamic psycho-spiritual counselling and resilience education, while acknowledging the complexities of applying faith-based principles in diverse real-life situations.

METHODOLOGY

This article utilizes a conceptual synthesis, drawing upon Islamic texts, including the Qur'an and Hadith, alongside scholarly interpretations, to explore the concept of heart-centered spirituality and its impact on mental well-being. This is a conceptual paper based on integrative literature review and synthesis of Islamic texts (Qur'an, Hadith) and selected scholarly works, that discuss the heart (*qalb*), its qualities, and its role in spiritual and emotional health. It also undertakes a conceptual synthesis, integrating Islamic teachings on the heart with contemporary understandings of mental health and resilience. Furthermore, this study undertakes a qualitative, conceptual analysis of both classical and contemporary Islamic scholarship to provide a nuanced understanding of heart-centred spirituality and its

practical applications. The sources are carefully selected to reflect depth, authenticity, and relevance. Classical materials include authoritative Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir) and foundational works on the purification of the soul (*tazkiyah al-nafs*), which articulate the central role of the *qalb* (heart) in human transformation. These are complemented by contemporary writings in Islamic psychology and psychospiritual studies that reinterpret these concepts in light of modern human challenges, including mental health, identity, and ethical development.

The selection prioritises texts that explicitly engage with inner development, moral consciousness, and the integration of knowledge and character. Rather than attempting exhaustive coverage, the approach is purposive focusing on sources that illuminate the continuity between classical insights and contemporary applications. Importantly, this study does not involve the collection or analysis of empirical data. Instead, it is grounded in a conceptual and interpretive methodology, aiming to synthesise existing scholarly traditions into a coherent framework. This allows for a theoretically rich exploration of heart-centred spirituality as both a spiritual paradigm and a practical guide for human development.

CONCEPTUAL INSIGHTS

The 3As Transformation Model

The 3As Transformation Model integrates Heart-Centred Spirituality (HCS) with Islamic psycho-spiritual principles to explain how inner transformation leads to resilience and meaningful living. At the core of the model lies the qalb (heart), regarded in Islam as the seat of intention, wisdom, and moral consciousness. The qalb functions as the spiritual compass that aligns human awareness, awakening, and action with divine purpose.

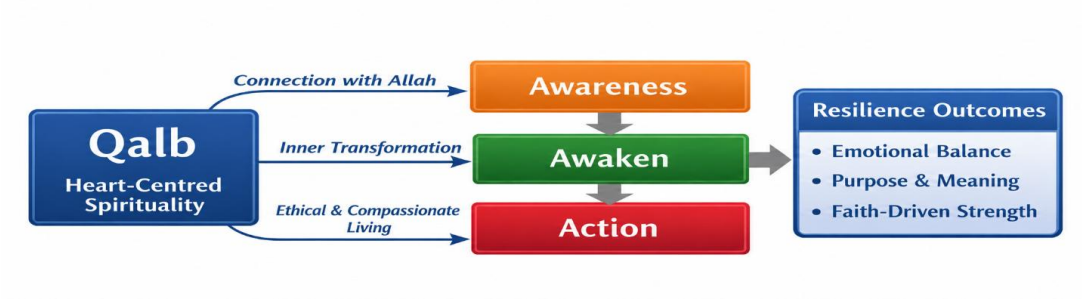


Figure 1: The 3As Transformation Model integrates Heart-Centred Spirituality (HCS)

The model unfolds through three interconnected stages: Awareness, Awaken, and Action. The first stage, Awareness, begins with conscious recognition of one's relationship with Allah, oneself, others, and the natural world. This awareness cultivates mindfulness (*muraqabah*) and reflection (*tadabbur*), enabling individuals to perceive life through a spiritual lens. The second stage, Awaken, represents inner transformation, when the heart becomes illuminated by divine meaning and purpose. Practices such as *tawakkul* (trust in Allah), *tafakkur* (contemplation), and shukr (gratitude) deepen this awakening, fostering peace and clarity. The final stage, Action, translates spiritual insight into ethical and compassionate living. Through sabr (patience), prayer, and remembrance (*dhikr*), believers embody resilience and moral excellence (ihsan).

The arrows in the diagram illustrate the dynamic flow from the qalb to the three stages, culminating in Resilience Outcomes, emotional balance, purpose and meaning, and faith-driven strength. This progression reflects the Qur'anic principle that purification of the heart leads to holistic well-being.

By integrating the 3As Model with HCS, this framework provides a conceptual synthesis that bridges Islamic spirituality and mental health. It offers a practical foundation for Islamic psycho-spiritual counselling and resilience education, emphasizing that true

transformation begins within the heart and radiates outward into purposeful action and balanced living.

Definition of Heart-Centered Spirituality

In Islamic spirituality, a human being is often considered to have three main components which are, physical, intellectual and spiritual. For physical component, this includes all the physical organs such as hands, eyes, mouth, etc., which are essential for interacting with the physical world. For intellectual component, this is associated with the brain, which is responsible for thinking, reasoning, and understanding and for spiritual component**,** this is linked to the heart, which is seen as the seat of spiritual intuition, compassion, and wisdom. The heart is believed to house the soul (roh), and it plays a crucial role in connecting with the Divine.

Heart-centered spirituality emphasizes the meaning, purpose, and values gained from a deep and transformative connection with four fundamental relationships: the Divine, oneself, fellow human beings, and the natural world. In this context, the heart is regarded as a crucial spiritual organ (Ratna, 2020). According to a comprehensive review by Koenig and Al-Shohaib (2019), practicing Islam through activities such as reading and reciting the Qur'an, regular prayer, devout belief, strict adherence to Qur'anic teachings, and participation in a supportive community can alleviate stress and promote mental health, overall well-being, and happiness. This is because the heart is nourished through these four basic human relationships.

The connection with the Divine involves experiencing a profound sense of unity and closeness to Allah, which is central to Islamic spirituality. The relationship with oneself requires self-awareness and introspection, enabling individuals to recognize their true nature and purpose. The bond with fellow human beings encourages cultivating compassion,

empathy, and love for others, fostering harmonious social interactions. Lastly, the connection with the natural world entails appreciating and respecting the interconnectedness of all creation, understanding it as part of Allah's divine design.

This heart-centered approach is not merely intellectual but deeply experiential and transformative. It demands a heart that is pure, humble, and receptive to spiritual growth, allowing individuals to align their inner selves with these fundamental relationships in a meaningful way.

The Concept of The Heart in Islam

Central to the Islamic understanding of spirituality and mental well-being is the concept of the *qalb* (heart). This heart is not merely the physical organ that pumps blood, but a spiritual entity that serves as the seat of consciousness, understanding, and connection to the Divine.

Definition of heart (*Qalb*) in Islamic Teachings

In Islamic teachings, *Qalb* is far more than a physical organ. It is the centre of intellect, emotion, and spiritual insight. It is the locus of faith, intention, love, and compassion. The Quran frequently refers to the heart as the source of understanding and wisdom. For example, in Surah Al-Hajj (22:46), Allah says, "Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts may reason and their ears may hear? Indeed, it is not the eyes that are blind, but it is the hearts which are blind within the breasts." This verse highlights the importance of the heart in discerning truth and understanding the signs of Allah.

The Heart as the Essence of Human Existence

The heart is considered the essence of human existence because it is the primary instrument through which we connect with Allah. A healthy heart, filled with faith and love for Allah, is the key to spiritual growth and inner peace. Conversely, a diseased heart, burdened by sin and

negativity, leads to spiritual decline and emotional distress. The Hadith, "Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh, which, if it be sound, all the body is sound, and which, if it be diseased, all [the body] is diseased. Truly, it is the heart," (Bukhari) underscores this critical point. The heart, therefore, is not merely an organ, but the very core of our being, influencing our thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Spiritual Significance of the Heart in Relation to Intention and Actions

In Islam, intentions (*niyyah*) hold immense significance. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Actions are judged by their intentions." (Bukhari). The heart is the place where intentions are formed. A pure and sincere intention, originating from a healthy heart, is the foundation for righteous actions. Conversely, a corrupt intention, arising from a diseased heart, can lead to harmful and destructive behavior. Therefore, purifying the heart and aligning one's intentions with Islamic principles is essential for spiritual growth and moral integrity. Every action, no matter how small, is evaluated based on the intention behind it. A seemingly good deed performed with impure intentions loses its value in the eyes of Allah.

Types Of Hearts

Islamic teachings describe different types of hearts, each characterized by its spiritual state and its relationship with Allah. While acknowledging that the terms "healthy," "sick," and "dead" hearts are simplified classifications, they are not arbitrary. Instead, they are derived from the Quran's own descriptions of the varying spiritual and moral states of the human heart (*qalb*). The Quran uses vivid metaphors and descriptions to illustrate the conditions of the heart, which can be categorized into these broad types.

Healthy Heart (*Qalbun Salim*)

A healthy heart is rooted in strong faith and sincerity (Ikhlas). It is guided by a deep belief in Allah and a commitment to living according to His guidance. This faith is not just intellectual but is deeply felt and influences all aspects of life. The heart is free from spiritual impurities such as malice, envy, and arrogance. It is cleansed through acts of worship, repentance, and self-reflection. A healthy heart is filled with love for Allah, which manifests in obedience to His commands and a desire to please Him. This love is not just emotional but is demonstrated through actions and decisions. It is characterized by gratitude (*shukr*) for Allah's blessings, recognizing that every good thing comes from Him. This gratitude is expressed through prayer, charity, and kindness. Allah says in Al- Quran 26:89: "Except for him who comes to Allah with a sound heart." (إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ) This verse explicitly mentions a "sound heart" (*qalbun saleem*), indicating a state of purity, sincerity, and freedom from spiritual disease. This aligns with the article's description of a heart rooted in faith, love for Allah, and good intentions. Attributes of a healthy heart can be inferred from other verses describing believers: humility, gratitude, compassion, and remembrance of Allah.

The heart is compassionate not only towards fellow human beings but also towards oneself and the environment. It recognizes the interconnectedness of all creation and seeks to treat all with kindness and respect. A healthy heart is humble and self-aware, recognizing its limitations and vulnerabilities. It seeks guidance from Allah and is open to learning and growth. It strives for balance and harmony in all aspects of life, ensuring that spiritual growth is accompanied by emotional and physical well-being. By cultivating these qualities, one can nurture a heart that is truly healthy and fulfilling, both spiritually and emotionally. The Quran describes this heart in Surah Ash-Shu'ara (26:89), "Except for him who comes to Allah with a sound heart." A sound heart is one that is receptive to guidance, eager to learn, and committed

to doing good. It is a heart that finds peace in remembrance of Allah and seeks to please Him in all its actions.

Sick Heart

The sick heart is one that is afflicted by spiritual ailments such as doubt, hypocrisy, and attachment to worldly desires. This heart is not completely devoid of faith, but it is weakened by the influence of negative thoughts and emotions. A sick heart may struggle with consistency in prayer, may be prone to backbiting and gossiping, and may prioritize worldly gains over spiritual growth. The Quran warns against the dangers of hypocrisy, stating that it is a disease that can corrupt the heart and lead to spiritual ruin. Seeking forgiveness and striving to purify the heart from these ailments are essential for restoring its health.

Dead Heart

The dead heart is the most spiritually desolate state, completely devoid of faith and connection to Allah. This heart is hardened, unresponsive to guidance, and immersed in sin. A person with a dead heart may deny the existence of Allah, reject His commandments, and engage in immoral behavior without remorse. The Quran describes the fate of those with dead hearts in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:7), "Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their eyes is a veil. And for them is a great punishment." Reviving a dead heart requires sincere repentance, a deep commitment to faith, and a conscious effort to transform one's life. Al-Quran 2:7: "Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their eyes is a veil. And for them is a great punishment." (خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِمْ ۖ وَعَلَىٰ أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ) This verse describes those whose hearts are "sealed," implying a state of spiritual death or complete detachment from Allah's guidance.

Their hearts are unresponsive to truth and immersed in sin. This verse is present in the attached file.

Other verses describe those who reject Allah's signs, deny the truth, and persist in disbelief as having hardened or dead hearts. The Quran's descriptions are often metaphorical and multifaceted. The three categories are not rigid but represent a spectrum of spiritual conditions. Thus, this article's aim is not to provide a comprehensive theological analysis but to offer a framework for understanding the heart's role in mental and spiritual well-being based on Islamic teachings.

Heart-Centered Spirituality and Mental Health

Over the past decade, spirituality has increasingly become a focal point in mental health research, with growing evidence highlighting its positive influence on psychological well-being (Labarta et al., 2024; Lynn & Schell, 2024). While the terms religiosity and spirituality are frequently used interchangeably, scholars have proposed various definitions to distinguish between the two concepts (Arrey et al., 2016).

The qalb (heart) occupies a central position in Islamic thought, serving as the locus of cognition, revelation, morality, and spiritual health. The Qur’an describes the heart in diverse states, sound, diseased, hardened, or receptive, each reflecting the inner condition of human beings. The 3As Transformation Model (Awareness–Awaken–Action) provides a conceptual synthesis that connects these Qur’anic portrayals of the heart to stages of resilience and psycho-spiritual growth. Qalb as Cognition (Awareness: Qur’an 22:46).

The Qur’an emphasizes that true understanding arises not merely from the eyes but from hearts capable of reasoning. This highlights the cognitive dimension of the qalb, where awareness begins with reflection (tadabbur) and mindfulness (muraqabah). Within the 3As

framework, Awareness represents the recognition of one's relationship with Allah, oneself, others, and nature. A heart that perceives reality through divine guidance becomes the foundation for resilience, as awareness nurtures clarity and self-understanding. Qalb as Recipient of Revelation (Awaken: Qur'an 26:192–194).

The Prophet's heart received revelation, signifying the qalb as a vessel of divine meaning. This corresponds to the stage of Awaken, where the heart is illuminated by purpose and spiritual insight. Awakening involves inner transformation through practices such as prayer, trust (tawakkul), and gratitude (shukr). At this stage, the believer's heart becomes attuned to divine wisdom, fostering peace and direction in life. Qalb as Moral Compass (Action: Qur'an 26:88–89).

A sound heart (*Qalbun Saleem*) is presented as the ultimate moral compass, guiding ethical conduct and compassionate living. This aligns with the stage of Action, where spiritual awareness translates into outward behavior. Through patience (*sabr),* remembrance (*dhikr*), and acts of service, believers embody resilience and moral excellence (*ihsan*). The heart thus becomes the source of faith-driven strength, enabling individuals to act with integrity and empathy. Qalb Pathology (Loss of Awareness: Qur'an 2:10, 2:74).

The Qur'an also warns of hearts that are diseased or hardened, symbolizing spiritual dysfunction. These states reflect a breakdown at the Awareness stage, where neglect and sin obscure perception of truth. Pathological hearts are unable to respond to divine guidance, underscoring the need for purification and renewal. Qalb Healing (Restoration: Qur'an 13:28, 94:6).

Healing occurs through remembrance of Allah, prayer, and patience. The Qur'an assures that "with every hardship is ease" (94:6) and that "by the remembrance of Allah hearts find comfort" (13:28). These practices restore balance at the Awaken and Action stages, cultivating emotional stability, meaning, and resilience.

Taken together, the 3As Transformation Model demonstrates how the Qur'anic vision of the heart provides a structured pathway for resilience. Awareness fosters reflection, awakening brings inner transformation, and action translates spirituality into ethical living. By situating the qalb at the center, this integrative framework bridges Islamic spirituality and mental health, offering practical insights for psycho-spiritual counselling and resilience education.From this, we can understand that as Muslims, our primary focus must be on embodying and reflecting the Quranic teachings and messages, particularly those related to mental health and well-being. It is essential to first seek guidance from the Quran to find comfort, strength, and solutions rooted in faith. Only after establishing this spiritual foundation should we consider supplementary approaches, such as psychotherapy or contemporary methods, ensuring they align with Islamic principles. This approach is critical for Muslims in academia, counselling, or any field addressing human issues, as the Islamic worldview fundamentally differs from Western perspectives. By prioritizing Islamic principles, we ensure that additional treatments or strategies complement, rather than conflict with, our faith, fostering a holistic and balanced approach to mental health.

This aligns with Malik Badri's principle of being "Muslim first," which fundamentally shapes his approach to psychotherapy by centering Islamic spirituality and ethics as the foundation for psychological practice. By grounding interventions in core Islamic values, such as trust in Allah (*tawakkul*) through prayer, patience (*sabr*), and gratitude

(*shukr*), Badri's framework ensures that mental health care harmonizes with faith, offering a spiritually integrated path to well-being.

It is essential to acknowledge that the path to heart-centered spirituality is not always straightforward, and individuals may encounter challenges along the way. For example, those struggling with mental health conditions such as depression or anxiety may find it difficult to cultivate the qualities of a healthy heart, such as gratitude and trust in Allah. Additionally, some individuals may experience conflict between their spiritual beliefs and their personal experiences or cultural norms. Therefore, it is important to approach heart-centered spirituality with nuance and sensitivity, recognizing the diverse experiences and perspectives of individuals within the Muslim community. Further research is needed to explore how Islamic teachings can be adapted and applied to address the specific mental health needs of different populations.

Relationship Between Spirituality and Mental Health in Islam

From the article "Early Muslim Scholars' Conceptions of Character Development and Contemporary Applications in Mental Health and Well-Being" by Rothman, et al, (2024), we can clearly understand that how early Muslim scholars approached health and well-being as a holistic endeavor that integrates the body, mind, and spirit, with virtue ethics playing a central role rather than focusing solely on physical ailments. Central to their understanding was the concept of the heart (*qalb*), viewed as the metaphysical seat of the self, where vices were considered diseases of the heart and virtues as their cures. This framework was deeply embedded in applied moral psychology, with classical Islamic literature offering extensive methods for healing the heart and soul through practices such as riyadat al-nafs (disciplining the self), *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the self), and t*ahdhib al-akhlaq* (refinement of character).

The refinement of character (*tahdhib al-akhlaq*) in Islamic tradition is deeply connected to the state of the heart and soul, achieved through practices such as *riyadat al-nafs* (self-discipline) and *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the self). Ibn Miskawayh, a foundational figure in Islamic ethics, defines character (*khuluq*) as "a state of the soul which moves it toward action without any need for reflection or deliberation," emphasizing that while some traits are innate, others are acquired through training and habituation. This means that *akhlak* (morality) is the outward manifestation of the internal state of the heart and soul, shaped by continuous self-discipline and purification.

The heart is seen as the essence of a person, and the values produced within it are externalized through actions, our *akhlak*. Thus, ethical behavior in Islam is not just about external compliance but is rooted in the inner transformation of the self, aligning the soul's faculties with virtue through conscious effort and spiritual practice. This comprehensive approach to ethics, as articulated by *Miskawayh* and later scholars, underscores that true moral character arises from the harmony and health of the heart and soul, cultivated by ongoing self-discipline and purification.

Muslim philosophers, influenced by Greek concepts like the tripartite soul and the four cardinal virtues, adapted these frameworks within an Islamic worldview that prioritized preparation for the Hereafter (*ākhirah*) over mere worldly success. In this adaptation, character development became not just a matter of ethical behavior but a spiritual journey centered on the purification and cultivation of the heart (*qalb*), which is regarded in Islamic tradition as the seat of consciousness, intention, and spiritual health. (Rothman, 2024)

This heart-centered approach is foundational in Islamic psychology, where well-being is seen as an integration of body, mind, and soul, and where the heart's state directly impacts emotional and psychological health. Practices such as *tazkiyat an-nafs* (purification of the

self) and *dhikr* (remembrance of God) are designed to heal and balance the heart, fostering virtues like love, compassion, wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice, but always with the intention of aligning oneself with the Divine and achieving tranquility in this life and the next (Rothman, 2024).

In the context of mental health, this means that Islamic virtue ethics and heart-centered spirituality are not just abstract ideals but practical paths to emotional resilience and psychological well-being. The process of refining character and healing the heart, as described by scholars like al-Ghazali, is directly linked to reducing inner turmoil and finding peace a connection echoed in the Qur'anic verse, "Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest" (Qur'an 13:28). Thus, the Islamic adaptation of Greek virtue ethics grounds mental health in the transformative work of the heart, making spiritual development inseparable from psychological healing.

This synthesis demonstrates that the Islamic tradition took the philosophical legacy of the Greeks and reoriented it toward a heart-centered, spiritually integrated approach, where mental health is achieved through the cultivation of virtues and the purification of the heart, all in preparation for ultimate spiritual fulfillment.

The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) was upheld as the perfect exemplar of good character, whose life and teachings serve as a guide for both inner transformation and outward conduct. Scholars like Ibn Rushd distinguished between exoteric ethics (jurisprudence) and esoteric ethics (the soul's cultivation), while others, such as *al-Isfahānī*, argued for their integration, emphasizing that cultivating virtues of the soul enables one to transcend worldly measures and fulfill their role as God's vicegerent.

Al-Ghazālī outlined a detailed six-step process for self-purification involving self-contracting, monitoring, examination, penalization, struggle, and admonition, highlighting the importance of external guidance in this journey. Contemporary positive psychology shares common ground with these early Islamic conceptions, particularly in its focus on virtues and character strengths, though the underlying frameworks and ultimate spiritual goals differ. Both modern psychology and Islamic theology agree that character development is essential for well-being; however, the Islamic perspective uniquely integrates purification from worldly evils and the pursuit of God's pleasure within the concept of self-actualization. This rich tradition offers a comprehensive blueprint for mental health and well-being that addresses the mind, body, and soul in an integrated manner, providing valuable insights for contemporary approaches to psychology and psychotherapy.

Islamic teachings highlight two key components for fostering resilience and well-being: patience (*Sabr*) and prayer (*Salah*). Patience is regarded as a cornerstone virtue in Islam, enabling individuals to endure hardships with grace and perseverance. The Quran underscores its significance in the verse: "Indeed, Allah is with the patient" (Quran 2:153), reminding believers that patience is not only a means of overcoming adversity but also a pathway to divine support and reward. Resilience, from an Islamic perspective, is deeply intertwined with patience as it involves enduring challenges without succumbing to despair or negativity. Studies have shown that individuals who cultivate patience tend to exhibit greater emotional regulation and adaptability, allowing them to face difficulties with strength and composure.

In summary, Islam provides a comprehensive framework for resilience through faith, prayer, patience, gratitude, and community support. The life of Prophet Muhammad serves as

a powerful example of how these principles can be applied to navigate life's challenges with strength and hope.

While this article emphasizes the transformative potential of Islamic psycho-spiritual practices such as *sabr* (patience), shukr (gratitude), and dhikr (remembrance), it is important to clarify that these practices are not intended to replace professional mental health care. Rather, they can serve as complementary approaches that enrich and support clinical interventions. Within the Islamic tradition, seeking help through spiritual practices is consistent with nurturing resilience and meaning; however, when individuals experience severe distress, clinical support becomes essential.

From an ethical perspective, Islam encourages believers to seek appropriate means of healing, and professional mental health care can be understood as part of this responsibility. Consulting trained clinicians for conditions such as depression, anxiety, or trauma does not conflict with Islamic values; instead, it aligns with the principle of *tawakkul* (trust in Allah) by recognizing that medical expertise is among the resources provided by God. Thus, integrating psycho-spiritual practices with professional care offers a balanced and holistic pathway to well-being.

This positioning ensures that the framework presented in this article does not inadvertently discourage professional support. Instead, it highlights the complementarity between faith-based practices and clinical care. Islamic psycho-spiritual practices can strengthen emotional balance, cultivate meaning, and foster resilience, while professional interventions provide structured therapeutic strategies for managing complex psychological conditions. Together, they form a comprehensive approach that honors both spiritual and psychological dimensions of human flourishing.

The life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a timeless example of resilience

The life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) serves as a timeless example of resilience, especially during moments of profound grief and hardship. One of the most challenging periods in his life was the Year of Grief (*ʿĀm al-Ḥuzn*), marked by the loss of his beloved wife, Khadijah (RA), and his protective uncle, Abu Talib. Their deaths left him deeply saddened, as Khadijah had been his unwavering source of emotional support and Abu Talib his shield against the hostility of the Quraysh. These losses compounded the challenges he faced, including increased persecution and rejection, such as during the painful incident at Ta'if. Despite these trials, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) remained steadfast in his mission, drawing strength from his faith and prayer.

During this year, Allah gifted the Prophet with the miraculous journey of Isra' and Mi'raj, where he was given the commandment of Salat (prayer). This divine gift underscored the importance of prayer as a means to connect with Allah, offering solace and guidance during times of tribulation. The Prophet's reliance on prayer exemplifies its transformative power—not merely as physical movements but as a heartfelt act rooted in sincerity and humility (*khushu'*). His approach teaches us that true connection with Allah happens through the heart, not just through physical actions. The Prophet's ability to endure grief while maintaining hope and perseverance offers profound lessons for humanity. He demonstrated that turning to Allah through prayer can provide comfort, strength, and clarity during life's most difficult moments. His example inspires believers to seek patience and resilience through faith, reminding us that even in sorrow, there is an opportunity for spiritual growth and closeness to Allah.

These trials exemplify how grief can be transformed into a path for spiritual growth by relying on patience (*Sabr*) and aligning oneself with Allah's will. The Prophet's ability to manage emotions like sorrow while maintaining his commitment to his community demonstrates how resilience can be cultivated through unwavering faith and trust in Allah.

Islamic teachings emphasize that life's adversities are tests designed to strengthen one's connection with Allah and prepare believers for greater rewards in the Hereafter. Grief is not merely an emotional response; it is a spiritual reminder to realign oneself with divine purpose. By enduring hardships with hope for Allah's mercy and reward, Muslims are encouraged to find meaning even in difficult situations.

In summary, Islam's holistic approach to well-being integrates physical health, emotional resilience, and spiritual growth into a unified framework that promotes balance across all dimensions of human existence. The emphasis on patience (*Sabr*) helps build inner strength to endure hardships, while prayer provides emotional and spiritual sustenance that fosters hope and trust in Allah's plan. Together, these elements empower individuals to remain resilient in the face of adversity while cultivating a deeper connection with their Creator. Prophet Muhammad's life exemplifies this model of resilience, offering Muslims timeless guidance on how to navigate trials with faith, perseverance, and purpose.

Scholarly Foundations of Heart-Centred Spirituality (HCS)

The conceptual synthesis of the 3As Transformation Model (Awareness–Awaken–Action) with Heart-Centred Spirituality (HCS) is firmly grounded in classical Islamic thought. Central to this framework is the discipline of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul), which emphasizes cleansing the inner self from destructive impulses and cultivating virtues that

align with divine guidance. This process resonates with the Awareness stage, where the believer recognizes the need for self-reflection and moral accountability.

The stage of Awaken draws upon the tradition of muraqabah (spiritual vigilance) and *khushu'* (humble attentiveness in worship). These practices awaken the heart to divine presence, fostering sincerity and inner transformation. In this sense, HCS does not overlap redundantly with classical concepts but rather integrates them into a structured model that emphasizes resilience and psycho-spiritual health.

Finally, the stage of Action reflects the principle of ihsan to worship Allah as though one sees Him, and if not, to know that He sees us. Ihsan situates ethical conduct and compassionate living as the outward manifestation of a purified heart. Within HCS, this translates into resilience practices such as sabr (patience), shukr (gratitude), and dhikr (remembrance), which empower believers to act with integrity and balance in the face of adversity.

This integrative framework is further legitimized by contemporary Muslim scholars. Malik Badri emphasized that Muslims must be "Muslim first" in psychotherapy, grounding interventions in Qur'anic and spiritual principles. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas highlighted the centrality of the heart in the process of attaining true knowledge and adab (discipline of the soul), while Seyyed Hossein Nasr underscored the metaphysical significance of the heart as the locus of divine presence in human beings. Together, these scholars provide intellectual scaffolding that situates HCS within both classical heritage and modern discourse.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper underscores the profound significance of heart-centered spirituality within Islamic wisdom as a transformative foundation for meaning, resilience, and mental well-being. The conceptual synthesis of the 3As Transformation Model (Awareness–Awaken–Action) with Heart-Centred Spirituality (HCS) offers a holistic framework that bridges classical Islamic teachings and contemporary mental health discourse. By situating the *qalb* (heart) as the locus of cognition, revelation, and moral consciousness, the framework demonstrates how inner transformation can nurture emotional balance, ethical action, and spiritual resilience.

Drawing upon Qur'anic guidance and prophetic traditions, the model emphasizes that resilience arises from cultivating trust in Allah (*tawakkul*), patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), and remembrance (*dhikr*). These psycho-spiritual practices complement professional mental health care, affirming that seeking clinical support is consistent with Islamic ethics, especially in times of severe distress. This balanced integration ensures that faith-based approaches enrich, rather than replace, therapeutic interventions, creating a comprehensive pathway toward healing that honors both spiritual and psychological dimensions of human flourishing.

The framework is further strengthened by classical concepts such as tazkiyat al-nafs (purification of the soul), muraqabah (spiritual vigilance), khushu‘ (humble attentiveness), and ihsan (moral excellence), which collectively guide the believer toward inner harmony and ethical living. Contemporary scholars including Malik Badri, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr provide intellectual legitimacy to this synthesis, affirming that the heart is not merely symbolic but the metaphysical center of human consciousness and divine connection.

Ultimately, heart-centered spirituality invites Muslims to cultivate a sound heart (*qalbun salīm*), one that perceives truth, acts with compassion, and finds peace in remembrance of Allah. The Qur'an reminds believers that "with every hardship comes ease" (94:6) and that "in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest" (13:28). These verses encapsulate the essence of resilience: faith as comfort, meaning as healing, and the heart as the bridge between divine wisdom and human experience.

By integrating Islamic psychospiritual principles with contemporary understandings of mental health, this conceptual framework offers a holistic, ethically grounded, and spiritually enriching paradigm for resilience education and counselling. It empowers individuals to lead purposeful, balanced, and spiritually fulfilling lives anchored in the pursuit of Allah's pleasure (*redha Allah*) and sustained by the healing wisdom of the heart.

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