

Special Article

Islamic Perspective of Psychotherapy

Realization of Divine Providence: The Power of Psychospiritual Healing

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Abstract

A defining belief common to all Muslims is recognition of the so called ninety-nine names of Allah as describing the attributes that define Allah's essence and actions. All 99 names accentuate Divine Providence, some more directly than others. All names emphasize God's sustenance, guidance, governance, mercy, care, love and healing. Compared to other theologies, the Qur'an emphasizes the doctrine of the Universality of Divine Attributes (notably providence), which is not confined to time, place, or people; much more clearly than other monotheistic theologies. Moreover, according to the Qur'an Islam is a religion addressed to all mankind not just Muslims.

Man according to Islam is not necessarily sinful, estranged or isolated. Significantly, Islam does not recognize that human suffering relates to any intrinsic conflict or strained composition. Admittedly, suffering can occur incidentally but not necessarily. This stands at odds with all the conflict presuppositions in other contemporary creeds. The discrepancy between Islam and other creeds reaches its utmost peak in dealing with the path to redemption or obtaining peace of mind (associated with psychological well being)

In Islam the answer to sustained, lifelong peace of mind is, in short, abiding by Shariah. Shariah is the divine guidance for man that shapes man's entire way of life.

So- contrary to the commonly held belief- Shariah is not simply a legal code; rather it is the path that delineates moral, legal and social norms for both individuals and societies. This path includes acts of worship; communal dealings such as commerce, finance and family laws; ethics and manners; civil and criminal law; governance and inter-governmental relations to mention but a few (not to speak of actions of the heart, {al-A'amal al-Qalbia})

Key words: Divine Providence; Islam; Psychological Well being; Redemption; Shariah

Introduction

Theories of mental health and their respective protocols of management are, conceivably, value-laden in several ways due to the influence of the sociocultural contexts in which they were developed and practiced. This explains the discrepancy between western cultures theories - prioritizing individual self-actualization- and their respective theories of eastern collective cultures origin where more emphasis is placed on interdependence, family and community harmony. Within the Islamic perspective, however, psychological health and management is viewed, as a harmony of a monotheistic faith with the individual social and natural milieus encompassing the individual. This article attempts to expose how such a harmony figures out in pertinent Islamic psychology postulates.

The Nature of Man

To address issues of human well-being one can hardly evade questions about the nature of the human condition. The answers to such cardinal questions have been approached from many perspectives; theological, spiritual, philosophical, psychological and empirical pseudoscientific. Almost all approaches tackled two cardinal questions: the cause of human suffering and the path to redemption. Despite some affinities with other alternative approaches, the Islamic approach stands strikingly unique particularly in its path to redemption.

Islam And Other Religions

Unlike Augustinian and evangelical theologies, Islam does not recognize that the nature of man is sinful. Even in more modernized liberal representations Christian theology still retains the belief that the cause of human suffering is systemic guilt (see liberal. Liberation theology) or that the cause of human suffering is ignorance (Hodgson, 2010).

Even existential theology holds the assumption that the human nature is estranged and isolated implying that humans are naturally anxious. The Qur'anic provisions stand in contrast to such aforesaid assumptions.

The Qur'anic Position

In Verse 29 in chapter al-Hijr

Allah addressed all angles by saying *{when I have created him (Adam) and have proportioned him -in good shape- and imparted to him (breathed into him) my soul (spirit) -then fall down to him (Adam) in prostration “in obayience”}.*

{فإذا سويته ونفخت فيه من روحي فقعوا له ساجدين} سورة الحجر، (آية: 29)

This verse implies that God Almighty ordains that humans are special and are worthy of respect. Most exegesis interpret the Qur'anic phrase “*breathed into him my soul*” as (breathed into him my created spirit). However, Imam Al-Ghazali indicated that the imparted spirit is not physical entity but pure essence. (see Ibn Kathir)

Thus, far from being intrinsically sinners, humans in the Qur'an are described as being honoured by their Lord. Verse 70, sura al-Israa says:

{*We have honoured the children of Adam and we have carried them on land and sea and we have provided them with al- Tayibat (beneficial things) and we have preferred them over many of those we have created with a marked preference*}

{*ولقد كرّمنا بني آدم وحملناهم في البر والبحر ورزقناهم من الطيبات وفضلناهم على كثير ممن خلقنا تفضيلاً*} سورة الإسراء، (آية: 70)

In yet another Qur'anic verse humans are said to be agents of their creator on land.

{*Behold, thy Lord said to the angles “I will create a vicegerent on earth” They said: “wilt thou place one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? whilst we do celebrate thy praise and glorify thy holy name?” He said “I know what you know not”*} Chapter 2-Albaqara verse 30.

{*وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ*} سورة البقرة، (آية: 30)

In connection with the Divine Endowments on man, the famous narrators of Hadith, Imams Bukhari and Muslim, reported that the prophet had said that everyone is born on Fitra only his parents change him otherwise. Fitra, semantically, stands for nature; natural disposition; impulse; character; mood; instinct; innateness or temperament. Etymologically “fitra” stems from the verb (fatara) which means create from nothing. According to the cardinal references of Hadith there is none born but created to his true nature (Islam) (see Sahih Muslim 2658 b). Islam is submission to Allah as the creator and sustainer of all that are created.

Origin of Man

The Qur'anic verse reads: {*and Allah has caused you to grow from earth [progressive] growth.*}

Surat. Nuh, (verse: 17)

{*وَاللَّهُ أَنْبَتَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا*} سورة نوح، (آية: 17)

According to the two cardinal exegetists Ibn Kathir and Al Tabari, the place of creation of Adam was in paradise where Allah breathed into him from his “created” soul/ spirit, and that the clay of which Adam was grown was from earth.

So, essentially Adam was created in paradise and that is where he belongs. His entire long journey of toil and turmoil elsewhere is an arduous pursuit of returning to his original abode i.e. to the imperishably blissful eternity of heavens. But of course, he must earn it by maintaining his “Fitra” i.e. his natural disposition. If he fails to maintain his fitra -and that is if he is being insistently ungrateful-(كفورا) he can still retain his eternity but not in paradise.

So, man according to Islam is not necessarily sinful, estranged or isolated. Significantly, Islam does not recognize that human suffering relates to any intrinsic conflict or strained composition. Admittedly, suffering can occur incidentally but not necessarily. This obviously stands at odds with all the conflict presuppositions in:

- 1- Freudian id-superego conflict
- 2- The original sin is an Augustinian and Neu Augustinian concept.
- 3- Modern catholic symbolic original sin
- 4- Existential condition of estrangement
- 5- Buddhist concept of attachment and craving
- 6- The newly emerging biological concept of intellect versus instinct forwarded by Jeremy Griffith (Griffith, J. (2016).)

The discrepancy between Islam and other creeds reaches its utmost peak in dealing with the path to redemption or obtaining peace of mind (associated with psychological wellbeing),

In Islam the answer is, in short, Shariah. Shariah is the Divine Guidance for man that shapes man’s entire way of life.

So- contrary to the commonly held belief- Shariah is not simply a legal code; rather it is the path that delineates moral, legal and social norms for both individuals and societies. This path includes acts of worship; communal dealings such as commerce finance and family laws; ethics and manners; civil and criminal law; governance and inter-governmental relations, to mention but a few (not to speak of actions of the heart, {al A amal al-Qalbia})

The sole purpose of Shariah is to procure human wellbeing by protecting their religion (Deen), life (Nafs), intellect (‘Aaql), lineage (‘E’rdh) and property (Mal) (See ibn Taymiyyah). Shariah is believed to be infallible, universal and unchanging because it is ordained by Divine Inspiration (i.e. The Qur'an and Sunna).

In this respect Shariah is different from Fiqh (jurisprudence), the latter being the jurists’ scholarly interpretation of Shariah itself. (Kamali 2008, Hallaq 2009. See also classical references in Al Shatibi 2004(مجموع الفتاوى) Ibn Taymiyyah 2005 {majmu al fatawa}

Thus, the path of redemption in Islam stands at variance with all others. In Augustinian and evangelical theology redemption is by Divine Grace (Williams, T. 1993; Bettenson, H. 2003; Chadwick, H. 2003) and in existential theology it is authentic relation with God (Flynn, TR. 2006); and in liberal theology It is love, growth and cocreation (Oord, TJ. 2015)

In his explanation of the human condition, Jeremy Griffith suggests that conflict resolution is achieved by understanding (Griffith, J. 2016). Griffith's cognitive approach takes instincts to be good in contrast to Freud who claims that instincts are evil. Both theories claim to be scientific although their basic assumptions are purely philosophical. Griffith is more akin to Arther Scgopenhaur.(see Schupenhaur). Even if they were scientifically supported, they offer only a cognitive recipe to alleviate suffering. In this respect Buddhism offers a more varied solution because it suggests not only cognitive mindfulness but also behavioural detachment. (Harvey P., 2012)

In contrast to all these conjectures Islam stipulates a more varied recipe of redemption which encompasses cognitive, behavioural emotional, spiritual, social, pedagogical and legal measures to attain well-being. Modern Catholicism comes closer to Shariah by purporting both faith and moral life but without equally emphasizing legal measures to attain the desired redemption. In contrast Shariah does all that.

Thus, it appears Islamic Shariah is different not only in rejecting the concept of conflict but also in providing a more detailed and diversified path of recovery. Perhaps the closest to this Islamic perspective is modern humanistic psychology as the latter emphasizes not conflict and instincts to be corrected so much as compassion forgiveness and inner peace as part of psychological being.

(Rogers, 1980; Maslow,1971; Frankle ,1997).

Still the list of redemptive protocols in Shariah is far more elaborate.

Yet for all its worth as a redeemer Shariah represents the constitution from which legal codes can be inferred.

This research attempts to derive such Qur'an- based interpretations and legal codes for psychological wellbeing.

For this purpose, the best start is perhaps the beginning of the human story, the relocation from paradise to the earth. *Islamically speaking*, Adam's relocation was not a surprise - because God is believed to know the unseen- rather it was planned as a path of redemption from the start. Verse 37-38 in Surat Albaqara says:

{Then Adam received from his Lord some words and he accepted his repentance; indeed, it is He who is accepting repentance. * And we said go down from it all of you and when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows my guidance there will be no fear concerning them nor will they grieve}.

{فَتَلَقَىٰ آدَمَ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ * قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا ۖ فَمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ.} سورة البقرة، (آية: 37-38)

So, it is indicated here that, following this Divine Guidance constitutes assurance of protection from “fear” (a defining symptom of anxiety) and “grief” (a defining symptom of depression).

In yet another exemplary verse 124 of Surat Ta Ha *{and whoever turns away from my remembrance – indeed he will have a miserable life}*.

{وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى} سورة طه، (آية: 124)

Reference to psychological health here cannot be ignored.

The Cultural Formation of Muslims

Like all other cultures Islam is enculturated through implicit social learning and explicit instruction (Boroditsky, L. 2011). Naturally the main source of Islamic instruction is the Qur'an, be it in its original Arabic form or translated. Islamic enculturation tools include food, dress, architecture, music, technology, art, though in modern times, expectedly, television, internet, films, and social media introduce hybrid or globalized values embraced in language and images. It can safely be said that the Qur'an contributes substantially to shaping individuals' identity, morality, emotion, and social norms by influencing how they think, perceive, feel, behave, and relate to the world. The Qur'an is sufficiently accessible and available within family, schooling, social interaction, rituals and within prayer setting.

Almost all Qur'anic verses can be considered as easily accessible and readily comprehensible elements of enculturation.

Divine Providence

This study puts forward the unifying principle of Divine Providence.

A defining belief common to all Muslims is recognition of the so called ninety-nine names of Allah as describing the attributes that define Allah's essence and actions. All 99 names accentuate Divine Providence, some more directly than others. All emphasizing God's sustenance, guidance, governance, mercy, care, love and healing. Compared to other theologies, the Qur'an emphasizes the doctrine of the Universality of Divine Attributes (notably providence), which is not confined to time, place, or people; much more clearly than other monotheistic theologies. So according to the Qur'an all prophets preach Islam and Muhammad's message addresses all mankind not just Muslims.

The Qur'an persistently indicates that God has subjected to Humanity what is on land and in the sea; emphasizing Divine Providence again.

In Surat. Abasa, (verses: 24-32)

*{So let man look at his food * That We poured down water in torrents * Then We split the earth with fragments * And caused to grow therein grain * And grapes and herbage * And olives and palm trees * And gardens of dense foliage * And fruits and herbage * For your enjoyment and for your livestock}*

{ فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ * أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا * ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا * فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا * وَعَنْبًا وَقَضْبًا * وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا * وَحَدَانِقَ غُلْبًا * وَفَاكِهَةً وَأَبًّا * مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ } سورة عبس، (آيات: 24-32)

This is a privilege that none of God's creation share.

To man Allah decreed that the mountains, seas, rivers, and what is in, on and above the earth are subdued to man. The magnanimity of this is astounding.

Consider for instance that Current scientific research estimates that the number of living species on Earth ranges between 8.7 million and 9 million. The number of bacteria in the human body is estimated at about 10^{14} bacteria (100 trillion), which means that bacteria outnumber human cells by 1-1.3. Fresh water and salt water contain huge amounts of bacteria, viruses, and microalgae. In salt water, the number of viruses can reach 10^7 viruses per milliliter.

Allah has created man out of love. Life is the greatest gift of all. It could be an unnervingly hallucinatory experience for one to imagine that one is not among the created beings or that the whole existence is a state of nothingness in absolute silence and complete stillness.

The Qur'an asserts that in heaven man enjoyed Divine Care and now on earth he has this boundless monopoly by the grace of his Lord.

Care in the womb

Divine Providence starts very early in the womb. Every single human soul is created from a sperm-ovum mixture { *We created man from the sperm of gametes that plague him, and we made him hearing and seeing* } Surat. Al-Insaan, (verse: 2)

(Gamete: A mixture of things).

{ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا } سورة الإنسان، (آية: 2)

The Qur'an states that Allah made it easy for man to gather in his mother's womb one creation after another in three darknesses { *...He created you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation in three darkness...* }. Surat. Az-Zumar, (verse 6)

(The three darknesses are explained as: the darkness of the womb, the darkness of the placenta and the darkness of the abdomen.)

{ ...يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّنْ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ... } سورة الزمر، (آية: 6)

Providence continues throughout pregnancy, the Divine Empathy, being clearly expressed in the following verse { *...Their mothers bore them through hardship upon hardship...* } Surat. Luqman, (verse: 14)

{...حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهُنَا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ...} سورة لقمان، (آية: 14)

When labor pains come to the mother, endorphins and enkephalins are released from her endocrine glands to soothe her pains and the pains of her helpless newborn fetus. When the new born breathes fresh air for the first time in its lungs, it cries out in pain, and everyone is delighted. As for the newborn, it quickly rushes to the breast instinctively without prior knowledge or experience, and it suckles for two years, completing breastfeeding

{*And mothers breastfeed their children for two whole years For those who wish to complete the nursing...*} (Surat. Al-Baqara, (verse: 233)

{وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ...} سورة البقرة، (آية: 233)

The process of suckling in a newborn baby is a vital aspect of their development and bonding with their mother. There are several fascinating processes that can only be explained by the Divine Providence bestowed upon the helpless newborn to insure its survival by miraculous reflexes. These include: *Rooting Reflex*: when a newborn baby's cheek or lips are stroked, it exhibits a rooting reflex, turning the baby's head towards the stimulus and opening its mouth. *Latching*: the baby latches onto the breast, taking in the nipple and areola. Proper latching is crucial for effective milk flow and comfort. *Suckling*: the baby uses its tongue and jaw to create a rhythmic suckling motion, which stimulates milk production and flow. *Swallowing*: as the baby suckles, it swallows milk, which provides essential nutrients and antibodies. Suckling also plays a role in: *Bonding*: skin-to-skin contact and physical closeness promote bonding between mother and baby. *Brain Development*: suckling stimulates brain development and can help with cognitive development.

From the Providence in the womb babies are born, open their eyes to see the light for the first time and soon afterwards they realize their new world had already received Divine Guidance to teach them what they never knew. This educational process continues throughout life gaining wisdom along the way, through the guidance of Allah's revelations:

{*Since We have sent you a messenger from among yourselves—reciting to you Our revelations, purifying you, teaching you the Book and wisdom, and teaching you what you never knew*}
Surat.Al-Baqara.(verse: 151)

{كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ} سورة البقرة، (آية: 151)

Divine Providence is Perpetual.

In the Muslim belief, Allah created people in the best stature and created them to acknowledge his Lordship and Providence.

{*And 'remember' when your Lord brought forth from the loins of the children of Adam their descendants and had them testify regarding themselves. 'Allah asked,' "Am I not your Lord?" They replied, "Yes, You are! We testify." ...*}

{وَأَذْأَأْ رَّبُّكَ مِّنْ بَنِي آءَمِّ مِّنْ ظَهْوَءِرِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا... ٥}

سورة الأعراف، (آية: 172)

The Qur'an does not cease to deepen the belief of Muslims that In the Muslim faith, whatever man endeavors on this earth, his endeavor is ultimately directed towards returning to God ; {*to your Lord is the return.*} Surat. al -A'lag, (verse 8)

{إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ} سورة العلق، (آية 8)

Thus, returning to that Paradise from which he was expelled, because it is the permanent bliss and the eternal world to which man should belong. The shortest path to that paradise is the (straight path); {*Guide us to the straight path*} Surat. Al Fatiha, (verse 6)

{إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ} سورة الفاتحة، (آية 6)

It is the verse that the child memorizes first in the care of his parents, and he memorizes it because it is the verse most frequently mandatorily repeated in his prayers at least seventeen times a day.

The Muslim knows that if he loses his way - and he may well go astray - Allah has guided him and will guide him to it through what He has revealed of the Book and wisdom, (see hadith: *...Allah is more pleased with the repentance of His servant than one of you finds what he has lost in the desert, and that He is more pleased with the repentance of His servant than His servant repents, and that He is more compassionate to man than a mother is to her suckling baby infant, and that if man came to his Lord with the earth full of sins, not associating partners with Him, He would meet him with the earth full of forgiveness, even if his sins reached the clouds of the sky and were like the foam of the sea.*)

In a hadith of Imam Muslim - *"If you did not sin, Allah would replace you and bring a people who would sin and seek forgiveness from Allah, and He would forgive them."*

The concept of Allah's care for His servants is established in more than one way - and even though Allah has decreed for the children of Adam that they would inhabit the earth as a punishment, He has blessed it and determined its sustenance for those who ask. According to Ibn Masoud, "those who ask" meaning according to the request of each one of them. Allah has forbidden injustice to Himself and made it forbidden to man; and said, *"Do not wrong one another,"* so it is not permissible in the law of Allah to deprive a person (any person) of his allotted share.

In the cultural formation of the Muslim, the concept of Lordship is repeatedly reinforced. If a calamity befalls the Muslim, it comes to his mind that *"there is no power or strength except with God."*

(لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العظيم)

If he is overcome, he says, {*God is sufficient for us, and He is the best Disposer of affairs.*} Surat, Aali Imran. (verse, 173)

{وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ} سورة آل عمران، (آية 173)

If one of his family is struck by grief, his consolation is to say, {*Indeed to God we belong, and indeed to Him we shall return.*} Surat. Al Baqara, (verse 156)

{الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ} سورة البقرة، (آية 156)

This is the language of the Qur'an, which is recited to the Muslim, and he hears repeatedly, even if he does not sit listening to it.

It is at the core of the Muslim's belief that Allah sent Muhammad as a Messenger {*There certainly has come to you a messenger from among yourselves, who is concerned by your suffering, anxious for your well-being, and gracious and merciful to the believers.*} Surat. Al Towba (verse 128)

{لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ} سورة التوبة، (آية 128)

{*And We revealed the Book (the Qur'an) to you (Prophet Muhammad) as an explanation of everything.*} Surat. An-Nahl, (verse 89.)

{وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ} سورة النحل، (آية 89)

Allah chose His Prophet Muhammad for intercession, but He did not make him a mediator going between Him and people; for Allah does not need a conciliator. The relationship between God and self-worship is direct and personal. The Qur'an says that it is

{*He who created me and He guides me. * And it is He who feeds me and gives me drink. * And when I am ill, it is He who cures me. * And it is He who causes me to die and then brings me to life. * And it is He who, I hope, will forgive my sin on the Day of Judgment.*} Surat. Ash-Shu'ara, (Verses 78-82) .

{الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ * وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ * وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ * وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ * وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ} سورة الشعراء، (آيات 78-82)

The first thing a Muslim learns in his childhood after the Shahada: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.", is the other four pillars of worship, which are *prayer, zakat, fasting, and Hajj*. The most important of these is the prayer, because prayer is a connection between the servant and his Lord. Allah made supplication the core of worship, because even in congregational prayer, supplication is during the devotees prostration, where the worshipper is closest to his Lord. The worshipper voices in a whisper that no one hears except them. The prostrating person says, "Glory be to my Lord, the Highest," and even if he keeps it in his heart without moving his tongue, God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing, for {*He knows the secret and what is more hidden.*} Surat. Ta Ha, (verse 7)

{وَإِنْ تَجَهَّرَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى} سورة طه، (آية 7)

Supplication is a pure plea between the worshipper and his Lord. It is a moment of purification and free association: sort of appeal in which the person stands before his Lord, knowing that nothing is hidden from God. Supplication, then, in the Muslim's belief, is a moment of pure and frank sincerity, full of purity, and in it is healing. In supplication, the servant acknowledges his sin, purifies himself, and begins his need for his Lord without fear or hesitation, and he insists on his Lord assertively and says, "O God, answer my supplication and do not disappoint my hope."

Providence by Shariah

The objective of Shariah is to negate harm by preserving *religion, life, reason, offspring, and wealth*. This is so that a person may make his food, drink, home, clothing, and honor good. He should not eat anything except what benefits him and should not drink anything that interferes with his mind. He should seek what is lawful in his earnings, and should not engage in usury, or other means of seeking illegitimate benefits and should avoid self-harm.

Protecting Family

Allah legislated laws that elevated the status of parents, especially mothers, and treated parents well and commanded them to be mindful of their kinship after fearing Allah. {O humanity! Be mindful of your Lord Who created you from a single soul, and from it He created its mate, and through both He spread countless men and women. And be mindful of Allah—in Whose Name you appeal to one another—and 'honour' family ties. Surely Allah is ever Watchful over you.} Surat. An-Nisaa, (verse 1)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۗ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا {سورة النساء، (آية 1)}

Allah also placed compassion and mercy between spouses. {And one of His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find comfort in them. And He has placed between you compassion and mercy. Surely in this are signs for people who reflect.} Surat, Ar-room. (verse 21)

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ {سورة الروم، (آية 21)}

This is more likely to provide a healthy environment for children to grow up in. The Shariah is keen to protect the family with a degree of detail that positive law rarely provides or can provide anything like it. The family is the first pillar of psychological security. God knows that the marital relationship might weaken or even not last, so Allah ordered that the entire society should be concerned, and try to mend the weakened ties {If you anticipate a split between them (the spouses), appoint a mediator from his family and another from hers. If they desire reconciliation, Allah will restore harmony between them. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.} Surat. An-Nisa , (verse 35)

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَأَبْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا {سورة النساء، (آية 35)}

But If the spouses want to separate by mutual consent and consultation, there is no blame upon them. *{But if they choose to separate, Allah will enrich both of them from His bounties. And Allah is Ever-Bountiful, All-Wise.}* Surat. An-nisa (verse 130)

{وَأِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّن سَعَتِهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا} سورة النساء، (آية 130)

Indeed the issue of family disruption and its consequences is discussed in great detail in the Qur'an. In addition to the previous quotations from Surat An-nisa on how to mend weakened ties between spouses, a whole Surah is dedicated to divorce. *{O Prophet! 'Instruct the believers: ' When you 'intend to' divorce women, then divorce them with concern for their waiting period, and count it accurately. And fear Allah, your Lord. Do not force them out of their homes, nor should they leave—unless they commit a blatant misconduct. These are the limits set by Allah. And whoever transgresses Allah's limits has truly wronged his own soul. You never know, perhaps Allah will bring about a change 'of heart' later.}* Surat. At-talaq, (verse 1)

{يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ ۖ لَا تَخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِّن بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۗ لَا تَدْرِي لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ أَمْرًا} سورة الطلاق، (آية 1)

In the same Surah, Allah (SWT) warned the believers against injustice in the context of marital conflicts, with a severe warning *(And how many a city has rebelled against the command of its Lord and His messengers, so We brought it to a severe account and punished it with a terrible punishment)* Surat. At-Talaq, (verse 8).

{وَكَايِن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ عَن رَّبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِ فَحَاسَبْنَاَهَا حِسَابًا شَدِيدًا وَعَدَّبْنَاَهَا عَذَابًا نُكْرًا * فَذَاقَتْ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهَا وَكَانَ عَاقِبَةُ أَمْرِهَا خُسْرًا} سورة الطلاق، (آية 8-9)

Islamic laws continue to surround the structures of the wider society with robust rules and morals...
Read Surat Al-Hujurat –

It is widely documented and acknowledged that Islamic Shariah had developed a comprehensive family law system centuries before many Western systems, covering marriage, divorce, inheritance, custody, and maintenance. Through legal scholarship, intercultural contact and translations, some of its ideas entered Western canon, civil, and common law traditions.

These included laws of marital contract and consent, inheritance laws, divorce rights, inheritance rights, child custody and welfare. (El Fadil 2001; Greshake 2000)

Islamic Laws Against Inter-Communities and Intra-Community Domination

Shariah has stipulated laws for nations regarding conflicts and reconciliation. Injustice is one major cause of suffering and distress.

Likewise, it is widely acknowledged that Islamic civilization developed a highly structured and codified system of diplomatic relations, including rules of war and peace, treaties, and protection of foreigners (dhimmī and amān systems). These practices significantly influenced European diplomatic theory and international law.

Islamic civilization had a profound influence on Western legal studies, particularly during the Middle Ages and early Renaissance. (Schacht 1964) This influence can be traced through the transmission of Islamic legal texts, principles, and methodologies into European jurisprudence—especially in the development of civil law, natural law theory, contract law, and legal education systems.

Scholars like Joseph Schacht (1964) and Harold Berman (1983) have argued that Islamic jurisprudence offered a model of a cohesive legal system independent of political rule, which impressed early Western jurists.

Islamic Legal Education and University Models

The madrasa system, with institutions like Al-Qarawiyyin (859 CE) and Al-Azhar (970 CE), predates Western universities and offered structured legal education. (Hallaq, 2009; Makdisi, 1981)

Providence for humanity

In Surat al- Anbiyaa verse 107, Allah addressed Muhammad by saying *{and we have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds}*.

{وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ} سورة الأنبياء، (آية 107)

Accordingly, this is always reflected in Shariah's principles of providence for all mankind. For instance, the Qur'an explains the origin of injustice.

The Qur'an recognizes the joys of human life which are permissible when taken in moderation. The Qur'an also recognizes the negative side of human behaviour which abuses these joys.

Take for example chapter 3:14

{The enjoyment of 'worldly' desires—women, children, treasures of gold and silver, fine horses, cattle, and fertile land—has been made appealing to people. These are the pleasures of this worldly life, but with Allah is the finest destination.} Surat. aal Imran, (verse 14).

{زَيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ
وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَأْبَ {سورة آل عمران، (آية 14)}

So, admittedly it is not in essence unlawful to enjoy congress with the opposite sex, gathering wealth, power and raising an extended family with many sons which refers to power and defense capabilities.

In the same breath the Qur'an also recognizes the rectifiable vulnerabilities in humans such as arrogance, pride, greed, oppression, mischief and tyranny when empowered. (see verses 2:11; 2:206; 3:180; 14:34; 96:6-7)

Examples of these are:

- Chapter 2:11

{When they are told, "Do not spread corruption in the land," they reply, "We are only reformers!"} Surat. Albaqara, (verse 11)

{إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ {سورة البقرة، (آية 11)}

- Chapter 96:6-7

{Most certainly, man will transgress all boundaries * once he feels self-sufficient} Surat. Alalaq, (verses 6-7)

{كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظٍ * إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظٍ * أَنْ رَأَاهُ اسْتَغْنَى {سورة العلق، (آية 6-7)}

That is perhaps why Shariah enjoins an endless number of disciplinary measures and practices. One can grow one's wealth but not with usury or gambling, enjoy love but only with one's spouse, possess arms but not oppress, love your people but not despise others, nourish oneself but avoid alcohol and mind-bending substances. Regarding the abuse of power the Qur'an refers consistently to the opposition against Shariah posed by the (mala'). This was mentioned in the Qur'an 13 times. Mala' stands for the elite, the wealthy and the political class: oligarchy in short.

Shariah legislates for overcoming the vulnerabilities of harmful human tendencies . Psychological research by Professor Badri explained how Shariah has presented solutions to the problems of alcoholism and AIDS endemic. (Badri's islam and alcoholism (1976); Badri's the sex revolution (2000)).

Badri's views align with Toynbee's.

"The Islamic prohibition of alcohol has undoubtedly been a blessing. Western civilization, which has not imposed such a prohibition, has suffered grievously from alcoholism." (Toynbee, 1948)

"In Islamic countries where drinking is forbidden by religion, alcoholism is virtually unknown. In the West, it is a plague and a symptom of inner spiritual emptiness." (Toynbee,1953)

Toynbee also wrote:

“The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding moral achievements of Islam, and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue.” Toynbee argues that this Islamic race blind attitude is inculcated through the egalitarian rituals in Hajj (pilgrimage) practice.

Turning Islamic Principles into A Launchpad

Psychology as an independent discipline had been well developed by experimental psychologists of the 19th century Wundt, Weber, Fechner, and Helmholtz, and by speculative psychologists like William James. According to many, psychology and other related social sciences were not able to deliver the expected goods. Still contemporary societies suffer from unchecked mental diseases, addiction, suicide, crime, aggression, wars, injustice, and tyranny.

However, from an Islamic perspective, some inspiringly promising paradigms seem to be progressively materializing. The emergence of spiritual and humanistic psychology, constituted an acceptable alternative to presumptuous Freudian psychoanalysis and to mechanistic behavioral theory (Victor Frankl, 1997; Abraham Maslow, 1971). Along similar lines Seligman’s complementary contribution to positive psychology seem to have shifted the focus of interest from scientific preoccupation with theories and methods of treating pathological cases to building integrated life models for mental health care (see Seligman, 2002; 2011; see also Szczesny Mahaley). This is reminiscent of the Islamic psychotherapeutic model which advocates therapeutic protocols such as: recalling the overall purposes of life; being keen to bear the consequences of life when it is harsh, through patience and endurance; seeking help from social support networks, the basis of which is the family, relatives and friends and to live with others through altruism; assistance in charitable works and charity, which purifies ones earnings, no matter how small, and to, as prophet Muhammad says (*follow up on the bad deed with good deed, erasing it, and treat people with good manners.*) Narrated by Attirmdhi

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: (اتَّقِ اللَّهَ حَيْثُمَا كُنْتَ وَأَتَّبِعِ السَّبِيلَ الْحَسَنَةَ تَمَحُّدًا، وَخَالِقِ النَّاسَ بِخُلُقٍ حَسَنٍ) رواه الترمذي

Modern psychologists in Islamic countries significantly contributed to these developments. It is worth mentioning in this regard that Professor Malik Badri, had accompanied and engaged the founders of behavioral, cognitive, and humanistic schools, including Wolpe (1915-1997), Eysenck (1916-1997), Mayer (born 1947), and Miller (1920-2012). Badri’s interventions with them from the perspective of his Islamic culture had an impact during a period when those same theories were just crystallizing. Professor Badri then devoted most of his academic life to his visions of Islamization and then spiritualization of psychology, the most prominent of which were his writings on contemplation, which were translated into many languages. Badri's writings had an impact on psychological studies and research in some Arab and Asian countries. These ideas have resulted in the development of models for therapeutic protocols that have influenced and enriched psychotherapy practices, including the Al-Balkhi model. Professor Badri has departed, leaving the

task of expanding analytical studies of Qur'anic values and classifying them into themes in the hands of his practicing students. These students may well exchange the results of their Islamic oriented therapeutic practices with all other scientific communities as well as conduct dialogues with similar schools of spiritual and positive psychology in global research forums.

Many young people working in the fields of psychological studies and services keep inquiring about how they can design culturally respectful protocols for psychotherapy.

It can be said that close parallels have become clear between Islamic perceptions of health and western positive and spiritual psychology. Certainly, every culture will resonate with its perceptions of the universe, life and humanity. It is worth noting here that perceptions, whatever they may be, constitute a mere descriptive content for a set of values that specialists need to reformulate as prescriptive protocols. How can Islamic culture enable the therapist to use such protocols with their clients? This is an open field for young scholars, to provide effective models in counseling and psychotherapy.

A Psychotherapist may be advised to restore the awareness of his patients regarding the panoramic view of their perceptions and responsibility towards themselves and others.

Raising awareness is a way to restore the psychological and mental balance of patients, so that one becomes more resistant to the successive, sometimes compulsive episodes of disappointment that take the form of ruminative symptoms. Badri's best treatment for rumination is contemplation, (Tafakkur). Badri pointed out that tafakkur is a systematic process that restores the human being's awareness of the axioms that have been absent from one's consciousness, so that reviewing them again becomes a mental exercise that takes the human being to a depth that expels the negative ruminations that cause tension. This is reminiscent of Nolen-Hoeksema (2011) who conducted investigative research on the phenomenon of obsessive rumination (see also Taha 2023)

Nolen-Hoeksema's studies have had a tangible impact on clinical studies and practices. It is worth noting that the most relevant of her contributions were related to the need to consider the influence of the patient's cultural environment and beliefs.

Such an introductory patient-therapist dialogue may well precede addressing directly the symptoms that worry the client such as feelings of anger, shame, anxiety, permanent state of deadly sadness, despair, hopelessness, helplessness or laziness and oppression. The prophetic invocation goes:

(Oh Allah I seek refuge in you from worry and grief, from incapacitating laziness, from cowardliness and miserliness, from being heavily in debt and from being overpowered by others)

(اللهم إني أعوذ بك من الهم والحزن والعجز والكسل والجبن والبخل ومن غلبة الدين وقهر الرجال) رواه النسائي

Researchers may well be advised to mine for more Qur'anic psychotherapeutic values in momentous classical compositions such as those of Al-Razi (1149 – 1210) in Spiritual Medicine, Al-Ghazali (932 – 1030) in Ihya and Al-Munqidh, Ibn Maskawayh (932 – 1030) in Tahdhib Al-

Akhlaq, Ibn Sina (980 – 1037) in *Al-Qanun*, Ibn Tufayl (1105 – 1185 CE) in *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya (1292 – 1350) in *Al-Madarij*, Ibn Ata Allah (1250 – 1309 CE) in *Al-Hikam*, and others.

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