The Impacts of Globalization on Mental Disorders: An Effective Solution From Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

Nowadays, the world in general is witnessing the frightening increase of psychological problems. This is due to the fast developmental changes brought by globalization and the marginalization of religion. Secular and irreligious psychological approaches which reject the spiritual aspects of man could not resolve the problems. Religion with its beliefs and practices guarantees the best and effective solutions to the problems. The challenge is how to apply those religious beliefs and practices in remedying those psychological problems. This requires right understanding of religious concepts and principles and the internalizations of these principles into daily life. This paper tries to embark upon discourse on the true understanding of the nature of man, his uniqueness compared to animal, and the meaning and purpose of his life. This true understanding of the nature of man leads to the understanding of the root causes of the problems and not the symptomatic ones. Consequently, the proper remedy can be given to cure these illnesses.

Keywords: Globalization, Psychological Problems, Beliefs, Nature of Man, Purpose of Life.

Abstrak

Pada masa kini, dunia secara amnya sedang menyaksikan peningkatan masalah psikologi yang menakutkan. Ini adalah disebabkan oleh perubahan perkembangan yang pantas yang dibawa oleh globalisasi dan peminggiran agama. Pendekatan psikologi sekular dan tidak beragama yang menolak aspek-aspek kerohanian manusia tidak dapat menyelesaikan masalah ini. Cabaran yang dihadapi adalah bagaimana untuk mengenakan kepercayaan-kepercayaan dan amalan agama dalam membetulkan masalah-masalah psikologi ini. Ini memerlukan pemahaman yang betul tentang konsep dan prinsip-prinsip agama dan penghayatan mendalam prinsip-prinsip ini ke dalam kehidupan seharian. Karya ini cuba untuk memulakan wacana pemahaman sifat manusia yang sebenar, keunikannya berbanding dengan haiwan, dan makna dan tujuan hidupnya. Pemahaman sifat manusia yang sebenar ini membawa kepada pemahaman tentang punca masalah dan bukan ke simptomatiknya. Oleh itu, ubat yang betul boleh diberikan untuk menyembuhkan penyakit-penyakit psikologi ini.

Kata Kunci: Globalisasi, Masalah Psikologi, Kepercayaan, Sifat Manusia, Tujuan Kehidupan.

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Introduction

This era of globalization witnesses the frightening increase of psychological problems such as anxiety, depression and stress. It is associated with the fast developmental changes, economic pressure, security and identity crisis and many other negative impacts.[1] This is aggravated with the failure of modern Western secular therapies in serving and instilling the genuine state of tranquility in man.[2] As a matter of fact, religion with its beliefs and practices guarantees the best and effective solutions to the problems and promises genuine tranquility in man.[3]It seems lack of religious knowledge as well as knowledge of modern psychotherapy places man in a great difficulty in benefiting from religious principles as valuable therapeutic methods. This paper aims at explaining the relation between globalization and mental health and introducing a new therapy which is religiously rooted, characterized by comprehensiveness in helping people to cope with the vicious challenges of globalization. This paper represents a humble attempt to embark upon a discourse on globalization and its relation with human psychological disorders, nature of man and his uniqueness compared to animal, shortcomings of modern Western schools of psychotherapy, and the required remedy for human mental disorders in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Globalization and Psychological Disorders

Globalization is defined as the flow of knowledge, commodities, finance and human beings across borders and boundaries.[4] The world turns into a "global village" whereby time and space is compressed.

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[1] Sayar, *The psychological dimension of globalization* (Istanbul: Cerrapasa Medical Faculty, 2001) Retrieved March 3, 2001 from http://www.yenisymposium.net/fulltext/2001(2)/ys2001.39.2.4.pdf. See also Al-Roubaie, Heritage, culture and globalization. *International Journal of Muslim Unity* 2 (1) (2004), pp.3-46.

[2] Badri, *The dilemma of Muslim psychologists.* (London: MWH London Publishers, 1979).

[3] See al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1982); Muhasibi, *Al-Riʿāyat li ḥuqūq Allāh*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1985); and Miskawayh, *Tahzīb al-akhlāq wa tathīr al-aʿrāq*. Beirut: Dar al-Maktabat al-Hayah, N.d.). Trans. Zurayk, Constantine, *The refinement of character*. (Beirut: Centennial Publications, 1968).

[4] Sayar, *The psychological dimension of globalization*, 1; and Kiely, Ray, & Marfleet (Eds.), *Globalization and the third world* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.3.

Although globalization has led to many positive impacts especially on economics, science and technology, it has triggered many negative results as well. Economically, the poor is becoming poorer and poorer; and his access to good health resources is getting more difficult. Cultural and technological transformations destroy sources of security such as nation and family. Solidarity is replaced by opportunism; and sincerity in human relations is replaced by superficiality.[5] In the concluding summary of recommendations of XV World Congress of Occupational Safety and Health, Sao Paolo, Brazil, clearly states that the economic injustice resulted from globalization leads to the increased prevalence of mental disorders in developing countries.[6] World Mental Health Report documents high levels of psychiatric disorders and distress in the developing world. More than half of the workers in the industrialized countries and evidently an increasing number of workers in developing countries suffer from psychological stress, time pressures and adverse psychological conditions of work. Among the reported outcomes are absenteeism, low productivity, and low quality of work. In extreme cases long-term stress leads to psychological burnout with total loss of working capacity. Globalization also requires people to act fast or otherwise they will be left behind. This phenomenon of man's weaknesses in coping with the demands, according to Hart, leads to anxiety.[7] It is further aggravated with the failure of modern Western therapies in providing effective remedies.

The Failure of Modern Western Secular Therapies

There are many schools of psychological therapy in the West. Among the leading approaches are Psychoanalysis, Behaviorism, Cognitive Psychology, and Humanistic counseling. Each perspective has its own distinct characteristics and approaches with regard to the causes of psychological problems as well as their treatment. In other words, the same psychological problem is interpreted, diagnosed, and treated

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[5] Sayar, *The psychological dimension of globalization*, 1.

[6] *Concluding Summary of the impact of globalization on occupational safety and mental health*. (1999). Sao Paolo: World Congress of Occupational Safety and Health. Retrieved March 3, 1999 from http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/cis/oshworld/xvwc/conclu.htm

[7] *Concluding Summary of the impact of globalization on occupational safety and mental health*, p.268.

differently by each school. By following a secular medical model of conceptualizing the human psyche, psychoanalysis views psychological illness as something caused by the internal conflict between opposing forces, namely id (the animalistic impulses in man), ego (the "I" or conscious part of personality which deals with reality), and superego which is the moral structure of personality which tends to internalize the ethical values of the parents. This is when the aggressive and sexual impulses of the id which is governed by the pleasure principle of obtaining immediate pleasure and avoiding pain, irrespective of time and place, are supposed to be constrained by the ego which, on the other hand, is governed by the reality principle of reason and common sense and the superego which abhors these animalistic impulses, as it represents the conscience of man. This conflict leads to anxiety, which is, for psychoanalysis, the main cause of psychological disorder. Conflicts mostly originate in early childhood and thus they are suppressed in the unconscious mind. Concerning treatment, the therapists somehow try to bring the repressed unconscious conflicts into consciousness so that the very cause will be clearly understood and then properly treated. Among the techniques used are free association and dream analysis.[8]

     This beautifully constructed psychoanalytic theory about psychological disorders and their treatment is now considered as one of the greatest failures of modern psychotherapy. Repeated controlled studies comparing patients who received psychoanalytic therapy with those who received no therapy at all, failed to show any differences between the two groups.[9] This led to disenchantment and psychoanalysis fell into disrepute to the extent that in many Western universities it is now mainly taught as history of psychology. It also failed because it downgraded the importance of thinking and the conscious responsibility of man to improve himself. By exaggerating the role of unconscious motivation, psychoanalysis deprived man of his moral responsibility and his conscious effort to repent, redeem, forgive or purify himself.

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[8] Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, translated by W. J. H. Sprott (London, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, 1937).

[9] Eysenck, "The Effects of Psychotherapy: An Evaluation, " 16 (1952) *Journal of Consulting Psychology* pp.319-324.

With the demise of psychoanalysis, Western psychologists started looking for a new model to explain psychological disorders and their treatment; and soon, behaviorism was ready with this new more practical approach. It is well known that behaviorism revolves around the principles of learning and conditioning. Behavior therapists hold that the causes of maladaptive behaviors have nothing to do with unconscious motivation but are simply learned habits. Since these abnormal behaviors are learned, they can also be unlearned. Thus, as for treatment, the therapist will use extinction (the elimination of the tendency to make a response) and inhibitory processes together with positive and negative re-enforcers to change these abnormal behavior patterns. Among the techniques used are systematic desensitization and modeling. This theory is also unable to fill the vacuum left by psychoanalysis in explaining psychological disorders and their treatment. It considered man simply an animal. The only difference it finds between man and animal is from the angles of the type of responses. It was doomed to failure in spite of its success in treating minor psychological phobic anxieties. Behaviorism severely criticized psychoanalysis as the unscientific endeavor. However in trying to be scientific, it went to the other extreme, as Aaron Beck says, by downgrading the importance of thinking.[10] Human "thoughts, feelings, and ideas" which behavior therapy neglected are the core of human personality, and for the true Muslim, they are the very foundation of his belief and religious awareness. By neglecting them, behavior therapy has failed to give man real happiness and a permanent cure of his psychological problems.

Proponents of Cognitive Psychology, Beck and Ellis believe that most of the psychological disorders are resulted from irrationalities that people stored in their minds. Thus, the solution for the problems is by confronting and finally removing all those irrationalities.[11] This technique appears to be very effective; and it seems in harmony with religion. Yet, it has not substantially served as a complete remedy for human psycho-spiritual problems because of its compartmentalized and secular outlook of man.

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[10] Beck, *Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders* (New York: New American Library, 1976),p. 8

[11] *Ibid*. See also Ellis, Fundamentals of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy for the 1990s, in ed. Windy Dryden, *Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy* (London: SAGE Publications, 1995), pp.1-30.

An Effective Remedy from Islamic Perspectives

Man by nature is of body and soul. The relation between the two is like a camel with its owner.[12] Human behaviors reflect the mode of the soul. Laughing reflects that the soul is happy, and weeping reflects that the soul is sad. That spiritual entity (the soul) which is the determinant of our behavior is the heart. It is the king where all bodily organs abide by its instructions. Knowing the importance of the heart, it becomes the subject of conquer by two conflicting forces, namely the good represented by reason (*'aql*) and divine guidance (*ma'rifah*) and the evil represented by passion (*hawā*) and desire (*nafs*) supported by Satan. The good forces produce light i.e. the light of *īmān* from within the heart that illuminates it, while the evil forces blacken it with darkness. This continuous conflict with a fluctuating result will determine human behavior. If the good wins, the heart will be good, and consequently the behavior also will be good and *vice versa*. Problems in man start with the winning of the passion and desire over the reason. They conquer and control the heart and give no chance to reason to function properly. If they manage to enslave the reason for their evil interests, the light of the heart becomes dimmer and dimmer and finally it is totally lost.[13]

Loss or lack of light of *īmān* exposes man to many problems, be it spiritual, psychological or physical. An obese person, for instance, is the one who is unable to restrain his desire of eating, which means that his animalistic soul is not in control of his rational soul. This spiritually unhealthy situation leads to physical illnesses such as heart attack and psychological problems such as low self-esteem. The lack of *īmān* is the major cause of spiritual, psychological and physical illnesses. The right and proper treatment, therefore, must be centered on restoring and increasing it.[14] This technique is known as *Īmān* Restoration Therapy (IRT). It requires both theoretical and practical elements, namely instilment of true knowledge, *mujāhadah* (inner struggle) and *riyāḍah* (discipline).

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[12] Al-Ghazali, Kimiya al-Sa'adah. In. *Majmu'at rasa'il al-Imam al-Ghazali*, Vol. 7. (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1994). Partial trans. Claud Field, *The alchemy of Happiness* (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 2000), p.37.

[13] Tirmidhi, Al-Tirmidhi's conception of the areas of interiority, *The Islamic Quarterly* 16 (3 & 4) (1972), p.168 - 88.

[14] Al-Qur'ān*, Sūrat *al-Isrā'*, 17:82; and Sūrat Yūnus, 10:57.

Knowledge Instilment

The abode of *īmān* is the heart. Early Muslim scholars believed that any defect in *īmān* was due to the spiritual illness of the heart. The most dangerous disease that afflicts the heart is the disease of ignorance, which causes a person to have all false beliefs and confusions. The physical body has weak immunity that can easily succumb to diseases. Likewise, the heart with weak spiritual immunity can also be easily 'infected' and misdirected. In order to strengthen the immunity of the body, a person needs to take specific antibodies, drugs or good nourishment; for the heart, the best immunization is instilling true and certain knowledge (*yaqīn*).

According to al-Ghazālī, this principle is quite similar to the principle of treatment for bodily illnesses. If the body becomes sick, it can be cured through its opposite. For example, high temperature is treated by cold water. With respect to the heart, the disease of ignorance is treated by seeking knowledge, that of niggardliness by generosity, that of arrogance by humility, and that of greed by restraining oneself from the things one craves.[15] Based on this principle, early Muslim scholars like al-Ghazālī in *Mizān al-'Amal* in the chapter of *Mudāwat al-Ghamm wa Izālat al-Khawf*;[16] Miskawayh in *Tahzīb al-Akhlāq* in the chapter of *'Ilāj al-Ḥuzn*;[17] and al-Balkhī in *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus* in the chapter of *Tadbīr I'adat Ṣiḥḥat al-Nafs, Tadbīr Taskīn al-Khawf wa al-Faz'* and *Tadbīr Daf' al-Ḥuzn wa al-Jaz'*[18] have urged Muslims to have sufficient knowledge about these four fundamental issues, namely God, human nature, the present world, and the hereafter. Knowledge about these four main aspects of the Islamic worldview, as al-Ghazālī says, is therapeutic and that ignorance is a deadly poison for the heart.[19]

To give an effective help to their patients, modern therapists need to make use of these four aspects in diagnosing and treating their clients.

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[15] Al-Ghazālī. *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 3, p. 187.

[16] Al-Ghazali, *Mizan al-'amal* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1989).

[17] Miskawayh, *Tahzīb al-akhlāq wa tathīr al-a'rāq* (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabat al-Hayah, N.d.). Trans. Zurayk, Constantine, *The refinement of character* (Beirut: Centennial Publications, 1968).

[18] Al-Balkhi, *Masalih al-abdan wa al-anfus* (Frankfurt: Institute for the History and Arabic-Islamic Science, 1984).

[19] al-Ghazālī, Kimyā' al-Sa'ādah, in *Majmū'āt rasā'il al-Imām al-Ghazālī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah,1994), vol. 7, p.44.

Examining their thought processes of patients and correcting their negative and pessimistic thoughts constitute what is referred to as cognitive psychotherapy. When it is based on religious and spiritual aspects, it will be cognitive psycho-spiritual therapy. As an illustration of the significance of this knowledge in the treatment, we may have a look at problems that underlie a suicidal attempt which is often triggered by unbearable severe anxiety, depression and stress. According to a survey, the majority of reported reasons for suicidal attempt are the feeling of hopelessness which is the result of high anxiety and depression. The patient appears to have a particular disposition to over-estimate the magnitude of the insolubility of his or her problems. Thus small problems are perceived as big and big problems are overwhelming. Furthermore, these individuals show an incredible lack of confidence in their own resources for problem solving. As a result, they tend to project a picture of doom into the future. Beck, Rush, Shaw, Brian and Gary say that they exhibit the cardinal features of the Cognitive Triad, namely an exaggerated negative view of the outside world, themselves and the future.[20] This would finally lead them to hopelessness and suicide. It is noteworthy that those negative trio concerns the nature of man, the world, and the future. This is indeed what early Muslim therapists were discussing, only adding the fourth fact or about the hereafter that Beck and friends as secular therapists naturally refuse to accept.

Thus, a Muslim psychotherapist should demonstrate and explain to his patients the fallacy of their beliefs. He then should correct these false beliefs and irrational reasoning. If the case that sparks anxiety is the losing of a job or the death of the family's breadwinner, they should be told about the reality of this life that all beginning has its end, and all existences except Almighty God are subject to perish.[21] It is irrational to expect the eternity of the non-eternal.[22] They have to be always reminded about themselves, namely who they are; what is the purpose of life; and where they come from and where they will be going. Their knowledge of these fundamental issues gives them meaning and purpose

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[20] Beck, Rush, Shaw, Brian and Gary, *Cognitive therapy of depression* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1979), p.11.

[21] Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ 28:88.

[22] Iṣfahānī, *Al-Dharī'ah ilā Makārim al-Sharī'ah*, (Egypt: Dar al-Wafā', 1987), 333. See also Miskawayh, *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq wa Ṭaṭhīr al-A'rāq* (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabat al-Hayāh, n.d.), p.193.

of their worldly life, that is, to serve God and be obedient to Him or at least to accept the problems of life with an optimistic approach. Having meaning and purpose in life and engaging oneself with the realization of this meaning and purpose will save oneself from existential anxiety and frustration.

A Muslim psychotherapist should also explain to his patient about the true nature of God and that He is always available, Omnipotence, Oft-forgiving, and Most Merciful. He also knows best what is good for his servants,[23] and that anything that happens is nothing but a Divine decree (*qaḍa'* and *qadar*).[24] Having true knowledge and right conception of God brings about security and safety, peace of mind, and positive thoughts. All these are qualities that a person with severe anxiety disorders does not have. Security is gained through the conviction that he is not alone, even at those times when he feels temporarily separated from other people. The feeling of safety increases as he comes to believe that there is a source that he can always turns to in times of difficulty, and that there is no difficulty, however great, that cannot be resolved through the help of God. This feeling of a deep, abiding sense of security and safety leads to peace of mind.[25] This peace of mind is increasingly felt when all misfortunes that incur are seen and understood as a test to his faith and patience.[26]

By knowledge, one can produce and nourish healthy thoughts as an emergency aid for unexpected emotional outburst. After having the knowledge, one is able to give all the right and proper answers and solutions to the problems he faces in life. This knowledge will bestow him with the ability to think rationally and positively, eliminating the irrational and negative thoughts that cause emotional disorder. His reason will be able to analyze and test any incoming thoughts. It is comparable to the conscientious and well-trained security guard who allows no one to trespass without proper and conscientious scrutiny. Any detected negative thought which is indeed the cause of anxiety and other psycho-spiritual diseases will be negated while the positive ones will be welcomed. Such healthy thoughts and cognitions, according to

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[23] Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:216.

[24] Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Ḥadīd 57:22-23.

[25] Bourne, *The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook* (Oakland: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 1997), 384.

[26] Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:155; and Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Muḥammad 47:31.

al-Balkhī, should be initiated and stored in the memory when a person is in a tranquil and relaxed condition.[27]

A person should therefore nourish himself with knowledge and good deeds to prevent from the problem of longing for this world, and not to detest leaving it as the baby who leaves his mother's womb crying in anxiety.[28] These are some examples on how the true knowledge and conceptions of those four fundamental issues can help a person to get rid of anxiety disorders. With this knowledge as part of their expertise, Muslim therapists have rich resources to carry out effective psycho-spiritual therapy. What they use in their cognitive healings is the Truth that patients have faith in, and not merely superficial conjecture. Besides providing the patient with this knowledge which is the first phase of *īmān* restoration therapy, the treatment will be more effective if the patient proceeds to the second phase which is inner struggle and discipline.

Inner Struggle (*Mujāhadah*) and Discipline (*Riyāḍah*)

In Islamic psycho-spiritual therapy, there are two very important and indispensable methods in the treatment of anxiety and other disorders. These are known as inner struggle (*mujāhadah*) and discipline (*riyāḍah*). These techniques are highly recommended by early Muslims scholars. Ibn Qayyim, for example, in his *Medicine of the Prophet* stated that *mujāhadah* is an effective treatment to ward off worry and sorrow for when the soul abandons its duties and searches for dominance and mastery, its sadness, anxiety and fear grow strong. When it fights these, for the sake of God, God turns that sadness and anxiety into joy, energy and strength.[29]

Al-Rāzī, regards this gradual training of the soul in suppressing the passions and opposing their natural inclinations to be the most important aspect of treatment in psycho-spiritual illnesses. He compares them to the medicines that are used to treat physical illnesses. He says that in treating the body medicines are used, but the medicines of the soul come through inner struggle (*mujāhadah*), discipline (*riyāḍah*), and

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[27] Al-Balkhī, *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*, p.342.

[28] Iṣfahānī, *Al-Dharī‘ah ilā Makārim al-Sharī‘ah,* p. 336.

[29] Ibn Qayyim, *Medicine of the Prophet* (United Kingdom, The Islamic Texts Society, 1998), p.151.

the refinement (*tahzīb*) of the character.[30] The two terms *mujāhadah* and *riyāḍah* have slightly different meanings but they are related like the two sides of the same coin. The former refers to an individual's struggle against his animalistic soul to prevent him from indulging in forbidden desires (*shahwah*), and the latter refers to acquiring good habits which secure the pleasure of God.[31] These methods are very effective in treating the root causes of psychological disorders which are mostly, as already stated, due to the illness of the soul or heart.

Inner Struggle (*Mujāhadah*)

It is interesting to point out that healing by the opposite or as is termed today, reciprocal inhibition, is in fact the essence of inner struggle. It is to "wean the soul from its habits and compel it to oppose its passions at all times".[32] In order to understand this statement, we have to understand the nature and reality of the soul. A healthy soul is the soul which is in a state of equilibrium, that is, balanced state of the functioning of the faculties of the soul, namely the faculty of desire (*al-quwwah al-shahwāniyyah),* the faculty of anger (*al-quwwah al-ghadabiyyah*) and the reason *('aql)*. To be balanced, all these faculties must be in a correct proportion to each other, in which the desire and the irascible faculties submit to the reason.

The soul in the balanced state will produce good characters such as generosity, patience, love of knowledge, wisdom and so on. All these qualities are the necessary elements in the treatment of psychological disorders. Generosity prevents from the excessive love of wealth and material possessions. This excessive love causes a person to have constant anxiety of the possibility of losing his property. Patience prevents a person from being afflicted with excessive anger and severe depression. With the control over these two maladaptive emotional reactions, the person will be able to have proper and rational thinking and tranquil emotionality; and he will not be enslaved by negative and irrational thoughts. Love of knowledge and wisdom is ultimately

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[30] Al-Rāzī, *Ṭibb al-Ruḥānī*, translated from Arabic by Arberry, *The Spiritual Physick of Rhazes* (London, John Murray, 1950), p.22.

[31] Al-Ghazālī. *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 3, p.68.

[32] Al-Qushairī, *Al-Risālah al-Qushayriyyah fī 'Ilm al-Taṣawwuf* (Beirut, Dār al-Kitāb al-Arabī, n.d.), translated from Arabic by B. R. Von Schlegell, *Principles of Sufism* (Berkley, Mizān Press, 1990), p. 99.

necessary because ignorance, as we have already stated, is the true underlying cause of most psychological disorders.

On the other hand, the soul which is not in a state of equilibrium will produce blameworthy characters such as greed and excessive love of wealth, impatience, anger, less interest to acquire knowledge and wisdom. All these qualities bring about anxiety and other psycho-spiritual illnesses. Therefore, in order to get rid of them, this equilibrium must be maintained. In order to maintain it, one has to constrain the soul from being led by its base desires. This principle, according to al-Ghazālī, is quite similar to the principle of treatment for bodily illness; and with respect to the soul, the disease of ignorance (*jahl*) is treated by learning (*ta'allum*), that of avarice by generosity, and that of impatience by forcibly restraining oneself from quick and immature thinking.[33]

The soul by nature is inclined towards worldly enjoyment and pleasure. It utilizes any possible means including trickery or deception in order to achieve this purpose. If it is left in such a condition for a long time, it will become blind and deaf with respect to good deeds. It will be in love with the world. This love for the world makes the soul blind to the next world. This is what the Prophet (s.a.w.) means when he says: "Your love for something will make you blind and deaf to others".[34] In order to treat excessive love of the world and to get out of this blindness and deafness, one has no choice other than fighting the whims and desires of one's soul because, as Ibn Qayyim describes, desire is the greatest of its illnesses, and opposing this is the strongest of its remedies.[35]

Thus to accomplish this task, it requires a person to endure the unending struggle against one's passion and desire until he gains mastery over them. The mastery of intellect upon the desire will keep Satan which is the source of evil obsessions away from the heart. In this state, Satan will lose its sustenance, that is, passion and desire. Without them, Satan will have no place of attraction in human psyche. A good analogy concerning this matter is like a house that becomes the target of a thief because of what it has. However, if it has nothing attractive to the thief,

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[33] Al-Ghazālī. *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 3, p.187.

[34] Abū Dā'ūd, Sulaimān ibn al-Ashʿath, *Sunan* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Makkiyyah, n.d.), no. 127.

[35] Ibn Qayyim, *Medicine of the Prophet,* p.151.

he will leave it. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "*As for My servants, no authority shalt thou (Satans) have over them*".[36]

Discipline (*Riyāḍah)*

In due course, the patient needs to discipline his soul towards acquiring good habits which secure the pleasure of God. This gradual process of cultivating good traits and to make an established habit is what is known as self-discipline or *riyāḍat al-nafs*. The word "*riyāḍah*" is derived from an Arabic word "*rawaḍa*" which has the meaning of "to tame, to train, and to domesticate" in a way which generates docility, tractability, and gentleness.[37] The soul, as we have mentioned before, is accustomed to enjoyment and desire. It has to be tamed and trained by cutting it off from its customs and replacing them with good traits.

The discipline simply means the process by which the soul is gradually trained to cultivate good traits. A stingy patient, for example, in his struggle against his excessive love of wealth, has to train himself to pay charity.   A hot-tempered patient, in his fighting against his aggressiveness, has to discipline himself with the opposite behavior such as tolerance and forgiveness. A person who is too obsessed with this worldly life and forgets God has to train and discipline himself with *'ibādah* (acts of service to God) and *zikr Allāh* (remembrance of God) that will bring him nearer to God. It is clear therefore that inner struggle and discipline are not only necessary but also very effective in changing one's blameworthy behaviors into the praiseworthy ones.

Conclusion

The religious oriented therapy i.e., *īmān* restoration therapy integrates cognitive, spiritual and behavioral approaches. It functions by re-illuminating the heart with the light of faith that will rid one from psycho-spiritual illnesses. Without these illnesses, one will enjoy complete tranquility (*ṭuma'nīnah*), happiness (*sa'ādah*) and be strong in facing all the psychological pressures posed by globalization. It is no wonder that lately many Western psychologists and psychotherapists

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[36] Al-Qur'ān, *Sūrah al-Isrā'* 17:65.

[37] Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabi, 1997), vol. 7, p.154.

have started to adopt parts of religious teachings and practices into their psychotherapeutic practices. They know that by totally rejecting religion and spirituality, they would not be able to provide a good and effective cure to their patients. However, in their eagerness to "spiritualize" their psychotherapeutic practices, as we have already stated, they encounter the problems of the lack of resources which forces them to benefit from other religions and traditions, namely Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. On the contrary, Muslim therapists today are indeed blessed with a rich and valuable heritage left by their ancestors in the field of psychology. It is a psychology which is religiously rooted, characterized by comprehensiveness, consistency, certainty, and suitability with the nature of man. This blessed gift should be appreciated with love and pride, and then followed through with the zeal to further develop it for the benefit of their patients whosoever. Muslim scholars of the past have done their duties by paving the way, and it is therefore left to Muslim psychologists and psychotherapists to continue and to make Islamic psychology widely used and practiced in this globalized world.