

## SUFISTIC SELF-HEALING: THE INTERSECTION OF SUFISM AND PSYCHOLOGY

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**Abstract.** Humans always desire to know themselves, know the world around them, and know their place in the world. This search has taken humanity from religious dogmas to philosophical discourse and the empirical sciences. Although human civilization has progressed in various alternatives for understanding the self about nature, the answers remain elusive. Spirituality, whether related to a particular religion or another, has been practiced for a long time and is claimed to provide answers to "unresolved doubts" (S. Haque Nizamie, et al, 2013). In recent years, there has been an increase in interest in spirituality, and advances in neuroscience have provided an opening to understand it from a more scientific viewpoint and place it in the proper perspective. In various cultures, spirituality is an important part of the belief system of the majority of society. This affects mental well-being and understanding of mental illness in terms of etiology, meaning, and self-healing modalities. It seems important for mental health professionals to be aware of how spirituality influences the mental well-being of individuals in both health and illness. This paper will outline the basic foundations of Sufism, how Sufism affects the mental well-being of individuals associated with it, and its relationship with psychology.

**Keywords:** self-healing, transpersonal psychology, Sufism

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## INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Given the all-encompassing nature of a holistic approach to health, it is surprising that there has only recently been a trend across the world to view health holistically. Currently, psychological health and well-being are beginning to be considered at a policy level by examining biopsychosocial models of health services. In addition, complementary alternative treatments such as naturopathy, acupuncture, traditional medicine, etc., have been recognized as being used by patients along with regular medical treatment. Doctors are increasingly recognizing this in line with the desire of patients who often look for other alternatives to obtain health.

According to Hegel and Marx, the source of mental illness in modern society is alienation. That is a situation where a person has lost himself and no longer considers himself as the center of his behavioral activities. This describes a situation where a person has many things and uses many things, but he feels lonely and alone and feels that something is missing. Increasingly, he feels like he is nothing because his life is dominated by other things outside of him, which rob him of peace of mind, and precious time, filling him with things that when he is truly alone, these things have no meaning. Hegel and Marx relate alienation in the context of modern humans, where society uses television broadcasts (currently social media) as the standard of truth. If his appearance is like on television, then his perception of reality is correct.

Characteristics of people who have mental health according to Faisal Anwar & Putry Julia (Education Journal, 2021): 1) A feeling of joy and satisfaction in their daily life, 2) An enthusiasm in living their daily lives, 3) Ability to interpret life's stress and recover from the adversity faced in life, 3) Ability to actualize yourself, 4) Flexibility to adapt to develop in a better direction by facing changes in life conditions, 5) Having balance, namely having a balance between work, play, study, rest, etc. in life, 6) Well-roundedness, spiritual outlook, soul, body, creativity, and cognitive development, 7) Pay attention to themselves rather than others, 8) Self-confidence and good self-assessment towards yourself.

This article examines the role of Sufism in healing practices. Various approaches to Sufism have been included in various studies including anthropological, sociological, and theological fields, but in the relationship between Sufism and health, the two are one unit that has recently become known as the biopsychosocial and religio-spiritual health models. Attempts have been made by various practitioners and observers of Sufism to anchor their approaches within a medical healing framework with the use of specific medicinal herbs, but this article is not intended to test the truth or authenticity of these approaches. This article outlines the facts about the contribution of Sufism in healing individuals for various health complaints, especially mental health.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **Sufistic Self-healing and Transpersonal Psychology**

The idea of Sufi healing involves the psychospiritual self, that is, ridding oneself of physical and material problems, to change one's state of mind. The concept of well-being is based on theological discourse, in which Sufis feel separation from the Divine makes a person vulnerable to emotional "illness" (O'Riordan, 1999; Shafii, 1985; Wilcox, 1995). The health psychology framework can be used to demonstrate explanations in allopathic medicine regarding mind-body interactions and their effects on physical illness (French, Vedhara, Kaptein, & Weinman, 2010; O'Riordan, 1999; Straub, 2012). In addition, the field of psychoneuroimmunology examines the interaction between psychological health and immune response, for example, the influence of anxiety and anger levels, increased cortisol levels, and increased heart rate which can result in myocardial infarction, as well as decreased immune responses (Barak, 2006; Kiecolt Glaser, McGuire, Robles, & Glaser, 2002; Syafii (1985) states that meditation has an impact on slower and shallower breathing, thereby increasing parasympathetic activity (the "relaxing" part of breathing). physiological function). In addition, meditation is said to affect lower plasma cortisol levels and lower blood pressure (Fatima et al., 2015; Syafii, 1985).

Spiritual and religious beliefs are an important way of coping with stress for many people, but unfortunately, they receive little attention from mental health professionals. Recently, however, religion and

spirituality have been incorporated into the therapeutic process and have shown promising results. The assimilation of spirituality into the psychotherapy process can take the form of improving existing therapeutic techniques – spiritually. augmented cognitive behavioral therapy or the development of new techniques in which spirituality itself is at the core – transpersonal psychotherapy. Although Sufi beliefs and practices have been incorporated into transpersonal psychotherapy there is no literature on incorporating these into cognitive behavioral therapy models.

Spiritually augmented cognitive behavioral therapy is essentially cognitive behavioral therapy that combines an individual's belief system, specifically spiritual, to focus on existential issues. Therapists work with the individual's spiritual beliefs and practices such as meditation, prayer, etc. But there is no attempt to instill his or her own beliefs or beliefs that the patient has never held into the therapeutic process. This therapy includes 10-16 sessions, each session lasts 45-70 minutes and is carried out once a week. This therapy has demonstrated efficacy in controlled trials with reduced relapse and rehospitalization in the treatment group. Sufi themes of patience (sabr), trust in God (tawakkal), contentment (rida), and God as Forgiving may have a significant impact in changing negative cognitive schemas and are accompanied by Sufi practices of remembering God (dhikr) and gratitude (syukur) may provide an appropriate framework for spiritually enhanced cognitive behavioral therapy for Sufi believers.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Basics of Self-healing**

Emotional healing generally occurs when individuals can acknowledge, accept, and process difficult emotions or experiences. This process looks different for everyone, but it is possible as long as one is open to letting go of expectations about what the experience will be like or what it will bring. The reality is that individuals will likely never be the same person they were before whatever they experienced happened. This may feel scary, but it can also feel very liberating as individuals seek to find themselves and experience post-traumatic growth.

After going through something traumatic, painful, difficult, or life-changing, it is important to heal the mind of the individual who

experienced it, and the effect it had on the physical body. The emotional healing process takes time and looks different for each person. Regardless of what illness an individual is experiencing, taking steps such as practicing self-compassion, practicing mindfulness, taking care of the body, and trying therapy can help. Emotional healing is the process of acknowledging, allowing, accepting, integrating, and processing painful life experiences and strong emotions. This may involve empathy, self-regulation, self-compassion, self-acceptance, mindfulness, and integration. Many people tend to want to control the emotional healing process by minimizing pain and controlling their emotions. However, this can hinder the emotional healing process.

Self-healing is a method of psychological healing that is thought to help a person to control emotions (Chan et al., 2013; Crane & Ward, 2016). Self-healing means self-healing because the word healing itself is defined as "a process of cure": a process of treatment/healing. Self-healing is intended as a process of treatment or healing that is carried out by oneself through the process of one's own beliefs and is also supported by the environment and external factors (Crane & Ward, 2016). Self-healing is closely related to confidence because self-context is an important element in motivating a person's self-confidence. Apart from that, self-healing is also related to intrapersonal communication because there is an internal dialogue process that occurs within the self's own space (M. Anis Bachtiar & Aun Falestien Faletehan, 2021).

Because self-healing means independent healing, logically this means that the client has accepted and understood his situation, and is ready to carry out various healing efforts independently. In general, the following describes the client's 'tasks' in independent healing: 1.) Learn to recognize active 'danger signs'. Feelings of boredom, emptiness, loneliness, confusion, anxiety, fear, worry, restlessness, anger, hatred, and other negative emotions that arise and interfere with daily activities are dangerous signs that call for attention. 2.) Seek help. Read books, read articles, listen to shows on the internet about advice or motivation, or contact someone who can provide support to him. 3.) Open your mind (and heart) to accept various healing efforts, and be prepared to carry out the necessary exercises.

What must be taken into account in the independent healing process is that to start practicing independently, a person still needs a teacher, counselor, or therapist to help establish an understanding of what happened, what went wrong, and what must be done. The

teacher, counselor, or therapist will lay the foundations for understanding the problem and the solution. Teachers, counselors or therapists will help individuals learn a healthy lifestyle holistically, individuals will continue it independently and internalize it in their daily living behavior.

## Steps for Sufistic Self-healing

Transpersonal psychotherapy is based on the premise that humans are essentially spiritual beings and therefore the core qualities associated with spirituality form the goals of transpersonal psychotherapy. The role of the therapist in transpersonal psychotherapy has been viewed variously as ranging from a spiritual guide to a “spiritual fellow sojourner.” The therapist does not promote a particular spiritual philosophy and the client is the one who takes the lead and determines the spiritual content of the therapy. Different spiritual practices, including Sufism, yoga, qigong, and aikido have been incorporated into transpersonal psychotherapy. Transpersonal psychotherapy has been used for the treatment of abnormal grief, spiritual crises, psychotic disorders, and substance use disorders. Transpersonal psychotherapy can provide a basis for engagement of shamans with mental health services and given the large number of people seeking shamans, this could have a significant public health impact.

Sufistic self-healing focuses on placing the problem of mental illness in a transcendental framework. His healing efforts paid great attention to the essential problems, rather than superficial material trinkets. The following are the stages of Sufistic self-healing which in general can be practiced by clients on themselves, after receiving help from a teacher who leads them to the Ultimate Goal, where losing direction is the source of the mental illness they suffer.

1. Learn to know which are the pseudo and real things. This aims to raise the level of individual understanding of things that are more transcendent beyond material things. This knowledge will form a new, completely different mindset, thereby leading individuals to new, healthier habits.
2. Change your perspective in viewing reality in the world. The right perspective in looking at life, and understanding the laws of the universe, helps individuals understand their position in

the universe so that this understanding keeps them away from false hopes, deceptive desires, prolonged daydreaming, and disappointment as a consequence of all of this.

3. Arrange time for reflection. Muhasabah is the fastest way to self-understanding before individuals seek help outside themselves.
4. Study the texts of daily routine remembrance from the verses of the Qur'an (al-ma'tsurat). On the internet, nowadays, there is a lot of information about this. However, pocketbooks have proven to be more helpful because they are quicker to access to read and practice.
5. Set a special and regular time to read the dhikr. Regularity is necessary for healing, just as allopathic medical drugs must also be consumed regularly. Routine activities will form habits, habits will become relatively permanent and long-term. The hope is of course that there will be no recurrence at another time.
6. Visit regularly, the spiritual teacher. Usually, remembrance meetings (not public recitation meetings) will be a good support system to help healing.
7. Join a community or assembly as a larger support system in the group, which will make it easier for individuals to access reminders that can function to maintain individual awareness.
8. Learn mindfulness. This is a meditation method used to train someone to focus more on what is happening around them. Mindfulness will help you be more aware of your surroundings and able to accept emotions openly.
9. Do positive activities and avoid things that are not useful. Positive routines will 'drain' the individual's energy so that hopefully there will be no energy left for negative and destructive things.
10. Make sense of the past and learn to learn from it. An easy example can be seen in the following sentence: "If I hadn't experienced that bad thing before, maybe I wouldn't have been able to progress this way?", "If I had never felt heartbroken because of it, maybe my soul mate wouldn't be my partner now."
11. Get into the habit of being grateful. Gratitude creates a feeling of 'enough' from which a sense of peace and happiness

emerges. Appreciating what you have, making good use of what you have, not complaining, and continuing to try, are expressions of gratitude in action.

## CONCLUSION

Sufi beliefs and practices are an integral part of the belief system not only in much of the Muslim world but also in the increasingly popular Western world. Sufism provides an important link to the understanding of revelation – the source of religious knowledge in Islam as well as other Semitic religions, and significantly influences the mental health of its adherents and adherents. Unfortunately, there is little research-based evidence from which to conclude in either direction. There is a need for research to develop scientifically sound ways to incorporate Sufi beliefs and practices into mental health care systems before any dogma takes root. At the same time, mental health professionals should not assume the role of preachers and start promoting Sufi beliefs and practices. This role should be limited to the use of beliefs and practices that are part of the belief system.

Incorporating spiritual/Sufi elements into mental health care services needs to go through two processes: 1.) Incorporating spiritual/Sufi healers into the mental health service delivery system which can include basic training in identifying mental illness and appropriate referrals when necessary. 2.) Incorporation of spiritual/Sufi beliefs and practices into a therapeutic process that can increase the utilization of mental health services by the most spiritually oriented population. Integrating spiritual beliefs and practices into mental health service delivery systems requires efforts at both the organizational and individual levels. The sensitivity of mental health professional training participants to spiritual issues needs to be encouraged. The focus of training should be on understanding spirituality as an important part of the individual seeking help and a thorough understanding of the belief systems of the people in the practice area.

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