

Al-Qur`an and Psychotherapy

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ABSTRACT

Psychologists of various conventional schools have worked very hard to solve human's psychic crisis problems. Yet, since most of them are nearly able to understand the human psychic structure, they took misleading decisions in their psychotherapy sessions. This research aims to provide better solution to solve existing psychic problems. In doing so, this research uses a literature study that takes psychotherapy texts of *Risale-i Nur* by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi as the object of the research. The Imani method (faith-based method) proposed by Nursi is a model of Islamic psychotherapy with the guidance of the Qur'an to understand the psychic elements of human fundamentally. This method has three techniques; self-devotion to the Qur'an and faith, maintenance of social relation, and maintenance of *ukhuwwah* (Islamic brotherhood) and unity. These three techniques are inseparable; all must be implemented in a simultaneous complexity and order. This method is fraught with applied faith practices, taking clients to cure the psychic disease, both preventative and curative, improving the quality of their faith in God.

Keywords: *human crisis, Islamic psychotherapy, the Imani methods, and Said Nursi*

1. INTRODUCTION

The academic world is growing more and more aware that conventional psychotherapy has misunderstood the essence of human: it only gives partial understanding and leaves behind the other part that is the wraith element in the human being, one that is the most important element in the practice of psychotherapy. Conventional psychotherapy offers its products on the basis that psychic problems are recognized by the physical behavior of humans, so that they have created psychic control over material considerations. This is evidenced by those who make a variety of methods and techniques by looking at common events and causes or habits. This is unacceptable, seeing physical symptoms do not always represent psychic symptoms, and customs that appear cannot be referred to a psychic conclusion. This points to the conclusion that no amount of advanced methods and techniques of conventional psychotherapy can cure a psychic disease; both preventative and curative.

Islamic psychotherapy then simply builds up its products to curb and solve these complex problems. For example, according to the theory of revelation, all men have a clot of blood (heart) that if it is good, all aspects of human life will be good. Because of this, Islamic psychotherapy has created a variety of methods and techniques that are generally intended to make the human heart good and pure (*tazkiyah an-nafs*). The adapter of the theoretical revelations utters the principle of the wraith of human; good and bad. Thus, these methods and techniques are invented to lead the human's wraith to good inclinations, and to cultivate its potentials not to return to bad tendencies.

In this regard, the Imani method of psychotherapy, developed by a Turkey's leading clerics, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, is worthy of mention. It is filled with highly rational applied techniques. In addition, it is also very easy, and it does not take long to understand the practice of psychotherapy. It also does not require experts, because his method is always stimulating every client's psychic ability to reach his/her ratio. So the clients can control themselves as they go about their daily routine. For this reason, this research aims to uncover the Imani method as a solution to human's psychic existing problems, while correcting the wrong understanding of human's psychic structure that has been produced by conventional psychologists.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative research, that involves understanding, concepts, values and characteristics inherent in the object of study holistically, by interpreting collected data in relation to various desired aspect [1]. The main object of research is psychotherapy texts in the nine volumes of *Risale-I Nur*, authored by Said Nursi. The texts will be analyzed by using data that is needed and supported. Considering that, this research is a library research; which means that its fully uses written sources, specifically the books produced by Said Nursi [2].

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Faith and Psychotherapy

Faith in Nursi's view has a profound effect on the formation of human character. It determines the soul condition of each individual. Therefore, observing the faith in the soul of each individual is the core of Nursi's psychotherapy approach[3]. Nursi defines faith as a foundation, which means that all human's souls depend on their faith. This is because faith is the source of meaning power, and as a way of opening up hopes that may be impossible in a materialistic point of view[4]. Faith in terms of psychotherapy is an applied and dynamic faith, a tangible faith in human's daily life. It is claimed that strategy of faith is the most universal, not viewing the different physical aspects of each individual, but the inner aspects that all humans have the same substance, so that problem solving with them is highly efficient; able to transform human life completely[5].

As the basic assumption, Nursi argues that the soul actually knows its essence, that it does not intend mortality, but immortality. Then, the human with a healthy soul will realize that it is unworthy to fight for a mortal thing. As evidence, when a man tries to satisfy his soul with material satisfaction, the soul will never feel satisfied with it. But when the soul is satisfied with things that are eternal, it receives, at least, and it is satisfied, and increases in satisfaction when filled with things that are everlasting[6]. This formula is the primary approach of psychotherapy according to Nursi. It directs the soul to be directed with eternal things. Besides, the order of the heart which is the first element of man's happiness stemmed from faith, especially faith in God and the hereafter; a clear faith untainted by doubt and not marred by hypocrisy[6]. On this basis, the Imani method (faith-based method) became the proper method of keeping a human psychic healthy, without interpreting the metaphysical dimension or the mortal dimension.

3.2. Islamic Psychotherapy of the Imani Method

The Imani method considers faith to be everything in life, that the key to a man's success and happiness is his faith. The concept of faith carried out in this method, however, has used all of mankind's psychic powers, so that it can receive faith consciously. The method is quite easy, only to include a client to read *Rasail Nur* along with one of them leading the class. Leaders will read the text little by little and discuss it with other members. Self-devotion to the Qur'an and faith, maintaining the social relation, and maintaining *ukhuwwah* and unity: all constitute three major chapters in the *Rasail Nur*. Thus, researchers discern a high value of urgency in these methods and techniques. Thus it is worth more exploration and review.

These three techniques are inseparable. All must be implemented in a simultaneous complex and order. Self-devotion to faith is the greatest component of this method, followed by a necessity to maintain acceptance in real life as both the spirit and the key to acceptance of such devotion, followed by safeguarding the bond of *ukhuwwah islamiyyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and *jamaah* (sense of community). For the most part, researchers see that Nursi in this regard is not blind to the cure, even if it ignores mental illness in a client or a patient, which is then relegated to positive action that will benefit his later life. Not that he's ignoring a client's psychic symptoms, but he feels that we shouldn't take the negative, but our obligation is to make a good standing with God. In other words, the client in this method is so preoccupied with good and useful activities that he forgets bad and potentially provocative the insanity.

3.3. Devotion to the Holy Qur'an and Faith (Iman)

Devotion is high dedication to a cause. Self-devotion to the Qur'an and faith means that human is required to unite his views and lifetimes for the sake of the Qur'an and faith[7]. Its mean that human does not teach except the values of the Qur'an, he does not argue against the policies of the secular government except by the argument of the Qur'an, and his whole spirit never reflects a value other than the Qur'an. As for faith, self-devotion to faith is a command from the Qur'an, with this faith the whole human problem is solved, not except psychological. It is thus because faith guides the human soul, so that it becomes aware to the duties it ought to carry, indirectly by faith human will directed which way he must go through life. Faith is also the strength for humans to live the reality of life[5].

Indirectly, faith educate the self and the personality to become human that easier to get the calmness, because faith teaches not to think beyond the limits of human's ability, and to leave the whole of it to The Omniscient The Wisser. Human's image was created with all its limits in order that he doesn't forget to recognize the imagery of everything. When human knows God, his soul will not get along blessing (*ridha*) with things that are not everlasting. When the soul is asked, what it thinks of those things that do not accompany it in the afterlife. Then the soul shall answer that it shall leave it. This is because the soul understands the essence of an immortal world and not eternal, therefore he hasn't really need that[6].

Devotion to faith is an ongoing education of the soul, but it must be applied for a lifetime. Because the soul has two contradictory tendencies, a tendency toward good and bad; and it is by conditioning that it can maintain the determination of wills. Curing psychic diseases by faith is the most effective and efficient way, for faith does not look at clients according to material specifications, but the very essence of the human soul; that's all the same. This method becomes difficult to deny because it touched a

fundamental aspect of human life (the nature of human sense; *fitrah*)[8].

Faith is the reminder of human to what he was created, and God created human to be exalted among other creatures[9], so that he also created all the potential that makes it easier for human to achieve that glory by faith. The substance of the soul with a firm faith will never distract attention to outward impermanent things[6], so that no worldly temptation human faces can shake his or her life principle, and so a client can save his or her health. Considering that the degree of faith that can go up and down and the lack of assurance that it will survive in a strong and stable condition, the duration of personal devotion to the faith will have to last a lifetime[8]. Therefore, researches concluded that it is not just healing the soul from its pain but leading it to be good as ever. It holds the value of a soul and personality that is forever dynamic and progressive in maintaining faith. This is because the world's problems are always developing, and psychotherapy methods and techniques must adapt to the conditions, and universal faith is the correct solution, as Dr. Yahya Hasyim suggests that faith is the cure for all sickness; from mental illness to an endless disease of thought and social[10]

Nursi views that the social diseases in society as one that comes from the subject's soul individually, such as desperation, distrust in social and political life, hostility, stupidity, dictatorship and insolence, hunting for benefits for personal gain[11]. The disease of the soul seems to be very simple to us, but the effects and strains of other diseases will develop more danger and more hostility; if not addressed immediately. For that matter, repairing the faith must first be done individually, before repairing the faith around it. In this technique, clients are led to (1) carry out all their duties as Muslims, (2) follow *sunnah nabawiyah* (prophetic tradition), (3) and abandon the mortal sin.

Furthermore, it has also been emphasized for a client to fortify himself by thinking, praying, begging for forgiveness, and admonishing one another to preserve his faith, to preserve the Qur'an and its *sunnah* (prophetic tradition), to always evaluate his worship, improve his morals, trim his vanity and selfishness, stifle his pride, and no longer seek popularity in the eyes of men. And all of this will help a client to recognize God, who then helps him to improve the quality of his faith.

Sensing the presence of God is also important; because psychically, humans needed it so much, so that Nursi formulated four easy techniques in a short time to get to know God well: these are *'ajz*, *faqr*, *shafaqah*, and *tafakkur*. *'Ajz* (humbleness) is a technique that moves emotions to always feel weak before God, which is followed by a need for it; and directly delivered mankind to the need for continued worship. *Faqr* (poverty) is a technique that moves emotions to feel less before god, so that human always hopes for His love, since human really has nothing but God-given. Poverty feels directed only to God, not human, because otherwise, showing poverty to human is an affront to God. *Shafaqah* (compassion) is like *'ajz* but in reaching out for the *ma'rifatullah* is not limited

in the worship work, with the full potential of the soul leading to human's need for God. *Tafakkur* (reflection) is a thoughtful activity in all things, especially thought the creation of God as a manifestation of His name and character[11], [12].

By this *ma'rifatullah* (seeing the God Allah), human knows his works and speech, and will not slip with every material temptation that is confronted to him; which is the source of mental illness. And from this *ma'rifatullah*, human will love the God in which he is the greatest happiness for the human soul. By all of this, human becomes easily devoted to the faith.

From here it is seen that devotion to faith is an attempt to move away from mortal things to everlasting things, in other words always working toward things to take an afterlife. According to Dr. Collin Turner, devotion to faith is by understanding struggle with *tazkiyatunnafs* or mental consecration[14]. Self-devotion to faith is essential, since human preoccupied with worldly life is human who loses his humanity in a material way. Human who was created to be exalted is unworthy to enjoy this narrow, mortal life, and so with devotion to faith and turning his eyes to things everlasting is a very good thing [4].

3.4. Keeping Grace in Real Life

No doubt that sincerity is the most important aspect of success in working a charity. In this regard, Nursi motivates us to continue to have a sincere spirit. In his view, to be sincere in intent, he means to curb tendencies, and a willing perfection is trust[15]. The realization of sincere evoke to peace of mind, reason and body, and then come to a conclusion that there really no calmness sense of soul, only by acceptance. A combination of self-devotion to faith techniques and keeping brotherhood is a complex composite if applied at maximum, it will have an excellent effect on the soul.

The belief born from perfect grace will always bring the doer to word, deed, desire, even good will; and will also plant in his soul fear of God, and hope, love, *ridho*, *tawakkal* (trusting), and so forth. Then, the doctrine of grace is the doctrine of religious complexes, the opposite of hypocrisy and lies[16]. With this, Dr. Collin Turner concluded that the teaching of sincerity is very good teaching, he not only charitable to God, but also charitable with God [14].

In the Nursi's life his grace came to the end of his greed to pursue heaven; so because heaven is not a target, but *ridho* (satisfaction) of God[3]. This is because of being willing is a source of spiritual strength, and there is no power other than being willing, so Nursi in the silent spirit seems unwilling to pawn out his innocence in any way, even to heaven itself, and not to losers in a sense. Willing is also the most polite way to pray and ask, he is also the most glorious worship, for his tendencies is well above earthly interests. This is what makes humans good in character and in temperament [6]

To keep willingness, Nursi urges to renounce the three vices; (1) envy, (2) selfishness and the quest for

popularity, (3) fear and greed [6]. To envy, selfishness and popularity; He was an obviously a psychic disease to be left behind, an almost contradictory disease by life-giving encouragement. Envy was counted in human's unwillingness to accept God's destiny and cause his soul to defect. Selfish and popularity also, human could never be willing to do so

As for fear and greed there are two characters that are hated by Islam; the opposite of courage, compassion, and self-sufficiency. To be greedy is to be greedy over worldly things that make the subject afraid of losing everything he has achieved. This thing which make him afraid of things other than God; like a fear of death, reluctant to do alms for a fear of decrease in wealth, fearing to fight against untruth; and according to Nursi, it is wary of satan to be fought. God entrusted fear for humans to guard their life, not to destroy themselves and to frighten themselves into unafraid things. And so fear ought to be in proper place; fear of vice to God, fear of getting sick from failing to maintain good health. As for undue fear, Nursi mentioned it as caution [13].

Nursi's effort to instill this value of sincerity is reflected in his will that allows his student to spit in the face of a tyrant as a form of opposition and blasphemy. But here, we interpret it rather different. In general it indicates Nursi's encouragement not to be afraid against the leaders of *dzalim* (unjust) and tyrants, and it is not permitted to fear death in this regard; for being martyred in return for deluded. And so it was reflected by his willingness of education, that grace is to be guarded and implemented at any time and under any circumstance, to be ever courageous to face any painful once; and it is a real form of willingness, in Nursi's viewpoint; we must all stay away from anything that comes obstruct our sincerity. This was proven, and Nursi wrote the evidence in the tract that the number of soldiers who feared and even retreated from the battlefield was more likely to be killed by the enemy than by the number of soldiers who were so valiantly under God's command by his full sincerity[13]

Knowing that willing greatness in waken the subject totality, felt leaving out the willing cause of even the most material destruction. Because the prayer that is not commenced and is filled with grace, will invite the wrath of God. As proof of the wrath of God, when divorce opinion and split up of *ahlul haqqi* (man of the righteousness), and *ahlu dholalah* (man of the wickedness) who united. And there's no way that good could ever confuse bad. Nursi held that all of this was not because of the unlearned *ahlul haqqi*, but because of the lack or lack of sincerity in them, which made them driven by self-interest. In contrast, when it has been with willingness within them, something bad if operate willingly will bring good results[6]

3.5. Strengthening Brotherhood and Group Unity

The latest techniques of the Imani method are the most helpful in carrying out the two previous techniques, it contributes much to motivating the subject to apply complexly of this Imani method. When the knowledge becomes a stronghold of every human to receive all his merits, then brotherhood is a fortress of every group that is accumulated in it. This technique trained each individual to put public interests ahead of selfish and greedy interest, with the same technique every subject became easier, faster, to achieve the *ridho* of God[14]

Furthermore, according to Nursi, this is the age of group. There is no value for a person who moves alone with his own interests, so because with the group, human is easier to do, and in religion, the group can more easily practice the Islamic faith; for the sake importance of group, not just a personal interest. Not only the Islamic brotherhood, but also the brotherhood of all the people needed in this day. On the basis that all individuals are brother[17]

The interests of the group are based on tendencies that love each other, and help each other, and make sacrifices for the common interest [1]. And this must be applied in view of the natural tendency of human which live in a society, and by protecting brotherhood and group; The human soul will feel happy and free of any pressure.

When these brotherhood and group are framed in the Islamic faith (Islamic brotherhood), to whom God alone refers to the doer, such as facilitated the application of submission to faith. This makes the Islamic brotherhood the most noble of all, for it is free from the tendencies of private, class, any other worldly tribe; to the detriment of the undesirable. Because faith always remind the Islamic brotherhood, so he has always shunned greed, envy, hostility, words and foul deeds [11]. Human with all this goodness would be educated not to fall to the ugliness of society. According to Dr. Ibrahim Janan, the surplus of this Islamic brotherhood, if it strong; then all the brotherhood outside the Islamic brotherhood will lose, and no one can stop existence.

The effect of a good client's psychic is happiness, tranquility, peace of the soul that can be good for his physical well-being, in other words the client will be both outer and inner healthy health. When these methods and techniques can be applied properly, the client is well-versed in the essence of a world that will never satisfy his soul and is fully aware of that which is not oriented toward anything worldly. Thus, the worldly things he views as paltry and inappropriate to issue, and then he is always going pursue the afterlife things which share the great happiness of the afterlife.

4. CONCLUSION

Taking revelation as the guidance, Islamic psychotherapy tries to fully understand the psychic elements of human, that is by following the natural tendencies, so it can

provide the most appropriate solution. Understanding the human psychic structure from the Qur'an's perspective, the Imani method is able to render human's motivation and hope staying positive, which causes an improvement in human's psychological condition. Thus, the Imani method could be a solution for the misunderstanding in conventional psychotherapy on human's psychic structure. By combining complementary and inseparable techniques, such as devotion to the holy Qur'an and faith, supporting humanity in daily life, and guarding brotherhood and group, human can improve their psychological health.

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