

MIND, HEART AND DATES

Psychology and Islamic Spirituality

for the Seeking Soul

Colophon

Title: MIND, HEART AND DATES

Subtitle: *Psychology and Islamic Spirituality for the Seeking Soul*

First edition: 2026

ISBN: 978-94-0388-626-8

Design and layout: Yücel Turan

Printing and finishing: Bookmundo

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YÜCEL TURAN

MIND, HEART AND DATES

Psychology and Islamic Spirituality

for the Seeking Soul

MIND, HEART AND DATES

*In this book, mind meets heart,
where thinking and feeling converge
on the path towards healing and growth.*

*Just as dates hold a place of honour in Islam –
a symbol of purity, nourishment and renewal –
so this book seeks to nourish you
with knowledge, warmth and strength.*

*It invites you not only to examine your thoughts and emotions,
but to feed yourself with a spiritual richness
that softens life and fills it with light.*

*Just as the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him,
broke his fast with dates,
this book gently breaks open the silence within you –
with quiet, powerful sustenance for soul and spirit.*

FOREWORD

Why This Book?

“Why am I not allowed to bring my faith into therapy?”

A client asked me that question years ago. Her tears said more than her words ever could. She had come seeking help for anxiety, yet felt she had to leave the most important part of herself – her heart and her faith – outside the door. It was as though psychology and Islam were two separate worlds that could never meet.

That question has stayed with me ever since.

In my practice I see this more and more: Muslims who struggle not only with their symptoms but with a deeper fracture. Their minds turn to therapy for answers, while their hearts long for meaning that is rarely acknowledged. They face an impossible choice between healing and faith.

Building a Bridge

This book is the bridge.

Evidence-based methods work well. They become even richer when woven into the lived experience and faith of those they serve. By combining CBT, ACT and EMDR with Islamic principles and *tasawwuf* – the inner dimension of Islam, focused on purifying the heart and drawing closer to Allah – something greater emerges. Healing happens in mind, heart and soul at once.

A note on tasawwuf: It is not a separate movement but an emphasis on values rooted in the Qur’an and Sunnah – sincerity, humility and love for Allah. All references in this book draw from the Qur’an and Sunnah and focus on

strengthening taqwa (God-consciousness) and nurturing love for Allah. The book honours the diversity within Islamic traditions and does not seek to exclude or critique any school of thought.

Who Is This Book For?

This book is for you if you believe mental wellbeing cannot be separated from faith and inner meaning. It is for anyone seeking healing that nourishes both mind and heart.

It is also for practitioners and therapists who wish to honour the spiritual and cultural lives of their Muslim clients. It offers concrete ways to integrate CBT, ACT and EMDR with Islamic spirituality.

The Journey Begins Here

What you will find in these pages is not a choice between science and faith. It is a path where both strengthen each other. Insight and surrender, analysis and *dhikr*, patience and acceptance flow together into something greater than the sum of their parts.

True healing calls for wholeness. It asks for space for all that you are. This book invites you to claim that space – for your mind, your heart and your soul, for the person you are in all your complexity and beauty.

Welcome to this journey.

– Yücel Turan

CENTRAL DISCLAIMER

Medical & Therapeutic Notice

This book offers supplementary insights and exercises alongside professional care.

X This book is NOT a substitute for:

- Diagnosis or treatment of mental health conditions
- Professional EMDR therapy (to be administered only by certified therapists)
- Medication adjustments (always consult your physician)


Seek immediate help if you are experiencing:

- Depression, anxiety disorders or psychosis
- Trauma, suicidal thoughts or self-harm

If you are experiencing any of the above, contact a crisis helpline or mental health professional in your country immediately. Do not wait.

✓ This book IS appropriate for:

- Personal growth alongside professional therapy
- Preparing for therapy sessions
- Daily self-reflection

 *This disclaimer applies throughout the entire book.*

Confidentiality & Case Studies

All case studies are composite accounts drawn from years of clinical experience. Names, ages, backgrounds and identifying details have been changed to ensure that no individual can be identified. This approach complies with GDPR regulations and the professional code of conduct for psychologists. Any resemblance to specific individuals is coincidental.

No Therapeutic Relationship

Reading this book, completing its exercises or following its guidance does not constitute a therapeutic relationship between reader and author. The author acts here as educator and writer, not as a treating psychologist. For individual support or treatment, please consult a registered healthcare provider. This book is not a substitute for a personal intake, diagnosis or treatment plan and cannot respond to questions about specific situations.

Limitation of Liability

This book has been compiled with great care, drawing on current research and extensive clinical experience. Nevertheless, the author accepts no liability for any harm resulting from the use of this information. Do not alter any ongoing treatment without professional advice. When in doubt, seek professional help immediately. Your safety and wellbeing come first.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yücel Turan is a psychologist working in mental health care. His life's work is bringing together what has long been kept apart: evidence-based therapy and the spiritual and cultural values that give people their deepest sense of meaning.

The Journey Began With a Question

Growing up between two worlds, I learned early to recognise a tension that many people carry: the gap between who you are and who you are permitted to be – in therapy, at work and sometimes even at home.

During my training, I learned the craft of CBT, ACT and EMDR – powerful methods with the capacity to transform lives. Yet through years of working with people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds – Muslims and non-Muslims, believers and seekers – I kept encountering the same truth: the human struggle is universal, but the path to healing is deeply personal and rooted in whatever gives life its meaning.

With Muslim clients I witnessed something that troubled me. Many had learned to treat their faith as something separate – something that did not belong in the therapy room. As though their heart had to wait outside while their mind went to work inside. How can you become whole when you have been asked to split yourself in two?

I have not always had the answers. But I have learned to sit with the questions and I have seen, again and again, that sitting with them honestly is already a form of healing. That is what I hope to offer you here. May this book serve you on your own unique journey towards wholeness.

With warmth and sincerity.

QUICK START – BEGIN HERE

Two Ways In

Ready to act now? Follow Steps 1-3 (5-10 minutes) and feel the difference today.

Prefer to lay the foundation first? Read the Introduction (page 1) and return here when you are ready.

Let's begin.

Step 1: What are you feeling right now?

Check everything that applies – more than one is fine:

- Anxiety / Panic / Restlessness
- Sadness / Low mood / Emptiness
- Anger / Frustration / Irritability
- Difficult memories / Physical tension
- Relationship difficulties / Conflict
- Feeling lost / Without direction
- Guilt / Shame / Self-criticism
- Stress / Burnout / Exhaustion

Step 2: Choose one exercise (5-10 minutes)

What you checked	Start with
Anxiety/Panic/Restlessness	Exercise 5: Breathing + <i>Dhikr</i> (p. 34)
Sadness/Low mood	Exercise 6: Gratitude (p. 35)
Anger/Frustration	Exercise 4: Quick Reset (p. 33)
Difficult memories/ Tension	Exercise 16: Grounding (p. 71) ⚠ First read the Safety Notice in Chapter 4 (p. 67)
Relationship difficulties	Active Listening (p. 116, 120, 122)
Feeling lost/Empty	Exercise 12: Values Identification (p. 55)
Guilt/Shame	Exercise 7: Recognise, Examine, Transform (p. 36)
Stress/Burnout	Exercise 10: Conscious Acceptance (p. 53)

Step 3: Do the exercise – now

Turn to the page and spend 5-10 minutes on the exercise. Notice how you feel afterwards. Come back tomorrow and repeat or choose something new.

You do not need to read the whole book first.

One exercise a day is enough. Stumbling is not failure – it is how learning feels. Growth is a spiral, not a straight line.

After one week: where to go next?

- **New to therapy?** Start at Chapter 1.
- **Dealing with something specific?** Use the Table of Contents.
- **Already familiar with CBT, ACT or therapy?** Jump straight to Chapter 6: The Practical Toolbox (p. 87).

Remember: This book does not replace professional therapy. If you are experiencing depression, anxiety, trauma or suicidal thoughts, please seek immediate support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

➤ **INTRODUCTION: PSYCHOLOGY AND ISLAM IN HARMONY** 1

PART I – THEORETICAL FOUNDATION (MIND)

1 INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY AND ISLAM	5
1.1 What Is Psychology? – CBT, ACT and EMDR Explained	5
1.2 Core Concepts in Islamic Psychology	8
1.3 Islamic Principles for Inner Peace	10
1.4 Tasawwuf: The Heart of Inner Transformation	14

2 WORKING WITH THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS	21
2.1 CBT: Bringing Thinking, Feeling and Action into Balance	21
2.2 The Heart as Compass – The Spiritual Approach	27
2.3 Practical Exercises for Daily Use	30

3 ACCEPTANCE AND TRUST	39
3.1 ACT and Releasing Control	40
3.2 Tawakkul: Trust in Allah without Being Passive	49
3.3 Practical Exercises for Daily Use	52

4 HEALING FROM TRAUMA AND PAIN	59
4.1 EMDR and Processing Memories	60
4.2 Islamic Comfort Principles: Spiritual Healing	62
4.3 Practical Exercises: Preparation for Healing	69

PART II – PRACTICAL APPLICATION (HEART)

5 SPIRITUAL PRACTICES AS PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOLS	77
5.1 Dhikr and Meditation – Rest for Head and Heart	78
5.2 Sabr and Shukr – The Twofold Path of Resilience	79
5.3 Prayer and Qur’anic Recitation – Science and Spirituality	81

6 PRACTICAL TOOLBOX FOR EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE	87
6.1 From Theory to Heart – All Exercises in One Place	88
6.2 Your Daily Rhythm	98
6.3 Qur’anic Verses for Different Situations	103

PART III – INTEGRATION AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH (SOUL)

7 THE HARMONY BETWEEN THERAPY AND FAITH	107
------------------------------------------------	------------

PART IV – BONUS: Growing Together

PSYCHOLOGY & FAITH IN RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTIES	115
------------------------------------------------------------	------------

PART V – CLOSING AND REFLECTION

CLOSING – THE BEGINNING OF YOUR JOURNEY	129
------------------------------------------------	------------

EPILOGUE – THE HEART THAT FINDS REST	133
---------------------------------------------	------------

PART VI – APPENDICES

A: SPIRITUAL REFERENCE GUIDE	136
-------------------------------------	------------

B: THE JOURNEY OF RELEASING AND TAQWA	139
----------------------------------------------	------------

PART VII – REFERENCE

GLOSSARY – ISLAMIC TERMS	142
---------------------------------	------------

BIBLIOGRAPHY	145
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He stood at the threshold – and chose to walk towards the light.

INTRODUCTION

Psychology and Islam in Harmony

What if healing does not begin with a choice? Not between science and faith. Not between therapy and spirituality. Not between mind and heart.

What if the path to wholeness runs precisely through embracing everything that you are – a thinking being and a praying heart, psychologically grounded and spiritually striving?

This book explores that possibility. It brings together what has long been kept apart.

Two Languages, One Truth

Psychology examines how we think, feel and act. It reveals the patterns that hold us captive, the thoughts that obstruct us and the traumas that still live in the body. It asks: *How does this work? What can be changed?*

Islam places that same suffering within a larger story of trial, growth, surrender and trust. It asks: *What is this for? Where is this pain leading me?*

Where psychology helps us understand, faith helps us endure and transform. Where science analyses, spirituality offers comfort. Where therapy gives technique, faith gives meaning.