

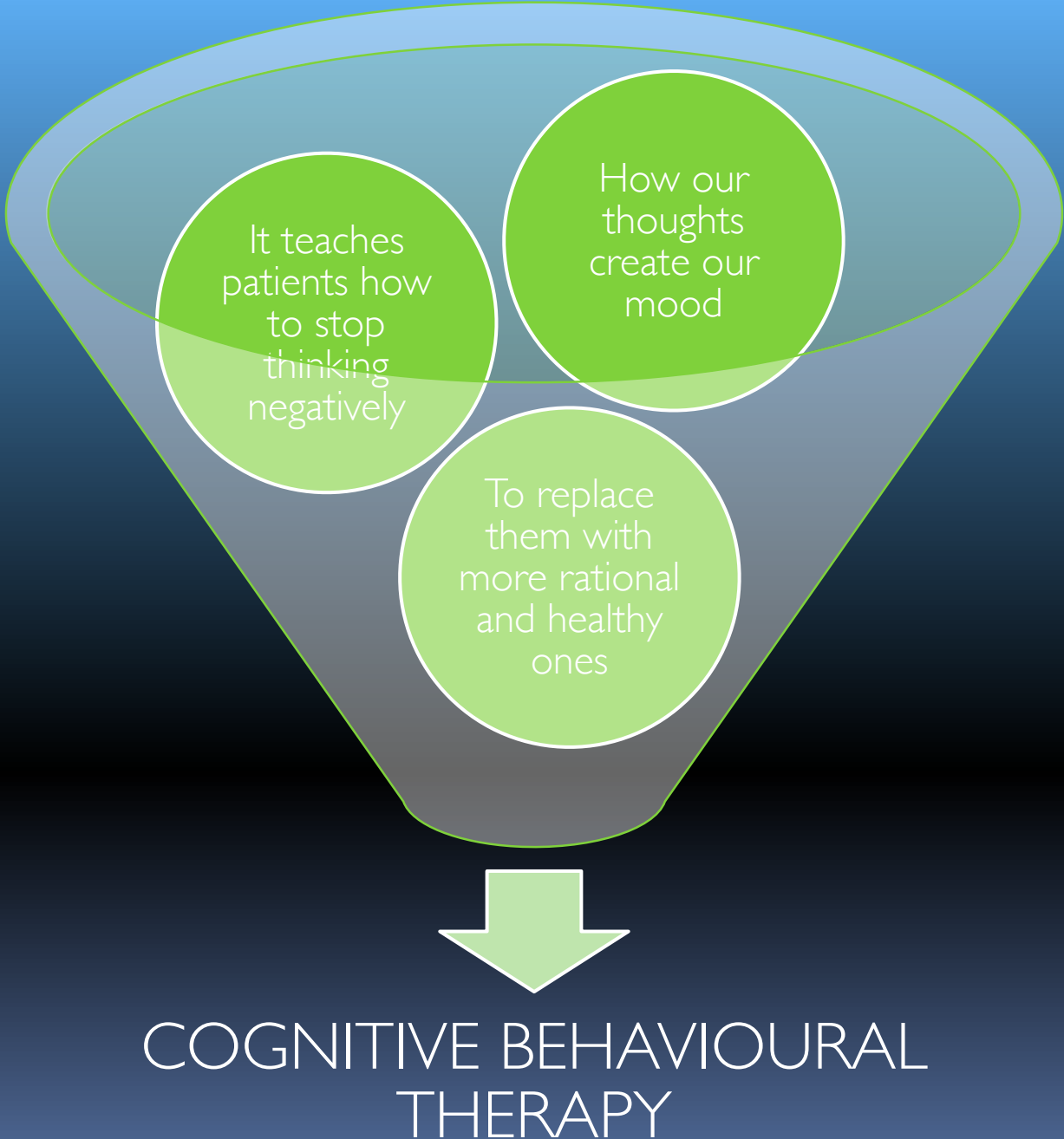


FAITH BASED COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY

COMMON CONCEPTS BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM



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It teaches patients how to stop thinking negatively

How our thoughts create our mood

To replace them with more rational and healthy ones


COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL
THERAPY

Overview

Some studies has shown that adding religious techniques, cognitions and behaviour concepts to the usual psychotherapy of religious anxious and depressed patients have faster recovery.

Most psychotherapists, hypnotherapists and counsellors commonly encounter religious clients.

Thus it is essential for them to understand different religious concepts and to use it effectively in their therapy.



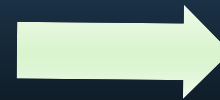
In this article, common religious concepts between Islam and Christianity use in cognitive therapy are discussed.




Islam and Christianity are chosen as they are the two most well-known religions in the world, each having more than one billion followers



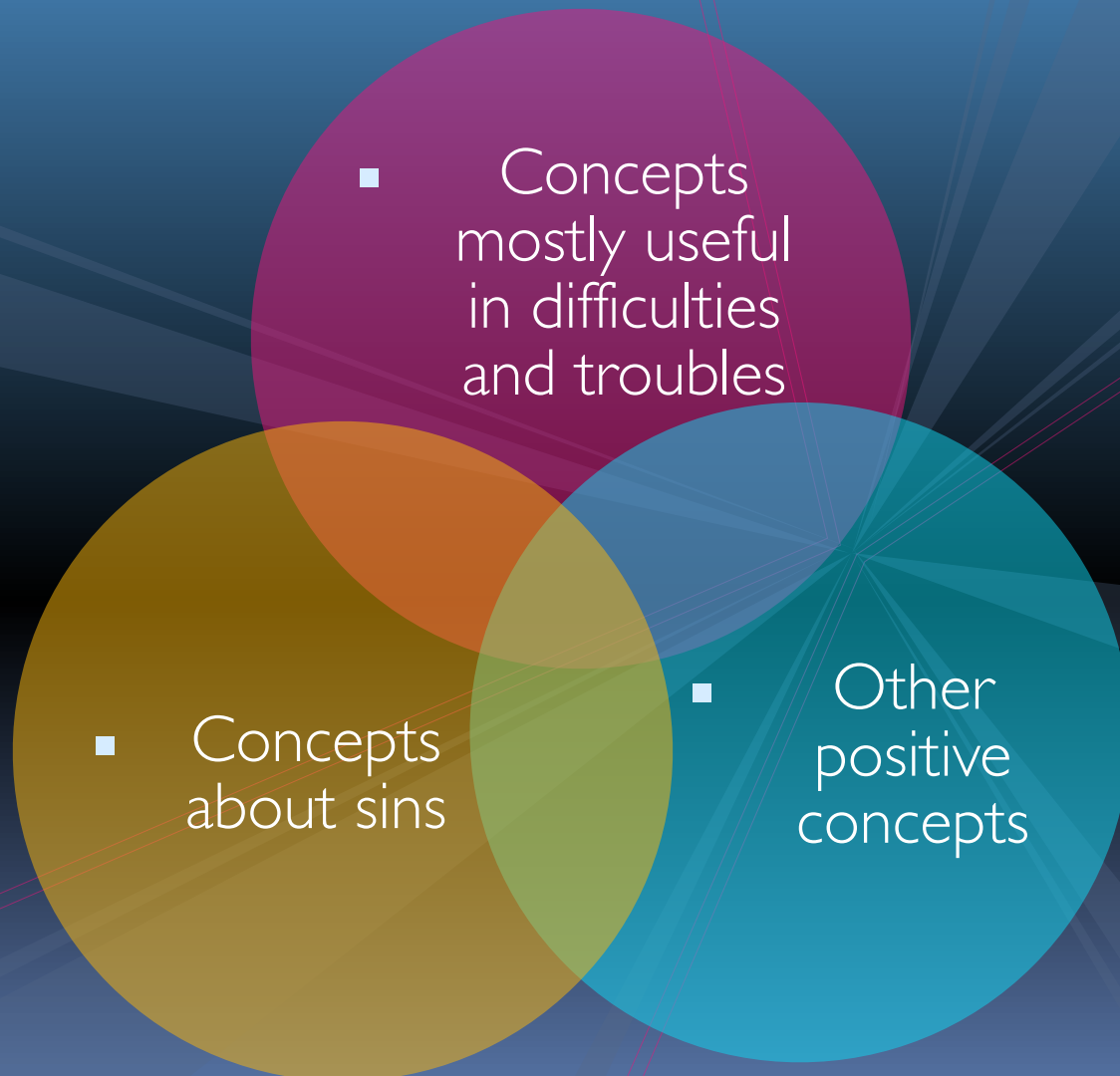
Besides that, Islam is the second most prevalent religion in Europe and the fastest growing religion in the world



Why Islam and Christianity?



Useful religious concepts against depression can be placed into three categories:





Useful religious concepts against depression.

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- Concepts mostly useful in difficulties and troubles

Sufferings and Difficulties of the Saints and Religious Figures.

- Prophets and Saints lives and sufferings are used as a reference point.
- Islam: Prophet Muhammad and his companions suffered much (tortures, imposed immigration, hunger, thirst, poverty, and wars).
- Christianity: Crucifixion story of Jesus
- How to decrease sorrow? >compare faith based depressed patients' problems with their holy people's difficulties.

Kindness, Mercifulness, and Help of God.

- Many verses and stories in both Islam and Christianity are able to strengthen the subjective probability that the problem will eventually end.
- Facilitate clients to believe that Allah will help them.
- Eg: Story of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and verse from Qur'an "or who is the one who answers the distressed when they call upon him, and removes the evil?" (Surah An-Naml:62)
- Verse from Bible: "God is faithful; he won't let you be tempted beyond what you can bear."

Preferring God's Will to One's Own Will.

- Even though sometimes trouble is unavoidable some people try to soothe themselves by connecting their will to God's will and by attending belief that those unpleasant events will improve in the future.
- When the only son of Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh), Ibrahim, died, he was sad and said, "the eye weeps and the heart is sad, but I do not say anything that angers God."
- Verse from the Bible: "Abba, Father.. Everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will but what you will."

God's Trial or Discipline.

- Some religious patients assume their problems as a punishment from God due to their own sins. But, sometimes it causes guilt feelings towards God.
- However, religious people always believe that God is always good and wants good fortune for good people. Thus, this belief makes them cope with the problems by assuming a good intention from God hidden behind it.
- Pious people also may assume their difficulties as God's discipline, trial, or examination, that may be in the favour of the people. Therefore, it prevents and alleviates the negative and guilt feelings.
- "And we will most certainly try you with some what of fear and hunger and loss of poverty and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient" (Surah Al-Baqarah: 155)

Blessings of the Distressed.

- In both religions, special attention is given to distressed people.

Temporariness of Human Difficulties


- Believe in eternal afterlife (hereafter) may soothe and



Useful religious concepts against depression.

Concepts about mostly sins; useful in difficultes and troubles
Concept against excessive



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- Excessive guilt feeling over the sins.
 - It aggravates worthlessness and hopelessness.
 - In the end, it will aggravate the guilt feeling itself.

Mercifulness
and
Forgiveness
of God

- God's
merciful

Religious
evidence
that God
loves the
sinners

EVIDENCE: Holy Bible;

• "Jesus answered them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor but the



Almost all
sins are
forgivable

- Almost

all sins
are

Good
deeds and
Repentanc
e wipes

out the
bad deeds

There is no
one who
does not
sin

• Even the



Useful religious concepts against depression.

Concepts about mostly sins; useful in difficult times and troubles

Positive Religious Concepts against excessive

Other positive concepts




Gratitude and thanking God

- can be emphasized by remembering God's numerous gifts and blessings toward the patients themselves.
- can be used to reduce the negative emotion and lead the depressed patients from worst pathological conditions or psychiatric disorder.
- E.g: (67:23), (16:78)



Faith's value

- patients always assume themselves as worthless
 - The faith that they have in God is the most important gift because it is the proof that they are not a useless person.
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Praying and asking from God

- They believe that God will answer and hear their request. Hence, it may increase their confidence and giving them hope.
- Quoted from Rasulullah saw: "It is not because God did not hear the request, but God will repay him by expediting what he prays for, or reserves it in the afterlife for him, or will remove an equivalent trouble from him."
- E.g: (40:60)

Immortality of the soul

- When a person died, it will relate with their action and behaviour in this world either as good deeds or inversely.
- Can consult and tell the patients so that they have faith that the beloved deceased person had faith in God and was a good person
- E.g: (4:69)

'if' clause

- We must always remember that the clause is not absolute so that we can show the patients about many other good characteristics so that they can expect God's love and attention in accordance.
- E.g: (14:7), (17:7)

Case example 1

- Ahmad, 33-year-old single man is suffering from depression and anxiety symptoms mainly related to thoughts regarding being guilty and tortured after death.
- Avoidance is used by this patient to cope with these negative thoughts but it leads to more complicated problems.
- I diagnosed this patient as having double depression (major depressive disorder superimposed on dysthymic disorder).
- He was undergoing several religious cognitive therapies and his condition improved gradually. The therapist worked on his negative thoughts of being tortured after death and feelings of anxiousness and sadness. He thought of being tortured after death because of the evil that he had done to others.
- The therapist and the patient together discussed several religious belief and concepts about this matter. The concept of God's kindness and mercifulness, forgiveness of God were emphasized in this therapy. They cognitively reappraised that God will forgive everyone's evil if they repented their sins. So, thinking in a negative way about the future like death is like negative fortune telling and its a thinking error.
- The patients reported significant but not complete relief and is feeling much better after the therapy and this shows the effectiveness of religious cognitive behaviour therapy in this religious patient.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there are many common religious concepts observed in Christianity and Islam.

Meanwhile, some people use some of these religious concepts to produce negative thoughts and feelings that may play important roles in aggravating their depression or other psychological disorders. For instance, extreme religious guilt feelings or negative thoughts regarding their afterlife or hereafter, their prayers, or their relationship with God are excessively been over thinking by the patients.

However, there are religious concepts that can be applied effectively to induce positive thoughts and lead to more positive feelings in patients such as to take account of religious concepts regarding gratitude, forgiveness, God's mercifulness and kindness, and positive thoughts and behaviours of religious figures.

CONCLUSION

Psychotherapists can more effectively help their religious patients by emphasising and knowing more about these concepts and by skilfully using their knowledge of religious beliefs in psychotherapeutic sessions.

Some limited studies in this regard show that this cognitive therapy through a faith based approach may be a treatment of choice for some patients, given their preferences and its equal or greater efficacy compared to secular therapies.



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THANKYOU

