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## Use of Prophet Mohammed's personal model of psychological resiliency, to help Muslim clients develop a spiritually meaningful and evidence-based treatment protocol for coping with anxiety and depression

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The Prophet Mohammed's life is the single most studied and documented of any historical figure, making him a clinically relevant research subject. Over the course of his lifespan, he faced significant trials and tribulations in his personal and public life, experiencing grief and loss, rejection and abandonment, trauma, humiliation, war, poverty and migration. The strategies that he used to maintain psychological resiliency, can be compared to many modern-day evidence-based practices. For example, mindfulness based stress reduction is currently used to help clients reduce stress, anxiety and depression with MBSR clinics opening up all over the world. The Prophet's use of prayer, supplication, and zikr (remembrance), is very similar to today's mindfulness based techniques. Cognitive restructuring- an evidence based CBT practice currently considered to be among the most effective in treating mental health issues, was constantly used by the Prophet when he re-framed challenges in a faith-based context which helped him find meaning in difficult life events; not only promoting acceptance and distress-tolerance, but also promoting post-traumatic growth rather than post-traumatic stress. He practiced behavior activation- another modern day treatment for depression, when he practiced ritual prayers at regular intervals of the day, fasting linked to times of the day, and daily goal-directed purposeful activities. He modeled compassion with his enemies and encouraged self-compassion over self-criticism, which resonates with principles of compassion-based CBT. In marriage, he modeled kindness and generosity- the two key factors identified by Dr. John Gottman as predictors for healthy marriages. Through these and many other evidence-based psychological strategies, the Prophet Mohammed developed an internal emotional regulation system that helped him maintain an attitude of optimism and hope. This paper includes analyses of specific teachings and actions of the Prophet that relieve emotional distress and a comparison with best practice clinical treatments used today. Clinicians need to recognize the importance of the Prophet as a role model for Muslim clients, and the fact that the foundation of his resiliency was spiritual faith. With an understanding of the Muslim mind-set which uses spirituality to support mental health, psychologists can integrate the Prophet's coping mechanisms into therapeutic interventions; this will help Muslim clients develop an optimistic attitude towards their therapy, maximizing the probability of therapeutic success. Prophet Mohammed provides the framework for an evidence based treatment protocol that can help Muslims tolerate, cope with and solve problems.

### Biography

Farah Lodi is the Owner of Moving Forward, counseling, consulting and coaching service in Dubai, UAE. She has a Master's degree in Mental Health Counseling from Seton Hall University in the US, and is a Canadian Certified Counselor and Cognitive Behavioral Therapist. She is a featured writer for the *Canadian Counseling and Psychotherapy Association* online journal. She is an adjunct Instructor of Psychology at Zayed University in Dubai and frequently invited as a guest Speaker, both in the UAE and internationally.

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