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ISSUES OF SPIRITUAL STABILITY AND EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT IN THE WORKS OF IMAM GHAZALI

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Abstract. This article examines the issues of mental stability, emotional balance, and overcoming personal crises reflected in Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's works such as "Al-Munqiz minaz-zolal", "Mizonul-amal", "Ayyuhal walad", and "Al-Maqsadul-asno". The study provides a comparative analysis of the thinker's methodology for dealing with existential crises, behavioral changes, and managing emotions based on the principles of modern psychotherapy and psychological correction. In particular, the methods of self-regulation proposed by the scientist were analyzed in conjunction with the concepts of "behavioral activation", neuroplasticity, and "social detox" in today's cognitive-behavioral therapy. Also, unlike the symptomatic approaches of Western psychology, the fundamental role of internal transcendent values in ensuring long-term mental stability in the tradition of Imam Ghazali was scientifically revealed. The conclusions drawn from the scientific analysis serve as an important foundation for creating national psychotherapeutic models.

Keywords: Imam Ghazali, Mizanul-amal, Al-Munqiz minaz-zolal, mental crisis, emotional balance, behavioral psychology, character correction.

Introduction. One of the biggest problems facing a person in the modern world is the psychological identity crisis and the lack of emotional control. Although the process of global urbanization, the excessive flow of information and the speed of socio-economic changes have made human life materially easier, they have seriously disrupted his inner world. As a result of the weakening of traditional values, spiritual foundations and family institutions in the conditions of globalization, the modern person is struggling to find answers to the questions “Who am I?”, “What is the fundamental purpose of my life?” and “Where is my place in existence?” This process of loss of identity alienates the individual from his inner “I” and disrupts his emotional self-regulation, that is, control system. The stressful environment that occurs in our lives weakens human willpower, leading him to depressive states. The daily social pressure and competitive environment causes a constant high level of release of anxiety hormones in the human brain, which creates a pathology called “willpower fatigue” in psychology. When the will is weakened, the individual cannot resist negative influences and succumbs to states such as depression and apathy.

Although the problems of the body and mind have been widely studied in the West, the need for the Islamic school of psychology and its bright representative, Imam Ghazali, in terms of healing the human soul, awakening internal motivation and controlling emotional reactions with the help of spiritual values remains high. Representatives of the Western psychological schools of behaviorism and cognitivism studied man mainly as a biological or mechanical system. However, the architecture of the soul, which is the transcendent and metaphysical core of man, has been neglected. Simply put, we have paid too much attention to the appearance of man, his mental

development, his physical needs or achievements, but we have forgotten the most important part of man, his invisible inner world, his spirituality and the needs of the soul, and we have neglected to study or educate them. For this reason, the psychological models presented by Imam Ghazali and based on the purity of the heart are as necessary as water and air for today's man.

Main part. Imam Ghazali is a scientist who experienced many spiritual crises during his life and overcame them with practical and scientific methods. In addition to the main books known to everyone, the scientist has other, less studied, small works. It is in these works that interesting methods are shown on how a person can control his emotions. The study of these works will be an important foundation in developing models for preserving the mental health of a modern person. One of such works is Imam Ghazali's "Al-Munqiz minaz-zolal", that is, "The Savior from Misguidance", which in its essence can be called the scientist's personal psychological autobiography. It perfectly describes the loss of meaning in human life, falling into the trap of doubts and worries, that is, the state of mind called “existential crisis” in modern psychology. This means that the principles of existential psychology, systematized in the West by Viktor Frankl and Irvin Yalom in the 20th century, were actually widely analyzed by Imam Ghazali in the 11th century based on personal experience. When the scholar worked as the head teacher at the “Nizamiyya” madrasa in Baghdad, a sharp change occurred in his psyche. From the outside, his life was perfect and smooth, that is, he was a person with wealth, social status, authority at the level of a caliph, and hundreds of disciples. However, in his inner world, cognitive dissonance, that is, internal contradiction, begins, that all this is fleeting and a mirage. In this regard, Imam Ghazali writes: “My tongue was tied, I was even unable to teach. This was not a physical illness, but the pain of doubt and the search for truth in my soul hitting the body” [1, 24-b].

This statement is a vivid example of a phenomenon called psychosomatics in modern medicine and psychology. In this case, the heart and mind transfer the pain that they could not find a solution to the physical body. The stuttering in Imam Ghazali’s speech was not a pathology of the speech organs, but a clinical symptom of a strongly expressed existential neurosis and depression. In this work, Imam Ghazali shows a professional, practical solution to getting out of emotional emptiness and depression. According to him, isolation, that is, complete separation from the noisy and distracting social environment for a certain period of time, can be the solution. Today, this practice is known as “social detox” or drug-free psychological rehabilitation. Imam Ghazali, who left Baghdad and spent 11 years in seclusion in the deserts of Syria and Mecca, minimized external stimuli, which allowed his nervous system to reset [1, 32-b]. In this regard, the French philosopher Claude Adrian Helvetius said, “Genius is nothing more than sustained, that is, sustained attention” [8]. That is, the ability to concentrate on a specific activity for a long time, regardless of noise and external distractions, is an important factor in high intellectual performance. In this regard, the psychologist William James described attention as the orientation and concentration of the mind on a specific object, emphasizing that human success largely depends on the ability to control attention.

Relying on intuition is described in the teachings of Imam Ghazali as the “Light of the Heart.” This is the restoration of spiritual stability not only through dry logical or rational arguments, but also through inner emotional experience and peace of mind, that is, tranquility. Rational reason is limited at a certain point, which throws a person into a whirlpool of endless doubts. Imam Ghazali proved that it is possible to get out of the crisis not only through intellectual analysis, but also through metaphysical experience, that is, enlightenment, which is the divine light that comes to the heart [2, 88-b]. Through this experience, Imam Ghazali proves that any spiritual crisis is not the destruction of the human personality, but rather a point of spiritual “transformation” for its ascent

to a new level. If the crisis is properly managed, it takes a person out of depression and elevates him to the level of a more integrated, strong and realized "Perfect Person."

Imam Ghazali, in his work "Mizan al-Amal", that is, "The Criterion of Action", scientifically and empirically substantiated the possibility of systematically changing human character and its emotional reactions. The scientist strongly rejects the fatalistic views of some people that "character (character) cannot be changed, it is genetic or innate". If changing behavior were impossible, all divine laws, education and upbringing systems would have lost their meaning. In his opinion, if it were possible to train animals, for example, to tame a wild horse or to train a bird of prey, it would be even easier for a person to train his feelings, instincts and emotions [4, p. 62]. This idea is directly consistent with the concept of neuroplasticity in modern psychology: the human brain and its behavioral algorithms have the property of being reshaped through new habits and systematic exercises. In his work "Mizan-ul-Amal", Imam Ghazali develops Aristotle's philosophy of the "Golden Mean" in a purely psychological and spiritual context and sees mental stability in four main axes of moral balance. He describes them in the axes of wisdom (the criterion of reason), courage (the criterion of anger), chastity (the criterion of lust), and justice (the criterion of harmony). The scientist emphasizes that the two extreme points of each of these four supreme virtues - ifrat, i.e. exceeding the norm, and tafriyt - falling short of the norm - are vices and mental illnesses, and their exact middle is mental stability. Let's analyze this using the example of anger.

The average, balanced norm of anger is passion. If the energy of anger exceeds the norm (ifrat), it turns into aggression, madness and oppression (tahawwur). Such a person cannot control his emotions and becomes a dangerous person for society. If the energy of anger is less than the norm (tafriyt), it leads to cowardice, cowardice and indifference (jubn). Such a person cannot defend his rights, and his will and sense of value fade away [3, 75-b]. Therefore, Imam Ghazali considers the ascetic approach (an approach that aims to achieve spiritual perfection by renouncing one's sensual desires, emotional needs, and worldly pleasures as much as possible and suppressing or eliminating them) to be a mistake. Because without anger, there is no protection and courage, and without lust, the human race will not continue. It is not necessary to kill them completely, but to maintain them at a moderate (golden mean) level through the education of reason and Sharia. In modern terms, it should be expressed as the highest form of emotional intelligence.

Instability, depression, and apathy in the human psyche often stem from confusion in life goals and lack of internal discipline. Imam Ghazali, in his letter-treatise "Ayyuhal Walad" (O Child) to one of his beloved students, revealed the motivational and behavioral foundations for achieving mental stability and inner peace. In this work, the scientist emphasizes that only theoretical knowledge, reading books, or philosophical reflections cannot cure the psyche, and that anxiety and depression only increase in the absence of practice, action, and discipline: "O child! Even if you study for a hundred years and classify a thousand books, if you do not deal with them in practical life, you will not achieve spiritual reward and inner peace" [6, p. 18]. This concept is the core of today's psychotherapy. For example, in cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), the method of "behavioral activation" is used for patients with depression. That is, it is not enough for a person to simply change his mind, he must also take physical action, change his daily routine, and develop practical discipline. Imam Ghazali proposed a method of properly distributing time and dividing each day into clear systematic goals in order to prevent emotional exhaustion and mental confusion. These concepts are exactly the same as the concepts of "Time management" and "burnout" today. The scientist instructs his student to make the most of every hour of the day and night, to allocate part of the night for contemplation and prayer (inner introspection), part for knowledge and study (cognitive development), and a certain part for the body and rest [6, 34-b]. Such strict and

consistent planning eliminates chaos in the human brain, saves from a sense of uncertainty, and as a result, reduces the level of anxiety and stress to a minimum.

One of the most complete philosophical and psychological works of Imam Ghazali is his treatise "Al-Maqsadul-asna fi sharhi asmaillahi-husna", that is, "The Supreme Goal in the Explanation of the Beautiful Names of Allah", which covers the influence of divine attributes and archetypes on human psychology. This work, with its methodological nature, is consistent with the methods of "correcting emotions through associative thinking", "neuro-linguistic programming (NLP)" and "affirmative visualization" in modern psychology. Imam Ghazali revealed a subjective psychological law in his works, that is, the more a person thinks about a concept, word or name, analyzes its semantic meaning, the more emotional background and neural circuits specific to that concept are formed in the brain and psyche [6, p. 42]. It is known that if a person constantly lives in an environment of negative, aggressive and fearful words, his behavior also becomes neurotic. Imam Ghazali solved this problem by understanding the highest divine qualities and incorporating them into the human character (correction). As proof of this, he said that by understanding and visualizing the quality of "Al-Halim" (extremely gentle, not angry), one can extinguish chronic feelings of revenge, hostility, irritability and aggression in a person. When a person meditates on this quality, he learns to control his petty nervousness. By understanding the quality of "Al-Quddus" (pure from any fault, defect and impurity), a person is encouraged to cleanse his inner world, mind and heart from negative thoughts, "psychological toxins" such as envy, gossip and resentment [6, p. 55].

The scientist writes that in order to form spiritual stability in oneself, a person should take these higher qualities as a role model and reflect them in his own actions. This methodology allows one to radically change the internal "Self-concept" of a person in a positive direction, to strengthen self-confidence on a spiritual basis. The methods presented in the above works of Imam Ghazali form a strong scientific harmony with a number of psychotherapeutic directions that are popular in the Western world today.

The difference and advantage of Imam Ghazali's approach from Western schools is that it does not consider a person as a mechanical or biological being who only reacts to external stimuli. The scientist inextricably links the root of human emotions with his spiritual intellect. Until internal transcendent values are strong, no external pragmatic technique can provide long-term mental stability. Simply put, if pragmatic methods such as external motivation, time management, or anti-stress exercises are not based on the values in a person's inner world (the meaning of life, beliefs, and principles), their effect will remain temporary. While Western psychology treats the symptom, Imam Ghazali's teachings treat the heart's confusion, which is the core of the disease. Imam Ghazali's works such as "Al-Munqiz minaz-zolal", "Mizanul-amal", "Ayyuhal walad" and "Al-Maqsadul-asno" show how inclusive, comprehensive and inter-temporal the psychological views of the great thinker were. It can be said that the scientist created a universal model of overcoming depression by scientifically substantiating the spiritual and existential crises he personally experienced.

In the work "Mizanul-amal", he developed the rule of "Mezon" by not extinguishing emotions or completely eliminating them, but bringing them to an average, that is, moderate state. His methods still serve as a universal and integrative mechanism that has not lost its value for today's clinical psychology, neurolinguistic programming and personal development systems. The works and views of Imam Ghazzali serve as an important foundation in overcoming modern psychological crises and creating new national psychotherapeutic models.

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