

The Philosophy of Divine Love ('Ishq) in Sufism and Its Application in Psychospiritual Therapy: A Critical Analysis of al-Niffārī's Kitāb al-Mawāqif

Filsafat Cinta Ilahi ('Ishq) dalam Tasawuf dan Aplikasinya dalam Terapi Psikospiritual: Analisis Kritis terhadap Kitab al-Mawāqif karya al-Niffārī

Adang Darmawan Achmad^{1*}, Subhan², Hudzaifah Achmad Qotadah³,
Abdillah Achmad Al Faruq⁴

^{1,2*}Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Indonesia

³Prodi Hukum Islam Program Doktor FIAI, Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia

⁴Univeristas Al Iman, Yaman

h.ahmad@umc.ac.id*, subhandjubaedi@umc.ac.id, hudzaifahachmad47@gmail.com,
abdillahachmada@gmail.com

Article Information	Abstract
<p>History: Received: 6 August 2025 Revised: 18 September 2025 Accepted: 30 October 2025 Approved: 27 November 2025</p> <p>Kata Kunci <i>Ishq, Tasawuf, al-Niffārī, Psikospiritual, Terapi Sufi, al-Mawāqif</i></p> <p>Keywords Ishq, Sufism, al-Niffārī, Psychospirituality, Sufi Therapy, al-Mawāqif</p>	<p>This article explores the philosophical and practical dimensions of Ishq Ilāhī (Divine Love) within the classical Sufi tradition, focusing on the seminal work al-Mawāqif by al-Niffārī, a 10th-century CE (4th-century AH) mystic renowned for his profound existential and spiritual expressions. In Sufism, Ishq represents the pinnacle of the spiritual relationship between the servant and the Divine, transcending ordinary love (maḥabbah) and serving as a transformative force that purifies the soul and dissolves the ego in the Divine Presence. This study employs a qualitative approach through document analysis and hermeneutic interpretation of the al-Mawāqif manuscript. The findings indicate that Ishq in this text is not merely a theoretical concept but a practical path of spiritual healing, characterized by ecstatic experiences (wajd), ego annihilation (fanā'), and spiritual subsistence (baqā'). Furthermore, the article argues that the values and experiential insights of Divine Love can be contextually adapted for contemporary psychospiritual therapy, particularly in addressing issues of existential void, spiritual crisis, and inner psychological distress. This study thus opens an interdisciplinary dialogue between classical Sufism and modern spiritual psychology, positioning Islamic mystical heritage as a potential source of holistic healing and inner transformation.</p> <p>Abstrak <i>Artikel ini mengkaji secara filosofis dan aplikatif konsep Ishq Ilāhī (cinta Ilahi) dalam khazanah tasawuf klasik dengan fokus pada kitab al-Mawāqif karya al-Niffārī, seorang sufi mistikus abad ke-4 H/10 M yang dikenal dengan ungkapan-ungkapan eksistensial dan spiritual yang mendalam. Dalam tradisi tasawuf, ishq merupakan puncak dari hubungan spiritual antara hamba dan Tuhan yang melampaui cinta biasa (maḥabbah), menjadi kekuatan transformatif yang memurnikan jiwa dan meleburkan ego dalam kehadiran Ilahi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi dokumen dan analisis hermeneutik terhadap naskah al-Mawāqif. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa ishq dalam kitab ini bukan hanya</i></p>

bersifat teoretis, tetapi menjadi jalan praksis penyembuhan spiritual melalui pengalaman ekstasis, kehancuran ego (fanā'), dan pencerahan spiritual (baqā'). Lebih lanjut, artikel ini mengusulkan bahwa nilai-nilai dan pengalaman cinta Ilahi dapat diadaptasi secara kontekstual dalam terapi psikospiritual modern, khususnya untuk membantu individu yang mengalami kekosongan makna hidup, krisis eksistensial, dan tekanan psikis yang bersifat spiritual. Studi ini membuka ruang interdisipliner antara tasawuf dan psikologi spiritual kontemporer dengan menjadikan warisan mistik Islam sebagai sumber terapi dan penyembuhan holistik.



Copyright © 2025 Adang Darmawan Achmad, Subhan, Hudzaifah Achmad Qotadah, Abdillah Achmad Al Faruq

1. Introduction

The development of contemporary psychological science has enriched the landscape of approaches to healing and the restoration of human mental well-being, ranging from cognitive therapy to transpersonal psychology. However, the persistent rise of existential crises, spiritual alienation, and enduring mental disorders in the modern era suggests that conventional therapeutic methods may not fully address the inner dimensions of the human psyche. In this context, the urgency of adopting a psychospiritual approach emerges, a holistic integration of spirituality and therapeutic practice that emphasizes the healing of the soul through connection with transcendent values (Umam et al., 2024). Within the Islamic tradition, *taṣawwuf* (Sufism), as part of the classical spiritual heritage, offers a significant alternative for addressing the inner struggles of the human soul (Knysh, 2017), particularly through the concept of Divine Love (*‘ishq*), which serves not only as a central theme in Islamic mysticism but also as an existential foundation in the spiritual transformation process of a *sufi*.

Divine Love in Sufism is not to be understood as mere affection or a superficial psychological emotion; rather, it is a metaphysical force that transcends reason and logic, leading to the annihilation of the ego (*nafs*) and the emergence of pure divine consciousness. The *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* by al-Niffārī (d. 354 H/965 CE) stands as one of the seminal Sufi texts that profoundly articulates the experience of transcendent love. With symbolic, aphoristic, and paradox-laden expressions, Niffārī constructs what can be termed a "liminal spiritual text", a literary manifestation of experiences situated at the threshold between the material world and the divine realm. His writings describe episodes of *shuhūd* (direct witnessing of the Divine), which occur in states of intense ecstasy devoid of rational mediation. In this framework, *‘ishq* is not merely a theological or philosophical theme but serves as an existential vehicle for spiritual transformation, what the Sufis refer to as the journey toward *fanā'* (annihilation in God) and *baqā'* (subsistence in His will) (Al-Niffārī, 1935).

A profound exploration of the concept of *‘ishq* in Sufism, as reflected in *al-Mawāqif*, offers rich

and contextually relevant insights for the development of contemporary psychospiritual therapy. Sufism emphasizes the purification of the soul, which gives rise to virtuous moral character (Nilyati, 2015). Concepts such as the purification of the heart (*tazkiyat al-nafs*), self-discipline (*mujāhadah*), and surrender to divine will (*tawakkul*) may be integrated into therapeutic practices to assist individuals in addressing anxiety, depression, and a range of psychological challenges (Sholikah, 2024). As described by (Utomo & Agustine, 2024), *taṣawwuf* is a state of being, a spiritual resonance, a movement of the heart, a whisper of conscience, and a longing that often defies verbal articulation. Through such an approach, individuals are not merely guided toward resolving superficial issues but are also encouraged to undergo a profound transformation in consciousness and in their relationship with themselves, others, and the Divine (Abitolkha & Mas'ud, 2021).

Scholars such as (Schimmel, 2011) and (Chittick, 1984) have underscored that Divine Love in Sufism not only reconfigures an individual's psychological structure but also redefines the relationship between the created and the Creator. Chittick even considers *'ishq* to be the metaphysical foundation of all reality, linking human existence to the Divine. Meanwhile, Rumi, in his *Mathnawi*, affirms that true religion is the religion of love, as love serves as the bridge between the material and the divine worlds. Within this framework, the experience of love in Sufism is

not passive; it is active, igniting transformative energy within the soul and facilitating liberation from worldly attachments. Consequently, Divine Love may be viewed as a form of spiritual therapy that guides individuals out of existential crisis and toward a liberating divine reality (Arberry, 1979).

The *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* possesses distinctive characteristics, notably its departure from the systematic structure typical of other Sufi texts. Its style tends toward spontaneous illumination drawn directly from ecstatic experiences. As Amar (2020) notes, understanding al-Niffārī's work is a formidable challenge due to the dense and elusive meanings embedded in his poetic expressions. He likens engaging with al-Niffārī's writings to a traveler who cannot sip a cup of coffee, yet the aroma alone reveals a hint of its richness, a sensation that resists simple explanation. This underscores that al-Niffārī's approach does not merely portray a deep and paradoxical form of love, but also revives a form of Islamic spirituality that is contemplative, deeply personal, and existential in essence.

From the perspective of modern psychology, particularly within the existential and transpersonal schools, spiritual love has long been recognized as a profound source of inner healing. In his seminal work *Man's Search for Meaning*, (Frankl, 1985), emphasized that love and meaning constitute two fundamental pillars capable of liberating individuals from existential trauma. Similarly, contemporary Muslim psychologists such as (Mujib,

2015), have demonstrated that integrating Islamic spiritual values into therapeutic practice can significantly enhance both mental and spiritual well-being. Within this framework, Sufi teachings especially the doctrine of Divine Love hold immense potential to be actualized as an alternative therapeutic approach that addresses the core of human psychospiritual afflictions.

This study seeks to establish a conceptual bridge between classical Sufi teachings and contemporary psychological paradigms, with *al-Mawāqif* serving as the central axis of textual and spiritual exploration. The aim is not merely to offer a descriptive exposition of the concept of *‘ishq*, but to uncover its practical implications in shaping a holistic healing approach grounded in one's relationship with the Divine as the primary source of inner restoration. Through this perspective, the article endeavors to demonstrate that classical Islamic texts are not merely of historical or theological value, but can also make significant contributions to addressing contemporary human challenges. Accordingly, the integration of the philosophy of *‘ishq* with spiritual psychotherapy paves the way for a more comprehensive and meaningful approach to understanding and healing the human soul.

2. Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative approach utilizing the method of library research, focusing on an in-depth analysis of classical texts, particularly *al-Mawāqif*, a seminal work authored by the renowned Sufi mystic al-Niffārī (d. 354 AH/965 CE).

The selection of this method is grounded in the philosophical, symbolic, and reflective nature of the subject matter, which necessitates a research strategy capable of uncovering layers of meaning embedded beneath the literal structure of the text. Within the context of classical Sufi studies, the library research approach functions not merely as a data collection technique, but also as an epistemological framework for critically and contextually engaging with the intellectual heritage of Islam. The analysis is carried out through a hermeneutic method, an interpretive approach that emphasizes understanding textual meaning within its symbolic and contextual dimensions. This method is particularly well-suited to *al-Mawāqif*, which is replete with symbolic language, metaphors, and non-literal expressions, thus requiring a deep, reflective mode of reading. Secondary data sources include both classical and contemporary works on Sufism, peer-reviewed journal articles, and academic publications that explore the intersections between psychology, spirituality, and Sufi-oriented therapeutic practices.

3. Results and Discussion The Concept of *‘Ishq* in *Kitāb al-Mawāqif*

The concept of Divine Love (*‘Ishq*) in *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* by al-Niffārī represents the innermost dimension of the spiritual journey of a *sufi* within the tradition of *taṣawwuf*. Unlike *maḥabbah*, which is often characterized as calm, balanced, and rational, *‘ishq*

manifests as a consuming, intense form of love that transcends the boundaries of logic. Within the Islamic spiritual framework, *'ishq* is not merely an emotional state; it also functions as an epistemological and ontological path that bridges the relationship between the created being and *al-Haqq* (the Divine). A *sālik* (spiritual seeker) enveloped by *'ishq* is compelled to relinquish all worldly attachments, including ego and carnal desires, in order to attain full union with the ultimate source of love: God Himself. The oft-quoted mystical aphorism from Ibn 'Arabī, "I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known, so I created creation that they may know Me", underpins the understanding that all existence originates in love, is sustained by love, and ultimately returns to love (Al-Niffārī, 1935). Accordingly, *'ishq* is not merely a spiritual impulse but serves as a fundamental metaphysical structure of the cosmos from the perspective of Islamic mysticism

This conception is further reinforced by the existentialist dimension of *taṣawwuf*, in which *'ishq* is not simply an affective state but a medium through which the seeker attains *ma'rifah* intuitive, experiential knowledge of the Divine. In this context, love functions both as a *manhaj* (methodology) and as the very substance of reality. Prominent mystics such as Rābi'ah al-'Adawiyah rejected conditional forms of love based on reward or punishment. Her devotion to God was pure, motivated solely by God's intrinsic divinity, without mediation by expectations of paradise or fear of hell. In this framework, *'ishq*

becomes the culmination of *fanā'*, the annihilation of the self in Divine presence (Loevy, 2025; Pskhu, 2019) and the bridge toward *baqā'*, existential permanence in Divine consciousness. Thus, *'ishq* functions as a vehicle of liberation from existential suffering, which is often rooted in experiences of separation, spiritual emptiness, and the search for identity (Al-Niffārī, 1935).

Kitāb al-Mawāqif is a distinctive and authentic expression of the *'ishq* experience, rendered in a form of mystical literature that is unique in its structure and tone. Each section begins with a signature phrase that has become emblematic of the text: "*He stationed me at a station and said to me...*" (*awqafani wa qāla li*). This recurring formula underscores that al-Niffārī is not presenting speculative metaphysical theory but narrating *muwājahah*, a direct spiritual encounter with the Divine in an elevated state of consciousness. This narrative strategy not only validates the authenticity of his mystical experiences but also signals that the text was composed in a heightened spiritual awareness, not through rational deliberation. Al-Niffārī appears to be writing from within a state of being overtaken by love, in which personal identity and intellectual autonomy are dissolved under the influence of Divine inspiration.

Divine Love in *al-Mawāqif* reveals itself as a paradoxical force. It is capable of being tender and ecstatic, yet also painful and annihilating. In one of the *maqāmāt* (spiritual stations), al-Niffārī writes, "*My love will render you silent within*

My words and effaced within My Will." This statement illustrates that 'ishq, from a Sufi perspective, does not lead to possession or dominance but to loss, loss of self, of ego, and even of language. However, this loss is not nihilistic; rather, it is transformative. The lover becomes a mirror of the Beloved, and through this process, a new spiritual identity is forged, one that is purer, deeper, and more authentic.

Strikingly, *al-Mawāqif* is not merely a text about love; it is a text that conditions the reader to experience love existentially. Al-Niffārī does not employ chronological narration or discursive argumentation. Instead, he constructs epiphanic fragments that jolt the reader's consciousness. Through deliberate irregularity, metaphorical language, and symbolic depth, he crafts a spiritual space within the text that compels the reader to confront feelings of loss, fear, silence, and longing (Al-Niffārī, 1935). In this light, 'ishq in *al-Mawāqif* is not a doctrinal statement, but an existential reality that transcends the boundaries of language and rationality.

Therefore, the concept of 'ishq as articulated in *al-Mawāqif* functions not only as a spiritual theme but also as a psychospiritual method that dissolves the dichotomy between intellect and emotion. Divine Love, in this formulation, opens the possibility for integration between the theological, existential, and psychological dimensions of the human condition. Its relevance extends into contemporary contexts where many individuals face crises of meaning, spiritual voids, and

psychological distress (Çelik, 2023; Sholikah, 2024b). In a world increasingly marked by existential fragmentation, spiritual legacies such as *al-Mawāqif* offer pathways to holistic healing by reconnecting individuals with the deepest center of their being love.

The Psychospiritual Dimension of 'Ishq

Within the field of spiritual psychology, Divine Love ('ishq ilāhī) is regarded as a transformative force that integrates the various dimensions of human existence, *nafs* (the self), *qalb* (the heart), and *rūh* (the spirit) into a harmonious unity. A profound experience of 'ishq is not merely an outpouring of religious emotion; rather, it constitutes an existential dialectic wherein the individual navigates a fundamental tension between the temporality of worldly identity and a primordial longing to return to the Absolute Source. In this context, existential suffering arising from feelings of alienation or the absence of meaning, as conceptualized by (Frankl, 1985) through the term *noogenic neurosis* is interpreted in Sufism not as pathology, but as a divine summons of love. Suffering, therefore, is not to be resisted or eliminated but embraced as part of a spiritual journey toward ultimate meaning.

'Ishq, as a form of love that transcends rationality and ego, produces tangible psychospiritual effects. These effects may manifest in the form of ecstasy, spontaneous emotional expressions such as weeping without apparent cause, or a sense of estrangement from social

reality, yet these are accompanied by a deep inner peace and joy. From the Sufi perspective, this form of love is not pathological but therapeutic, as it connects the individual to a transcendent meaning that transforms emotional distress. Just as Frankl's logotherapy teaches the healing power of finding meaning in suffering, the Sufi tradition advances a more radical proposition: suffering itself is interpreted as a path of love toward God. Pain is not negated, but rather embraced as an essential element in the journey toward the Most Compassionate.

This approach is supported by various spiritual case studies in which individuals engaged in practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance), *dhawq* (spiritual taste or sensation), and contemplative meditation on the Divine Names (*Asmā' Allāh*) exhibit significant psychological transformation. Observable outcomes include reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, increased gratitude, and greater self-acceptance. In this framework, *'ishq* is not merely a metaphysical or theological construct; it becomes a psychospiritual resource that reaches the innermost depths of the human soul depths often inaccessible to conventional medical or psychotherapeutic methods. Consequently, Divine Love emerges as a holistic and transcendent foundation for healing, addressing not only symptomatic expressions but also the existential roots of human suffering (Nurusshobah & Fitra, 2025).

Discussion of the psychospiritual dimension of *'ishq* cannot be separated from the

concept of *fanā'*, the complete dissolution of the ego in Divine presence. At this stage, personal identity ceases to serve as the center of existence, as consciousness is immersed in Divine unity. Common sources of fear, anxiety, and restlessness typically driven by future-oriented worries or worldly attachments are transcended through the experience of absolute presence. Al-Niffārī, in *al-Mawāqif*, articulates this experience in a powerful statement: "*I stood before Him, and He made me forget myself.*" This expression captures the peak of transpersonal spirituality, a state that, in humanistic psychology, corresponds to self-transcendence, where the individual feels united with a reality greater than the self (Al-Niffārī, 1935).

Such perspectives lay the foundation for the development of Sufi-based therapeutic models now being formulated within contemporary Islamic psychology. A notable contributor in this domain is Abdallah Rothman, who has articulated therapeutic approaches grounded in Sufi principles. In Rothman's model, Divine Love occupies a central position in the healing process, not as a peripheral spiritual idea, but as a transformative force capable of fostering inner balance, mental well-being, and existential connection with God (Rothman & Coyle, 2020). The aim of therapy in this model extends beyond psychological recovery; it seeks to cultivate a spiritually integrated state in which the individual is anchored in their true source of meaning (Alawiyah & Handayani, 2019; Fitriya et al., 2024; Maulana, 2019;

Sumarni, 2020). This approach is especially relevant in modern societies where spiritual disorientation and excessive materialism or individualism have become widespread (Waslah, 2017).

Thus, it can be asserted that *'ishq*, within the framework of *taṣawwuf*, is not a transient emotion or a mere moral ideal, but an existential structure that reshapes the human soul. It operates as a healing force that engages not only the emotional and mental dimensions, but also reorients the very foundation of human existence toward the Divine. In a modern world increasingly plagued by loss of direction and meaning, where value disorientation and identity crises are prevalent Sufi perspectives on Divine Love offer a profound and viable alternative. They teach that the deepest meaning of life is realized through spiritual connection with the Most Loving, and that suffering, when understood as a divine invitation to love, becomes a genuine path to healing (Nurusshobah & Fitra, 2025).

The Psychospiritual Therapeutic Application of the Concept of *'Ishq*

In contemporary Islamic psychotherapy, the concept of *'ishq*, or Divine Love, has evolved into a significant therapeutic framework for addressing crises of meaning and various psychospiritual disorders. The integration of *'ishq*-based values within therapeutic practice is not merely symbolic, but functionally oriented toward deep spiritual transformation. One practical application is found in the form of

spiritual guidance (*irshād rūḥī*), whereby a *murshid* (spiritual guide) directs a *murīd* (spiritual seeker) through a transpersonal healing process. This dynamic is rooted in *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul), achieved through devotional practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance), *tafakkur* (reflection), and *murāqabah* (spiritual watchfulness). These activities not only reduce psychological distress but also fortify the individual's spiritual connection with God, positioning *'ishq* as a gravitational center that restores and stabilizes the human inner self (Baqiah et al., 2020; Rizal, 2022; Sucipto, 2020).

Moreover, *'ishq* has been institutionalized in integrative therapeutic models, notably Sufi counseling, which synthesizes conventional counseling techniques with Sufi spiritual principles. In this approach, Divine presence is not perceived solely as a theological abstraction, but as a living reality permeating the healing process. The experience of Divine Love serves as a balancing force between reason and emotion, enabling patients to reinterpret suffering as a medium for spiritual growth (Bakri et al., 2025). One method proven effective in this context is the therapeutic use of Sufi poetry such as the works of Rūmī and Ibn 'Arabī as a means of emotional expression. These poetic texts function as non-verbal communicative tools that resonate with the soul, offering individuals a reflective and poetic avenue through which to process deep emotional wounds (Maryati, 2024). Hence, expressive therapy grounded in Sufi

literature provides an aesthetic medium for reconstructing meaning imbued with spirituality.

Another key element in the therapeutic application of *'ishq* is spiritual literacy. The engagement with classical texts, such as *al-Mawāqif* by al-Niffārī, extends beyond textual study to become a contemplative practice that transforms consciousness. This method, often referred to as Islamic spiritual reading, involves guiding clients through introspective reflection on spiritual narratives that illuminate life's deeper meanings. In practice, such interventions have been implemented in Islamic psychotherapy centers across Malaysia and Indonesia, with promising outcomes in alleviating symptoms of anxiety, depression, and existential emptiness. The aim is not intellectual consumption but existential reflection, using these texts as mirrors of the soul that facilitate spiritual awareness and encounter with the Divine (Maryati, 2024). Accordingly, Sufi texts serve as a bridge between the inner world and Divine meaning, positioning *'ishq* as a remedy for existential wounds that lie beyond the reach of conventional medical treatments.

The collective dimension of *'ishq* also plays a vital role in psychospiritual therapy. Group-based spiritual activities, such as *majelis dhikr* (remembrance gatherings), *ḥalaqāt* (Sufi circles), and Sufi retreats represent communal therapeutic modalities that integrate spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions into a unified experience. Within this communal context, individuals find solace not

only in personal spiritual solitude but also in sacred companionship. Such collective experiences create healing spaces where the presence of Divine Love is not merely internalized but shared, embodied, and enacted within a mutually supportive spiritual network. The act of spiritual sharing reinforces religious identity, expands existential awareness, and provides individuals with a secure and meaningful place within the rhythm of life. Therefore, community-based approaches grounded in *'ishq* contribute not only to individual healing but also to the strengthening of spiritually cohesive and emotionally supportive social bonds (Plante, 2022).

In summary, the application of therapy grounded in Divine Love (*'ishq ilāhī*) presents a holistic paradigm of healing that transcends the mere alleviation of psychological symptoms to target the reconstruction of existential structures. In this context, Divine Love is not to be romanticized as mere spiritual sentimentality, but recognized as a powerful force of transformation that guides individuals out of inner crisis and toward enlightenment and meaning. Through spiritual mentorship, Sufi literacy, aesthetic expression, and transcendent community, *'ishq*-centered therapy aligns with the objectives of *maqāsid al-sharī'ah*, particularly in preserving the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) and intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*). Hence, Divine Love is not merely a normative teaching in Sufism but also a strategic resource in Islamic psychotherapeutic practice offering a relevant, robust, and applicable response to the

psychosocial challenges of the contemporary world.

The consequences of the usage of the concept of *'ishq ilāhī* (Divine Love) in psychospiritual therapy show that the Sufi concept of love is not only theological or moral in its essence but also has a tangible therapeutic role in the resolution of the existential crises of the contemporary human being. The inclusion of the values of *'ishq* in Islamic psychotherapeutic practice represents a new paradigm that places spirituality as the central component of holistic healing. Within the framework of Islamic psychology, this method extends the traditional limits of therapeutic treatment through transcendental consciousness, which unites the rational, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the self. The aim of *'ishq*-based therapy is not merely to heal psychological symptoms of anxiety, depression, and meaninglessness, but to develop spiritual self-awareness that results in inner peace, existential completeness, and proximity to God (*qurb ilā Allāh*).

At the social level, the *'ishq*-focused therapeutic model helps to enhance communal and spiritual unity. Collective spiritual activities such as *majelis dhikr* (remembrance gatherings) and *ḥalaqāt ṣūfiyyah* (Sufi circles) serve as social healing spaces that promote emotional solidarity and spiritual empathy among people. This means that Divine Love is not only a provider of individual healing, but also a transformational social power that strengthens compassion (*rahmah*) as the moral basis of human relationships. This kind of communal

paradigm is especially applicable to modern societies that are suffering from spiritual burnout, alienation, and moral disintegration under the strain of modernity, materialism, and individualism.

Epistemologically, the present study reinforces the importance of Sufism as an intellectual and spiritual platform for building a spiritually integrated therapeutic paradigm in the context of Islamic psychology. The combination of *'ishq* with the postulates of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* provides a normative foundation for viewing spiritual therapy as a means of preserving both the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) and the intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*). In practice, this observation can guide the creation of Islamic Psychospiritual Therapy programs in colleges and universities and Muslim counselor training. The introduction of *'ishq*-based therapy in the long run is likely to create a new paradigm of Islamic mental health care one based on spiritual, ethical, and humanistic values. This practice can serve as a model for Islamic psychotherapy centers in Indonesia and other parts of the Muslim world, which aim to integrate modern psychological science and Sufi wisdom in the development of human well-being. Therefore, *'ishq ilāhī* should not only be considered a theoretical notion of Sufi philosophy but also a living, practical tool of healing that can provide a timely and transformative answer to the psychosocial predicaments of the twenty-first century.

4. Conclusion

This study affirms that *'ishq*, or Divine Love, in the Sufi tradition is

not merely the core of a mystic's spiritual journey, but also a transformative force that reconfigures the inner structure of the self and offers a therapeutic dimension for souls afflicted by existential anxiety and a void of meaning. *Al-Mawāqif*, the seminal work of al-Niffārī, serves as an authentic representation of the 'ishq experience, conveyed through prophetic spiritual expressions that depict an intimate relationship between the created and the Creator, embedded in a total atmosphere of surrender, awe, and longing. Philosophical and psychospiritual approaches to interpreting 'ishq reveal that Divine Love is not merely a theological construct but rather an existential reality with profound healing capacity that strengthens the architecture of the human psyche. The experience of 'ishq demonstrates its ability to reconstruct the fragmented dimensions of the self, often fractured by trauma, value disorientation, and spiritual desolation. In this context, a Sufi-based psychospiritual therapy grounded in 'ishq has proven effective in fostering inner peace, enhancing self-awareness, and nurturing a meaningful spiritual connection.

Therefore, the integration of classical Sufi heritage with contemporary psychological approaches offers a constructive and relevant framework for addressing present-day mental health challenges and spiritual crises. By engaging with *al-Mawāqif*, this article seeks to revitalize Sufi traditions as a

foundational source for the development of modern psychospiritual therapeutic paradigms. Future research may be directed toward the applied implementation of 'ishq-based therapies within contemporary Sufi communities in Indonesia, as well as toward the empirical validation of their effectiveness in systematically supporting mental health recovery processes.

References

- Abitolkha, A. M., & Mas'ud, A. (2021). Integration of Sufism Values into the Curriculum of Islamic Religious Education Subject in Junior High School. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)*, 9(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.15642/jpai.2021.9.1.1-16>
- Alawiyah, D., & Handayani, I. (2019). Penanaman Nilai Spiritual dalam Dimensi Psikoterapi Islam di PP. Rehabilitasi Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Nashrun Minallah. *KONSELI: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling (E-Journal)*, 6(1), 23–32. <https://doi.org/10.24042/kons.v6i1.4073>
- Al-Niffārī, M. ibn 'Abd al-J. (1935). *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt* (Arthur J.). Luzac.
- Amar, A. (2020). *An-Niffari, Pribadi Penyendiri, dan Karya Tersembunyi*. Ngopibareng.Id. <https://www.ngopibareng.id/read/an-niffari-pribadi-penyendiri-dan-karya-tersembunyi-2963780>
- Arberry, A. J. (1979). *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam*. George Allen & Unwin.

- Bakri, S., Wahyudi, M. A., & Andriyani, I. N. (2025). Sufism and mental health: A phenomenological exploration of the experiences of followers of sufi quantum therapy in Indonesia. *Multidisciplinary Reviews*, 8(7), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.31893/multir-ev.2025219>
- Baqiah, Z., Gojali, M., & Naan, N. (2020). Pengaruh Amaliah Zikir Terhadap Tingkat Ketenangan Hati Jamaah Ibu-Ibu Pengajian. *Syifa Al-Qulub*, 4(2), 27–33. <https://doi.org/10.15575/saq.v4i2.7588>
- Chittick, W. C. (1984). *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*. SUNY Press.
- Fitriya, E., Ma, S., & Hikam, A. (2024). TASAWUF DALAM PERSPEKTIF PSIKOLOGI: HARMONI SPIRITUAL DAN KESEHATAN MENTAL. *Alhikam Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Education*, 5(2), 291–306.
- Frankl, V. E. (1985). *Man's Search for Meaning*. Washington Square Press.
- Knysh, A. (2017). *Sufism: A New History of Islamic Mysticism*. Princeton University Press.
- Maryati, S. (2024). Psikoterapi Islam Untuk Meningkatkan Kesehatan Mental. *Journal on Education*, 07(01), 6905–6911.
- Maulana, U. (2019). *Spiritual Sebagai Terapi Kesehatan Mental*. PTIQ Press.
- Mujib, A. (2015). Implementasi PsikoSpiritual dalam Pendidikan Islam. *Madania*, 19(2), 195–206. <https://doi.org/10.29300/madania.v19i2.38>
- Nilyati, N. (2015). Peranan Tasawuf Dalam Kehidupan Modern. *TAJDID: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 14(1), 119–142. <https://doi.org/10.30631/tjd.v14i1.24>
- Nurusshobah, & Fitra, A. A. (2025). Kesehatan Mental dan Spiritualitas: Bagaimana Konsep Al-Qur'an Menghadapi Krisis Psikologis Era Kontemporer? *Al-Fahmu: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, 4(1), 115–130.
- Plante, T. G. (2022). Five Spiritually Based Tools for Clinical Practice During Challenging, Stressful, and Apocalyptic Times. *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*, 9(4), 272–277. <https://doi.org/10.1037/scp0000304>
- Rizal, A. (2022). Tazkiyah Al-Nafs Sebagai Terapi Dalam Permasalahan Masyarakat Modern. *Jurnal Al-Aqidah*, 14(2), 120–128. <https://doi.org/10.15548/ja.v14i2.4705>
- Rothman, A., & Coyle, A. (2020). Conceptualizing an Islamic psychotherapy: A grounded theory study. *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*, 7(3), 197–213.
- Schimmel, A. (2011). *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. University of North Carolina Press.
- Sholikah, Z. (2024). Symphony of the Soul: Integration of Islamic Psychotherapy and Sufism. *Esoteris: Studies on Sufism*, 1(1), 1–22.
- Sucipto, A. (2020). Dzikir as a therapy in sufistic counseling. *Journal of Advanced Guidance and Counseling*, 1(1), 58–67.

<https://doi.org/10.21580/jagc.2020.1.1.5773>

Sumarni, S. (2020). Proses Penyembuhan Gejala Kejiwaan Berbasis Islamic Intervention Of Psychology. *NALAR: Jurnal Peradaban Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 3(2), 134–147. <https://doi.org/10.23971/njppi.v3i2.1677>

Umam, K., Suarilah, I., Felipe-Dimog, E. B., Yusuf, Ah., & Susilo, I. (2024). Psychospiritual care: a concept analysis. *Healthcare in Low-Resource Settings*, 12(2), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.4081/hls.2024>

Utomo, P., & Agustine, T. (2024). The Integration of Psychosufistic (Sufism) and Islamic Spiritual Counseling Approach in Shaping Islamic Character: Construction of Islamic Education based on Religious Counseling. *At-Ta'lim: Media Informasi Pendidikan Islam*, 23(1), 51–62. <https://doi.org/10.29300/attalim.v23i1.3451>

Waslah, W. (2017). Peran Ajaran Tasawuf Sebagai Psikoterapi Mengatasi Konflik Batin. *At-Turats*, 11(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.24260/at-turats.v11i2.893>