

PREVENTION OF SELF-HARM IN ADOLESCENTS FROM BROKEN HOMES THROUGH *MA'RIFAT AL-NAFS*: A THEMATIC STUDY OF QUR'ANIC EXEGESIS

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Abstract: *The increasing prevalence of self-harm among adolescents from broken homes in Indonesia demonstrates the serious psychological impact of parental divorce, which often triggers emotional instability, anxiety, and destructive behaviors. National surveys indicate that adolescents from divorced families are more vulnerable to depression and self-injury than those from intact families. This study aims to explore the role of ma'rifat al-nafs (self-awareness) as a Qur'anic-based approach to preventing self-harm in broken-home adolescents. Using a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach, this research applies thematic exegesis of the Qur'an and integrates insights from classical and contemporary tafsir, particularly the thought of al-Ghazālī on self-awareness. The findings reveal that ma'rifat al-nafs (a deep understanding of self-identity) strengthens emotional resilience by guiding adolescents to understand themselves, accept their circumstances, and transform negative emotions into constructive actions. Its practical application is realized through three techniques: self-talk as reflective dialogue to regulate emotions, self-forgiveness to release guilt and resentment, and self-love to build self-appreciation and positive growth. These techniques align with Qur'anic principles in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195 and Q.S. As-Shams [91]: 7–10, which emphasizes the prohibition of self-destruction and the importance of soul purification. In conclusion, ma'rifat al-nafs provides a spiritual and psychological framework to reduce self-harm tendencies, while its effectiveness requires support from education, community, and social environments. Thus, this study contributes to presenting a Qur'anic solution that integrates spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions to improve the well-being of adolescents from broken homes.*

Keywords: *Adolescents, Broken Home, Ma'rifat al-Nafs, Self-Harm, Qur'anic Exegesis.*

Abstrak: *Meningkatnya prevalensi self-harm pada remaja broken home di Indonesia menunjukkan dampak psikologis serius dari perceraian orang tua, yang sering memicu instabilitas emosional,*

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kecemasan, dan perilaku destruktif. Survei nasional menunjukkan bahwa remaja dari keluarga bercerai lebih rentan mengalami depresi dan melukai diri dibandingkan dengan mereka yang berasal dari keluarga utuh. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengeksplorasi peran *ma'rifat al-nafs* (kesadaran diri) sebagai pendekatan berbasis Al-Qur'an dalam pencegahan *self-harm* pada remaja *broken home*. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif melalui pendekatan deskriptif-analitis, penelitian ini menerapkan tafsir tematik Al-Qur'an serta mengintegrasikan pemikiran tafsir klasik dan kontemporer, khususnya pemikiran al-Ghazālī tentang kesadaran diri. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *ma'rifat al-nafs* (pemahaman mendalam tentang jati diri) memperkuat ketahanan emosional dengan membimbing remaja untuk memahami diri, menerima keadaan, dan mengubah emosi negatif menjadi tindakan konstruktif. Aplikasinya diwujudkan melalui tiga teknik: *self-talk* sebagai dialog reflektif untuk mengatur emosi, *self-forgiveness* untuk melepaskan rasa bersalah dan dendam, serta *self-love* untuk membangun penghargaan diri dan pertumbuhan positif. Ketiga teknik ini sejalan dengan prinsip Al-Qur'an dalam Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195 dan Q.S. As-Shams [91]: 7–10 yang menekankan larangan merusak diri serta pentingnya pensucian jiwa. Kesimpulannya, *ma'rifat al-nafs* menyediakan kerangka spiritual dan psikologis untuk mengurangi kecenderungan *self-harm*, meskipun efektivitasnya memerlukan dukungan pendidikan, komunitas, dan lingkungan sosial. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam menghadirkan solusi Qur'ani yang mengintegrasikan dimensi spiritual, emosional, dan sosial guna meningkatkan kesejahteraan remaja *broken home*.

Kata-kata Kunci: Keluarga Bercerai, *Ma'rifat al-Nafs*, Melukai Diri, Remaja, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an*.

Introduction

The rising rate of divorce in Indonesia has triggered an increase in self-harm behavior among adolescents from broken homes. The YouGov Omnibus survey in 2021 showed that 20.21% of Indonesian adolescents who experienced family breakdown were identified as having intentionally hurt themselves.¹ Additionally, this data is supported by the 2024 Mental Health Deep Dive Survey, which states that 40% of Generation Z from broken-home backgrounds are more likely to experience anxiety, stress, and self-harm.² These facts demonstrate that parental divorce affects adolescents' mental health, making them more likely to engage in self-harm.

Studies on adolescents in the context of self-harm and broken homes have shown a progression from family breakdown to emotional instability, and eventually to negative actions. Adolescents from divorced families have greater emotional vulnerability compared to those from intact and harmonious families.³ They tend to feel unloved (broken heart), unappreciated (broken values), disconnected from their families (broken relationships), or even guilty about their parents' separation.

1 Kim Ho, "A Quarter of Indonesians Have Experienced Suicidal Thoughts," YouGov, 2019, <https://yougov.com/articles/23994-quarter-indonesians-have-experienced-suicidal-thou>.

2 Deloitte, *2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey: Living and Working with Purpose in a Transforming World* (2024).

3 G. A. A. Wulan Prameswari Dewi, Ni Nyoman Ari Indra Dewi, and I Rai Hardika, "The Dynamics of the Meaning of Life in Balinese Teenagers whose Parents are Divorced," *Jurnal Kesehatan, Sains, dan Teknologi (Jakasakti)* 2, no. 3 (2023): 117–24. <https://doi.org/10.36002/js.v2i3.2702>.

⁴ Ironically, self-harm is often chosen as a way to vent emotions.⁵ These three aspects indicate that self-harm not only harms adolescents physically but also psychologically.

This study is based on the view that not all adolescents can easily accept the reality of their parents' divorce. Acceptance of this situation plays an important role in shaping the mental health of adolescents from broken homes.⁶ Difficulties in coming to terms with this reality often drive them to seek escape through self-destructive behaviors such as self-harm.⁷ This contradicts the teaching in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195, in which Allah forbids human beings from destroying themselves. Therefore, an appropriate approach is needed to help adolescents from broken homes face their psychological challenges.

Specifically, this study aims to intervene in the mental health of adolescents from broken homes through *ma'rifat al-nafs* (understanding the essence of the self) to prevent them from engaging in self-harm. This is actualized through three techniques: self-talk, self-forgiveness, and self-love. These techniques function to redirect emotions and feelings of non-acceptance of parental divorce toward self-improvement. This approach enables individuals to recognize themselves more deeply, thereby striving optimally to maintain their identity and potential. Thus, this article offers a significant solution to breaking the cycle of self-harm among adolescents from broken homes while also enhancing their psychological well-being.

This research is a library study that employs a qualitative approach and a descriptive-analytical method. The study focuses on thematic exegesis by referring to relevant tafsir works to analyze the concept of *ma'rifat al-nafs* in relation to preventing self-harm among adolescents from broken homes. This method was chosen to uncover Qur'anic values as both a foundation and a framework for understanding and intervening in the mental health issues faced by these adolescents.

In addition, this study applies a phenomenological method to tafsir literature that discusses human inner experiences in dealing with emotional pressures and the search for life's meaning. This allows for an exploration of how exegetes interpret

4 Miftahul Jannah and Nurjannah, "Konseling Islami dengan Teknik Modelling untuk Mengatasi Emosi Negatif Anak Broken Home," *Indonesian Journal of Educational Counseling* 6, no. 2 (2022): 87–95, <https://doi.org/10.30653/001.202262.188>.

5 Binti Anis Sholikhati et al., "Peningkatan Kesadaran Tentang Pentingnya Kesehatan Mental Pada Remaja Untuk Mencegah Terjadinya Self Harm di Desa Kreyo," *Prosiding Kampelmas* 2, no. 2 (2023): 1609–17.

6 Novita Maulidya Jalal et al., "Penerimaan Diri Pada Remaja Dengan Orang Tua Berce-
rai," *Prosiding Sarasehan Konselor & Call For Paper Penguatan Keilmuan Konseling Sebagai Solusi Ketahanan Keluarga Muslim*, IAIN Parepare, 2022, 74–82, <https://repository.iainpare.ac.id/id/eprint/4515/>.

7 Alfaynie Axelfa Trie Aprilia, Agung Wibawa, and Bangun Suharti, "Komunikasi Intra-personal (Self-Talk) dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Dampak Buruk Self-Harm Pada Remaja Brokenhome," *Jurnal Communio: Jurnal Jurusan Ilmu Komunikasi* 13, no. 1 (2024): 29–43, <https://doi.org/10.35508/jikom.v13i1.9284>.

the concept of *ma'rifat al-nafs* (self-awareness) as proposed by al-Ghazālī, and its relevance in shaping individual thought patterns and behavior.

Through this approach, the study seeks to examine the concept of *ma'rifat al-nafs* and connect it with the psychological dynamics of adolescents who engage in self-harm due to parental divorce. In doing so, this research addresses psychological aspects and provides a Qur'anic perspective that can serve as both a foundation and a spiritually based solution for overcoming this issue.

The Reality of Self-Harm Among Broken-Home Adolescents

According to Allister, self-harm is the deliberate act of injuring oneself, causing psychological or physical harm without suicidal intent. Such actions include cutting the skin with sharp objects, burning the skin, hitting parts of the body, such as the head, with hard objects, pulling out hair, scratching the skin until it bleeds, and consuming toxic substances or illegal drugs.⁸ This behavior is often carried out as a way to vent anger, disappointment, and depression.⁹ In the context of adolescents from broken homes, self-harm is not a justified act, as Allah has prohibited His creatures from destroying themselves, as stated in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195.

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Spend in the way of Allah and do not throw yourselves into destruction with your own hands. And do good; indeed, Allah loves those who do good." (Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195).

Several studies show that family breakdown negatively impacts children. According to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), there were 2,971 cases of children experiencing psychological problems due to their parents' divorce.¹⁰ This condition often triggers emotional disturbances such as anxiety and depression among adolescents from broken homes.¹¹ Some of them turn to negative behaviors such as drug abuse, aggression, self-harm, or even suicide.¹² However, not all broken-home adolescents engage in such behaviors. Some can cope with their difficult times and grow into resilient individuals.¹³ From these

8 Allister, "Multiple Meanings of Self Harm: A Critical Review," *Journal of Mental Health Nursing* 12, no. 3 (2003): 177–85.

9 Aprilia, Wibawa, and Suharti, "Komunikasi Intrapersonal (Self-Talk) dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Dampak Buruk Self-Harm Pada Remaja Brokenhome," 29–43.

10 Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia (KPAI), "Data Kasus Anak Korban Pengasuhan Bermasalah Tinggi: KPAI Lakukan Advokasi," *Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia (KPAI)*, October 4, 2022, <https://www.kpai.go.id/publikasi/data-kasus-anak-korban-pengasuhan-bermasalah-tinggi-kpai-lakukan-advokasi>.

11 Brigita Suhartini et al., "Studi Literatur Penelitian Kesehatan Mental Individu Yang Mengalami Broken Home," *Journal of Therapie* 1, no. 1 (April 2024): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.62872/hv38aq73>.

12 Jalal et al., "Penerimaan Diri Pada Remaja Dengan Orang Tua Bercerai," 74–82.

13 I Gst. Agung Diah Rusdayanti et al., "Pengembangan Panduan Konseling Rational

studies, it can be identified that broken-home adolescents are prone to negative actions if they are unable to regulate their emotions.

Parental divorce poses a serious threat to a child's psychology. Regardless of age, children feel pressured upon learning of their parents' divorce.¹⁴ However, older children may experience lighter impacts than adolescents.¹⁵ Within the age range of 10–18, adolescents tend to have high sensitivity and intense emotional fluctuations, making them more vulnerable to stress.¹⁶ The inability to accept this reality often causes broken-home adolescents to feel ashamed and insecure, as this age is highly susceptible to the emotional impacts of parental divorce.

On the other hand, some broken-home adolescents are found to be able to rise and grow from their difficult situations. They can adapt to circumstances and manage emotions positively.¹⁷ Support from family, friends, or professionals can help them rebuild self-confidence, discover new meaning in life, and turn the experience of parental divorce into a stepping stone for greater personal growth.¹⁸ This, in turn, saves them from hardship while preparing them to face future challenges with strength.¹⁹ Therefore, responding to problems and managing emotions positively becomes a key foundation for broken-home adolescents to avoid self-harm.

The ability to manage emotions must be pursued with self-awareness and acceptance. This process involves a deep understanding of one's inner state and difficult situations.²⁰ By accepting reality, broken-home adolescents can find healthy ways to express their emotions.²¹ Such awareness and acceptance strengthen

Emotive Behavioral Teknik Dispute Cognitive untuk Meningkatkan Konsep Diri dan Resiliensi terhadap Kemandirian pada Siswa," *Jurnal EDUCATIO (Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia)* 10, no. 1 (2024): 114–24.

14 Ridwan Syaidi and Zudan Fakrulloh, "The Impact of Divorce on Children in the Civil Law Perspective," *SYARAH: Jurnal Hukum Islam dan Ekonomi* 12, no. 1 (2023): 77–90, <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.30-10-2021.2315725>.

15 Nurul Syarifah and Nela Widiastuti, "Konsep Diri Remaja Broken Home di Instagram," *Journal of Digital Communication and Design (Jdcode)* 2, no. 2 (2022): 116–20.

16 Amirafatin Salsabila and Ira Darmawanti, "Dinamika Psychological Well-Being Dewasa Awal yang Tumbuh di Dalam Keluarga Broken Home," *Character: Jurnal Penelitian Psikologi* 10, no. 02 (2023): 158–67. <https://doi.org/10.26740/cjpp.v10i2.53492>.

17 Imron Muttaqin and Bagus Sulisty, "Analisis Faktor Penyebab dan Dampak Keluarga Broken Home," *Raheema: Jurnal Studi Gender dan Anak* 6, no. 2 (2019): 245–56, <https://doi.org/10.24260/raheema.v6i2.1492>.

18 Syarifah and Widiastuti, "Konsep Diri Remaja Broken Home di Instagram," 116–20.

19 Ni Putu Lilis Purnama Devi and David Hizkia Tobing, "Resiliensi Pada Remaja dengan Latar Belakang Keluarga Broken Home," *INNOVATIVE: Journal of Social Science Research* 4 (2024): 1390–1404, <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v4i2.8586>.

20 Muhammad Nafi, Fitri Tiara Mulyani, and Fitria Nur Afifah, "The Concept of Ma'rifatun Nafs and Self Knowledge: Comparative Study of the Thoughts of Al Ghazali and Sigmund Freud," *JOUSIP: Journal of Sufism and Psychotherapy* 2, no. 2 (2022): 121–36, <https://doi.org/10.28918/jousip.v2i2.6728>.

21 Syaidi and Fakrulloh, "The Impact of Divorce on Children in the Civil Law Perspec-

emotional resilience, making them more prepared to face life's challenges without resorting to self-harm.

Previous studies have explained that broken-home adolescents tend to behave impulsively and are vulnerable to self-harm. This is due to the process of identity formation and life-goal determination that occurs during adolescence. Nevertheless, they still have the right to happiness and well-being.²² Thus, self-acceptance and persistence of broken-home adolescents in navigating life play an essential role in dispelling negative stigma, avoiding self-harm, and developing their potential.

From these studies, it can be understood that parental divorce is identified as one of the causes of self-harm. Yet, every human being is given trials and life circumstances according to individual capacity. Therefore, this paper considers psychological, social, and spiritual factors in understanding the impact of parental divorce on adolescents. A Sufi approach, such as *ma'rifat al-nafs* (understanding the essence of the self), plays an important role in shaping one's behavior, as indicated in Q.S. As-Shams [91]: 7–10.

Ma'rifat al-Nafs: A Concept for Preventing Self-Harm

Etymologically, *ma'rifat* comes from the root word *'arafa*–*ya'rifu*–*ma'rifatan*, which means to know, to recognize, and to acknowledge. Terminologically, it refers to the knowledge and understanding of things in a detailed and comprehensive manner.²³ According to al-Ghazālī, *ma'rifat* is the knowledge of the divine secrets of Allah Swt. and the understanding of His decrees concerning all that exists.²⁴ Meanwhile, *nafs*, meaning soul or self.²⁵ From the perspective of Islamic spirituality, *ma'rifat al-nafs* is a term that refers to profound knowledge of oneself, particularly in the context of understanding the soul.²⁶ The combination of these two words reflects an effort to comprehend the essence of the self more deeply, regarded as an important step toward attaining closeness to God.

According to al-Ghazālī in "*Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn*", *ma'rifat al-nafs* is the foundation of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul). He asserts that a person will not achieve true happiness (*sa'ādah*) without first understanding the nature of their own soul, namely the part of themselves that tends toward goodness and the part that tends toward evil.²⁷ Al-Ghazālī views the human soul as a mirror

tive," 77–90.

22 Aprilia, Wibawa, and Suharti, "Komunikasi Intrapersonal (Self-Talk) dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Dampak Buruk Self-Harm Pada Remaja Brokenhome," 29–43.

23 Taufik Burhanudin Azis, "Konsep Ma'rifat dalam Tasawuf atas Pemikiran Imam Al-Ghazali," *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran Islam* 8, no. 2 (2024): 357, <https://doi.org/10.24127/att.v8i2.3265>.

24 Al-Ghazālī, *Kīmīyā' al-Sa'ādah* (Kairo: Dār Muqattam, 2010), 21.

25 Muḥammad ibn Makram ibn Manẓūr al-Ifriqī al-Miṣrī, *Lisān al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), 111: 320.

26 Ghazālī, *Kīmīyā' al-Sa'ādah*, 21.

27 Erlin Wulandari, Evi Verlantika, and M Hafidz Khusnadi, "The Concept of Tazkiyat al-Nafs by Al-Ghazali as a Method in Moral Education," *Jurnal Iqra': Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan* 6, no. 2 (2021): 369–70.

which, when cleansed of despicable traits such as anger, envy, and despair, will reflect divine light.

Meanwhile, Ibn ‘Arabī in “*Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*” emphasizes that knowing oneself means realizing the divine dimension embedded in the human soul.²⁸ He interprets *nafs* not merely as a biological entity, but as a space of consciousness where humans feel a connection with God. Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, in “*Mufradāt al-Alfāz al-Qur’ān*”, explains that the *nafs* is a driving force that motivates human actions—both good and evil—depending on the process of spiritual purification (*tazkiyah al-nafs*).²⁹ He emphasizes that the *nafs* acts as the center of moral and spiritual consciousness that determines the direction of a person’s behavior. This concept shows that the human soul has different levels, namely *nafs al-ammārah* (the soul that commands evil; Q.S. Yūsuf [12]: 53), *nafs al-lawwāmah* (the soul that regrets mistakes; Q.S. Al-Qiyāmah [75]: 2), and *nafs al-muṭma’innah* (the calm soul; Q.S. Al-Fajr [89]: 27–28).³⁰ These three levels describe the inner journey of humans from the impulses of desire to peaceful spiritual awareness.

The process of *ma’rifat al-nafs* helps a person move from the first level to inner peace that is full of acceptance of oneself and Allah’s decree. Thus, understanding *ma’rifat al-nafs* can serve as an effective approach to preventing self-harm, especially for individuals experiencing emotional distress. In the process of *ma’rifat al-nafs*, one is guided to recognize and understand negative emotions and thoughts that may lead to self-harm. This awareness reminds human beings that their body and soul are divine gifts that must be preserved.³¹ By eliminating ego, cultivating love, and embracing self-acceptance, one can attain inner peace.

The core of *ma’rifat al-nafs* lies in understanding the purpose and essence of life, recognizing both one’s strengths and weaknesses, and developing the ability to control thoughts, feelings, and speech. This concept encompasses mastery over personality, character, and temperament.³² In the Qur’an, the command to know oneself is expressed in the following verse:

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ۖ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ۚ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا ۚ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا ۚ

“By the soul and He who proportioned it and inspired it with its discernment of wickedness and

28 Ibn ‘Arabī, *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 293–94.

29 Zaduna Fiddarain, Farrel Izham Prayitno, and Sulhi Kholid Al Abid, “Semantic Analysis of Nafs in the Qur’an: A Toshihiko Izutsu Perspective and Its Relevance in Modern Thought,” *Bulletin of Islamic Research* 1, no. 3 (2023): 216, <https://doi.org/10.69526/bir.v1i3.360>.

30 Hafiz Abdul Ghani and Hafiz Saeed Ahamd, “The Dynamics of Nafs: The Interplay of Self-Purification and Success in Islamic Teachings,” *NUQTAH Journal of Theological Studies* 4, no. 1 (2024): 6–13; Nik Rosila Nik Yaakob, “An Islamic Conceptual Framework of a Well-balanced Personality,” *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 28, no. 4 (2011): 73–74, <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajiss.v28i4.332>.

31 Yusron Masduki and Idi Warsah, *Psikologi Agama* (Palembang: Tunas Gemilang Press, 2020), 76.

32 Ghazālī, *Kīmīyā’ al-Sa’ādah*, 21–24.

righteousness. Successful indeed is the one who purifies it and ruined indeed is the one who corrupts it.” (Q.S. As-Shams [91]: 7–10).

The verse above explains that self-understanding is essential in shaping one’s character and behavior.³³ Al-Jīlānī (d. 561 H) stated in his exegesis that Allah created the human soul with a mixture of higher and lower dimensions. Afterward, Allah inspired the soul with the capacity to distinguish between good and evil.³⁴ The phrase *nafs* in this verse also contains an implicit command to reflect upon and understand the true nature of the soul.³⁵ This process involves purifying the soul from various evils and negative influences so that it may attain its purity.³⁶ Consequently, individuals can achieve a higher spiritual rank before Allah, avoid loss, and attain true happiness.

Al-Ghazālī (d. 505 H) emphasized that the essential foundation of a person is *maʿrifat al-nafs*. He argued that to know oneself, individuals must understand their nature both outwardly and inwardly.³⁷ The outward aspect includes desires and greed derived from satanic, animalistic, predatory, and angelic elements.³⁸ These four elements must be balanced, neither excessive nor deficient—so that the self may be safeguarded from desires that lead to corruption and destruction. The inward aspect, on the other hand, encompasses the faculties of thought, memory, and imagination.³⁹ Both of these dimensions essentially reside in the heart, making the heart the “commander” that must be corrected in the context of preventing self-harm.

Rectifying the *nafs* is a fundamental component of self-control and moral improvement. It involves managing inner drives, which, if left unchecked, may lead to destructive behavior.⁴⁰ Therefore, mastering the *nafs* is the key to righteousness. Achieving balance between heart and intellect is crucial for enabling individuals to avoid behaviors that bring harm to themselves.

Based on the concept of *maʿrifat al-nafs* as explained earlier, preventive measures are needed to ensure that adolescents from broken homes do not fall into negative behaviors such as self-harm. The techniques of self-talk, self-forgiveness, and self-love are seen as practical manifestations of the concept of *maʿrifat al-nafs* put forward by al-Ghazālī in “*Kīmīyāʾ al-Saʿādah*” so that they function as a form of psychotherapy to overcome deep-rooted emotional disorders in damaged

33 Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm wa al-Sabʿ al-Mathānī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1995), 67–70.

34 ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, *Tafsīr al-Jīlānī* (Kuwait: Maktabah al-Maʿrūfiyyāt, 2010), 430–31.

35 ʿAbd al-Karīm bin Hawāzin al-Qushayrī, *Laṭāʾif al-Ishārāt* (Kairo: Al-Hayʾah al-Miṣriyyah al-ʿĀmmah li al-Kutub, 2010), 142–43.

36 Ibn ʿArabī, *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 2011), 232–40.

37 Ghazālī, *Kīmīyāʾ al-Saʿādah*, 25.

38 Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥārith ibn Asad al-Baṣrī al-Baghdādī al-Muḥāsibī, *Al-Riʾāyah li Ḥuqūq Allāh* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1991), 56.

39 Ghazālī, *Kīmīyāʾ al-Saʿādah*, 29–32.

40 Ghazālī, *Kīmīyāʾ al-Saʿādah*, 34.

adolescents at home.

1. Self-Talk

This method involves reflection (*muḥāsabah*) and open internal communication to identify and manage feelings and internal conflicts experienced by broken-home adolescents. It emphasizes understanding one's inner condition for self-preservation, as written in Q.S. Al-Ḥasyr [59]: 18.⁴¹ The process of internal dialogue is divided into four stages: sensation, perception, memory, and thought.⁴² It begins with the sensation felt, the interpretation of that sensation, and its storage in memory to serve as a reference for thinking. In addition, it can increase the self-awareness of teenagers from broken homes so that they can recognize and manage sources of stressors in their daily lives.⁴³ Therefore, this process helps broken-home adolescents recognize the thoughts and emotions underlying their actions, enabling them to evaluate and adjust their responses to various situations more effectively.

This dialogue technique must involve internal conversations that guide and motivate the self.⁴⁴ For example, by asking questions such as: Who am I? Where do I come from? For what purpose was I created? Why do I suffer? And with what will I find happiness? As expressed in the saying: "Whoever knows himself, knows his Lord".⁴⁵ The meaning of this saying is that if one understands the characteristics and conditions of his soul, he will be more capable of understanding his relationship with God.

This concept aligns with the words of Allah in Q.S. Fuṣṣilat [41]: 53 and Q.S. Al-Dhāriyāt [51]: 21, which imply that divine guidance is embedded within the human self to be observed and contemplated.⁴⁶ Thus, self-understanding becomes the starting point for recognizing one's mental state, making it easier to discover God's guidance as manifested in self-awareness.

This technique should also be strengthened with *dhikr* while visualizing the

41 Muḥammad bin 'Alī bin Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-Shawkānī, *Faṭḥ al-Qadīr* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1994), 59.

42 Ian Burkitt, "Self and Others in the Field of Perception: The Role of Micro-Dialogue, Feeling, and Emotion in Perception," *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 33, no. 4 (2013): 267, <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/a0030255>.

43 Lukman Nugraha Pratama and Khodijah Khodijah, "Pendekatan Ma'rifat al-Nafs Al-Ghazali terhadap Gejala Psikosomatik: Studi Pre-Eksperimental dengan Psychosomatic Symptoms Questionnaire (PSQ-39)," *Esoterik* 10, no. 2 (2024): 54, <https://doi.org/10.21043/esoterik.v10i2.28955>.

44 Ibrāhīm al-Fiqī, *Quwwat al-Taḥkīm* (Kairo: Tawzī' Dār Rāyah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 2007), 43–48.

45 Ibn 'Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (Kairo: Maktabah Mesir, 2015), 61–62; Syafaatun Almir-zanah, "God, Humanity and Nature: Cosmology in Islamic Spirituality," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 76, no. 1 (2020): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i1.6130>.

46 Wabwah al-Zuhayli, *Tafsir Al-Munir: Aqidah, Shari'ah, dan Manhaj*, trans. Abdul Hayyie al-Kattani (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2013), 40–41.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as an inspiration and role model.⁴⁷ Indeed, remembering Allah is a fundamental healing for fear and anxiety.⁴⁸ Deep self-reflection as part of the process of *ma'rifat al-nafs* enables a person to more easily identify the root of problems and maintain emotional balance.⁴⁹ Positive self-dialogue is important in healing disappointment and refraining from dangerous actions such as self-harm.

2. Self-Forgiveness

In this process, broken-home adolescents must be able to release guilt and negative judgments that hinder their mental well-being. The effort to forgive must be accompanied by patience and openness of heart. Patience is the best weapon for anyone facing trials.⁵⁰ To forgive, one must not consider trials or misfortunes as disasters.⁵¹ Instead, one must be patient and view them as a form of God's mercy upon His servants.

Someone who endures the bitterness of life with patience will be able to forgive himself and others for what has happened.⁵² In this context, forgiveness plays an important role in releasing emotional burdens and erasing adolescents' resentment toward their parents' divorce. Allah Swt. emphasizes in His words:

وَلَا يَأْتِلْ أُولُو الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أُولَى الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

"And let not those of virtue among you and wealth swear not to give [aid] to their relatives and the needy and the emigrants for the cause of Allah and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like it if Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (Q.S. An-Nūr [24]: 22).

According to Ibn 'Āshūr in *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, the above verse not only calls for forgiving others but also reveals that forgiving oneself and one's circumstances is the way to heal a wounded and disappointed heart.⁵³ This attitude fosters inner

47 Ghazālī, *Kīmīyā' al-Sa'ādah*, 21.

48 Robert Frager, *Heart, Self, and Soul: The Sufi Psychology of Growth, Balance, and Harmony* (Wheaton: Theological Publishing House, 1999), 330.

49 Wulandari, Verlantika, and Khusnadi, "The Concept of Tazkiyat al-Nafs by Al-Ghazali as a Method in Moral Education," 371.

50 Ibn Qaḍīb al-Bān, *Ḥall al-Iqāl* (Kairo: Dār al-Risālah, 2005), 74.

51 Justyna Mróz, Loren Toussaint, and Kinga Kaleta, "Association between Religiosity and Forgiveness: Testing a Moderated Mediation Model of Self-Compassion and Adverse Childhood Experiences," *Religions* 15, no. 9 (2024): 1137, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15091137>.

52 Iis Amanah Amida and Bambang Kurnia Nugraha, "Analysis of the Concept of Self-Awareness in Sufism and its Implication in the Guidance Counseling Process," *Formosa Journal of Sustainable Research (FJSR)* 3, no. 1 (2024): 171–82. <https://doi.org/10.55927/fjsr.v3i1.7913>.

53 Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr, *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* (Tunisa: Dār al-Tūnisiyyah, 1984), 188–90.

peace, which is the foundation for the growth of self-awareness and new hope.⁵⁴ By forgiving, troubled teenagers open the way for psychological recovery, acceptance of their situation, and readiness to rise from despair.

Q.S. An-Nūr [24]: 22 that forgiving oneself and one's circumstances becomes a path to healing a wounded and disappointed heart. By forgiving, broken-home adolescents open the way for psychological recovery, acceptance of their situation, and readiness to rise from despair.

Meanwhile, al-Ghazālī (d. 505 H) stressed in his work *Kimiyā' al-Sa'ādah* that true happiness can only be attained through purification of the heart from negative traits such as hatred and resentment.⁵⁵ Self-forgiveness is a way to let go of anger, hatred, and grudges against oneself, thereby enabling reconciliation and inner peace.⁵⁶ When a person has reconciled with himself, he can radiate love and compassion toward himself, making him unwilling to engage in self-harm.

3. Self-Love

This technique involves giving oneself sincere attention and compassion. According to al-Ghazālī (d. 505 H), the process of loving involves appreciating one's values and potential, which should be utilized to achieve a better life.⁵⁷ This can be done by accepting oneself as he is, developing self-confidence, appreciating personal growth through challenges, and honing one's abilities.⁵⁸ In preventing self-harm among adolescents, this approach enables them to rise and refocus on their life goals.

The encouragement to love oneself is implied by Allah in Q.S. Ar-Rūm [30]: 21, where He states that He placed affection and compassion among human beings so that they may find tranquility.⁵⁹ Based on this verse, self-love becomes a prerequisite before loving others to attain happiness.⁶⁰ After all, how can one be happy if one does not love oneself? Therefore, self-love means nurturing and treating oneself well. A person who loves his soul will not harm himself. Instead, he will maximize his potential to prove his worth as a manifestation of a servant's gratitude to the Creator.

By actualizing the above techniques in sequence, broken-home adolescents can strengthen their self-control against self-harm and discover the true meaning of life. They can gain deeper self-understanding and acceptance, while being content

54 Navi Agustina, Ajeng Yunita Aisyah, and Sri Lestari, "Kegiatan Mengenal Diri Pada Remaja di Panti Asuhan," *Plakat: Jurnal Pelayanan Kepada Masyarakat* 3, no. 2 (November 2021): 230–42, <https://doi.org/10.30872/plakat.v3i2.6744>.

55 Ghazālī, *Kimiyā' al-Sa'ādah*, 34.

56 Antonius Atosokhi Gea, *Relasi dengan Diri Sendiri* (Jakarta: Media Komputindo, 2002), 49.

57 Ghazālī, *Kimiyā' al-Sa'ādah*, 36–40.

58 Fiqī, *Quwwat al-Taḥkīm*, 48.

59 Muḥammad Mutawallī al-Sha'rāwī, *Tafsīr wa Khawāṭir al-Sha'rāwī Ḥaul al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Mesir: Maṭābi' Akhbār al-Yaum, 1997), 11360.

60 Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Aẓīm wa al-Sab' al-Mathānī*, 434–35.

with and submitting to what has been decreed by Allah. Consequently, *maʿrifat al-nafs* encourages the soul to think well of Him, to perceive the wisdom behind trials, and thereby to attain inner peace (*nafs al-muṭmaʾinnah*) and emotional balance in facing life's challenges.

Here is an illustration of the phases experienced by broken home adolescents in their efforts to achieve well-being:

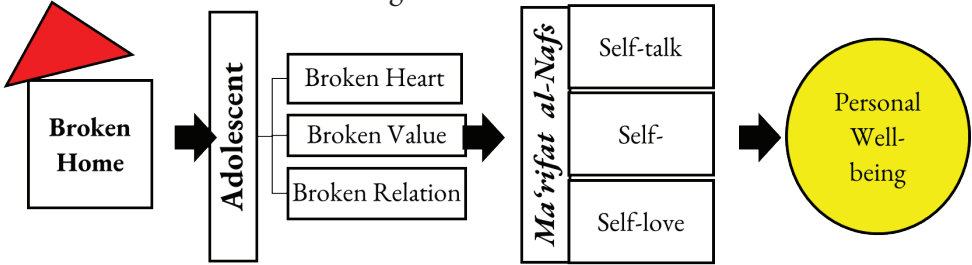


Figure 1. Phases of Broken Home Adolescents in Achieving Well-Being

The figure shows that, to achieve well-being, broken home adolescents must undergo the process of *maʿrifat al-nafs* so they can make peace with their emotional wounds.

Concretizing *Maʿrifat al-Nafs* in Broken-Home Adolescents

Broken-home adolescents who have not yet recognized their true essence (*maʿrifat al-nafs*) are easily controlled by negative emotions. Many of them resort to self-harm as an outlet for disappointment and anger. Yet self-harm is a forbidden act by Allah, for He created His servants with compassion. Humans are entrusted by Him to safeguard both soul and body. Therefore, *maʿrifat al-nafs* becomes the key to loving and protecting oneself from destructive behaviors such as self-harm.

No matter how great the trials faced by broken-home adolescents, self-harm is not the right solution to escape the chains of their disappointment. In this regard, Allah reminds humankind not to destroy themselves and to always preserve their well-being as a form of gratitude for the blessings of life, as stated in Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195.⁶¹ According to al-Marāghī, this verse not only prohibits physical acts that harm oneself, but also encompasses all forms of behavior that lead to moral, spiritual, and psychological destruction.⁶² Similarly, al-Qurṭubī emphasizes that this verse forms the legal basis for the prohibition of self-harm (*tablik al-nafs*), because life is a trust from Allah that must be preserved, not ended or harmed.⁶³ Hence, a faithful individual must constantly strive (*mujāhadah*) to attain *maʿrifat al-nafs* and seek divine assistance to overcome the challenges faced.

Meanwhile, concretizing *maʿrifat al-nafs* requires external efforts from various

⁶¹ ʿĀshūr, *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, 212–16.

⁶² Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī* (Kairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥal-abī, 1946), 251.

⁶³ Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr ibn Farḥ al-Anṣārī al-Khazraǧī Shams al-Dīn al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ li Ahkām al-Qurʾān* (Kairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1964), 389.

stakeholders to ensure that the healing and self-development process runs more effectively. These efforts include the following steps:

First, integrate the value of *ma'rifat al-nafs* into the curriculum of *akidah akhlak* (creed and ethics) education at the junior and senior high school levels. The educational process plays a strategic role in shaping the spiritual character of adolescents. Teaching the concept of *ma'rifat al-nafs* in schools not only adds to theological knowledge but also helps adolescents recognize and manage their emotionality. The knowledge gained from such instruction can serve as a valuable provision for adolescents, instilled within the school environment. As Allah Swt. says in Q.S. An-Nahl [16]: 125, teaching must be done with wisdom and good advice.⁶⁴

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ
صَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction and argue with them in the best way. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided." (Q.S. An-Nahl [16]: 125).

According to Ibn Kathīr, this verse emphasizes the importance of teaching methods that are gentle, rational, and heartfelt, rather than dogmatic.⁶⁵ Through an approach based on wisdom and *mau'izah hasanah*, young people can be guided to understand their self-worth, appreciate life, and develop empathy for others. Education based on *ma'rifat al-nafs* helps them build awareness that a stable soul is the foundation of morality and spiritual resilience. This effort is expected to foster spiritual and moral awareness among adolescents, enabling them to face life's challenges with greater wisdom and responsibility.

Second, revitalizing youth mentoring programs in mosques. A mosque is not merely a place of worship, but also a center for character building and spiritual well-being of the community. This step is grounded in Q.S. At-Tawbah [9]: 71:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضُهُمْ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

"The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoy what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise." (Q.S. At-Tawbah [9]: 71).

Those verses emphasize that guidance in daily life is important, socially,

64 Marāghī, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 161.

65 Abū al-Fida' Ismā'il bin 'Umar bin Kathīr al-Qurashī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Aẓīm* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1999), 462.

spiritually, and morally.⁶⁶ The social and spiritual role of Muslims in guiding each other towards goodness.⁶⁷ Mosque youth organizations, which serve as facilitators of religious and social activities, should establish mentoring programs for broken-home adolescents in their community. Thus, the mosque serves as a space for social healing, where teenagers from broken homes receive guidance through mentoring activities, reflective studies, and emotional coaching based on Qur'anic values. Such programs ought to be guided by a *murshīd* (spiritual mentor) who possesses a deep understanding of self-awareness and the psychological struggles of broken-home adolescents. This way, they will not feel the urge to harm themselves and will instead be able to build spiritual values while strengthening solidarity among youth.

Third, participation in social healing communities. One example is *Behome Indonesia*, a community that contributes to the National Mental Revolution Movement for broken-home families.⁶⁸ This community provides meaningful insights through social media and organized activities, motivating its members to rise from adversity through the Instagram account @behome.id.⁶⁹ This participation reflects the value of openness to peace as mentioned in Q.S. Al-Anfāl [8]: 61.

وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلَامِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“And if they incline to peace, then incline to it [also] and rely upon Allah. Indeed, it is He who is the Hearing, the Knowing.” (Q.S. Al-Anfāl [8]: 61).

Contextually, the above verse shows the importance of openness to reconciliation and social support.⁷⁰ Communities such as BeHome Indonesia provide a means for teenagers from broken homes to find meaning in togetherness, share experiences, and learn to turn pain into life lessons. They can express their feelings, no longer feel isolated, undergo a process of self-improvement, and find their purpose in life. From the perspective of al-Manār's interpretation, this kind of social involvement is a form of *islāh* (self-improvement and community improvement) which is at the core of Islamic teachings.⁷¹

Of these three forms of concretization, *ma'rifat al-nafs* is not only oriented

66 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* (Kairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2012), 100.

67 Abū Ja'far Muḥammad bin Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr Ath-Thabari* (Jakarta: Pustaka Az-zam, 2007), 538.

68 Novrizaldi, “Wakil Presiden Serahkan Anugerah Revolusi Mental 2023,” Kemenko PMK, 2023, <https://www.kemenkopmk.go.id/wakil-presiden-serahkan-anugerah-revolusi-mental-2023>.

69 Reifita Devi Listya Suwono, “Pengaruh Motif Penggunaan Media Sosial Instagram Behome.Id Terhadap Kepuasan Followers dalam Menggunakan Layanan Kesehatan Mental,” *Commercium* 4, no. 1 (2021): 143–54, <https://doi.org/10.26740/tc.v4i1.40613>; “Brokenhome Indonesia Official,” @behome.Id, 2025, <https://www.instagram.com/behome.id/>.

70 Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Aẓīm*, 73–74.

71 Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Manār* (Kairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1968), 197.

toward spiritual introspection but also demands active social involvement. This concept combines three dimensions, namely:

1. The theological dimension, which is the awareness of Allah's mandate to protect the soul.
2. The psychological dimension, which is the ability to manage emotions and trauma.
3. The social dimension, which is participation in an environment that nurtures and calms.

By understanding *ma'rifat al-nafs* through the Qur'anic framework and social implementation, broken home teenagers can take the path of *tazkiyah al-nafs* towards inner peace. This self-awareness gives birth to spiritual resilience that prevents them from destructive behaviors such as self-harm, while reinforcing the values of love, patience, and gratitude as the foundation of a meaningful life. In addition, the percentage of self-harm among broken homes in Indonesia can decrease significantly. In this case, increased awareness and support from the surrounding environment are also expected to accelerate their recovery process.

Conclusion

Based on the research discussed, it can be concluded that the concept of *ma'rifat al-nafs* (self-awareness) is an effective theological and psychological approach to preventing self-harming behavior among adolescents from broken homes. Deep self-awareness serves as the foundation for emotional and spiritual resilience that guides individuals to understand their inner dynamics more wisely. Through this process, adolescents learn to recognize sources of emotional stress, manage negative impulses, and transform them into positive energy that drives personal growth. This concept is in line with the moral message of Q.S. As-Shams [91]: 7–10, which emphasizes purification of the soul, and Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195, which calls for protecting oneself from destruction—two principles that affirm human responsibility for the maintenance of the soul and body.

In an implementational context, *ma'rifat al-nafs* can be applied through strengthening self-talk, self-forgiveness, and self-love, which serve as media to form resilient and self-aware personalities. They nurture feelings of acceptance, empathy, and the ability to reconcile with the past. When adolescents from broken families can reach the level of acceptance, they are better prepared to face life realities without getting stuck in the cycle of feelings of guilt and inner suffering.

However, the effectiveness of *ma'rifat al-nafs* implementation depends not only on the individual but also demands external support from the educational environment, family, and society. The role of teachers, counselors, and the community is critical in creating a safe space for youth to express themselves and receive soothing spiritual guidance. In this manner, *ma'rifat al-nafs* is not merely an introspective concept, but also a holistic strategy that integrates the spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions to build balance within.

To expand this study, further research should examine the scope of divorce's

impact on all family members, husbands, wives, and children of different ages—to formulate a more comprehensive and equitable intervention model. This approach is expected to strengthen the prevention of destructive behavior and create psychological well-being based on Qur’anic values in contemporary society.

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