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Week 41: Mental Health

WEEK 41 OCT 8 TO OCT 14 **MENTAL HEALTH**

Up to 40% of Palestinians suffer from depression.

32.7% of children in Gaza suffer from severe levels of PTSD and 49% suffer through moderate levels.

54% of Palestinian boys and 46.5% of Palestinian girls 6-12 years old are estimated to have emotional and behavioral disorders.

A June 2021 op-ed in Scientific American, "As Health Care Workers, We Stand in Solidarity with Palestine", was retracted after protests from Israeli groups.

Sources: PLOS ONE, Borgen Project, MAP UK, New Arab

<http://kuminow.com/MentalHealth>

[Next Online Gathering](#)

[This Week's Entry](#)

[You Should Know](#)

[Upcoming Weeks](#)

[You Should Watch or Read](#)

Dear Kumi Now supporter,

On Tuesday **Badia Dweik** of [Human Rights Defenders](#) and **Cody O'Rourke** of [Good Shepherd Collective](#) spoke about nonviolent opposition to occupation in Palestine and, in particular, the [Defund Racism campaign](#). The replay of the session is now available on [YouTube](#) and on [our website](#). The website includes the advocacy instructions and links shared during the gathering. You can also find the camera fund [here](#).

We would love it if you could share the session with your community. You could use language such as:

Last week we learned about the nonviolent opposition to occupation in Palestine and the Defund Racism campaign. Our guests were Badia Dweik of Human Rights Defenders and Cody O'Rourke of Good Shepherd Collective. Learn more in the latest Kumi Now online gathering. <https://youtu.be/8iL3FiMoDhw>



The **World Health Organization (WHO)** observes each October 10 as **World Mental Health Day**. The overall objective of World Mental Health Day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health. The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide. You can find information on the day, including events held by the WHO, [here](#).

Next Online Gathering

WEEK 41	MENTAL HEALTH
TUESDAY OCTOBER 5 6PM (UTC+3)	KUMI NOW ONLINE
	
	featuring guests TBA

October 12: Week 41 - Mental Health

[Full information on the gathering is here.](#)

Mental health is too often a taboo subject even in the healthiest of societies. But in societies torn apart by violence or affected by constant hardship mental health can become an even more difficult subject to address. World Mental Health Day, celebrated on October 10, was founded by the World Federation of Mental Health to raise awareness of mental health issues around the globe and direct resources where they are needed. One such area is Palestine, where the constant use of tear gas, night raids, checkpoints, and other forms of psychological warfare take their toll in the West Bank and the combined injustices of the blockade of have created a society on the brink of crisis in Gaza.

Our guest will be announced very soon.

Time: Tuesday, October 12, at 6:00pm East Jerusalem, Palestine time (UTC+3) That's...

- Pacific (Seattle/Vancouver): 8am
- Central (Chicago): 10am
- Eastern (New York/Toronto): 11am
- Atlantic: 12pm
- Newfoundland: 12:30pm
- Greenwich (London): 4pm
- Central Europe (Paris/Stockholm): 5pm
- South Africa: 5pm
- Manila: 11pm
- Sydney: 1am (+1 Day)
- Auckland: 3am (+1 Day)

Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94679502800> (There might be a quick registration form, and please set an alarm for yourself for Tuesday.)

Remember, if you'd like to receive a reminder about the gathering an hour before it begins, please use the [registration form at the bottom of the page](#).

This Week's Kumi Now Entry

Please note: To match the dates in the book, we will now be posting a new entry each Friday, and this newsletter should go out each Friday or Saturday.

Sharing and publicizing: The graphics in this newsletter are designed to be the perfect size and shape to share to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. So each week you can help the cause simply by sharing these images online. It's one more option you have to help.

Kumi Week #41: Mental Health

Week 41 of Kumi Now is now available [on the website](#). The people of Palestine face staggering concrete problems imposed by the Israeli occupation—targeted killings, intermittent bombings, detainment, maiming and torture, economic impoverishment, home demolitions, restricted movement, loss of airways, roads, agriculture, and infrastructure—but there is in addition the intangible burden of psychological damage which these physical violations impose on victims, families, and witnesses. This damage is no accident, since maximizing injury to the morale of the Palestinian community has long been an explicit goal of Israeli policy. In this way, the Palestinians have been the object of intense, prolonged, deliberate psychological warfare and humiliation aimed to erase their identity as a people.

Please read the essay on this issue and the story of the USA-Palestine Mental Health Network. And here are some facts for you:

WEEK
41

OCT 8
TO
OCT 14

MENTAL HEALTH

Just the facts...

Up to 40% of Palestinians suffer from depression.

Among areas heavily bombarded during the 2014 war on Gaza, 54% of children suffered severe PTSD.

Following the war, the WHO estimated over 20% of the Gazan population developed mental health conditions requiring psychosocial care.

32.7% of children in Gaza suffer from severe levels of PTSD and 49% suffer through moderate levels.

54% of Palestinian boys and 46.5% of Palestinian girls 6-12 years old are estimated to have emotional and behavioral disorders.

The arrest of children by Israeli military forces is a driver of mental health disorders including anxiety, depression, attentional and educational difficulties, suicide, and self harm.

29% of adolescents have witnessed a family member humiliated.

DCIP found that 75% of detained children endured some form of violence during by Israeli soldiers.

Mental health services remains a very under-funded sector of public health, in part because of the stigma that remains around mental

The pandemic has been hard on the mental health of health care workers working under occupation with shortages of medical equipment and vaccines.

A June 2021 op-ed in Scientific American, "As Health Care Workers, We Stand in Solidarity with Palestine", was retracted after protests from Israeli groups.

Sources: PLOS ONE, Borgen Project, MAP UK, New Arab

<http://kuminow.com/MentalHealth>

Understanding Nonviolence in Palestine: Just the Facts. MLK's principles of nonviolence...

- Up to 40% of Palestinians suffer from depression.
- Among areas heavily bombarded during the 2014 war on Gaza, 54% of children suffered severe PTSD.
- Following the war, the WHO estimated over 20% of the Gazan population developed mental health conditions requiring psychosocial care.
- 29% of adolescents have witnessed a family member humiliated.
- 32.7% of children in the Gaza Strip suffer from severe levels of PTSD and 49% of children suffer through moderate levels of PTSD.
- 54% of Palestinian boys and 46.5% of Palestinian girls 6-12 years old are estimated to have emotional and behavioural disorders.
- The arrest of children by Israeli military forces is a common driver of mental health disorders, leading to high rates of anxiety, depression, and attentional and educational difficulties as well as suicide and self harm.
- DCIP found that 75% of detained children endured some form of violence during their arrest by Israeli soldiers. Over 70% said they experienced verbal abuse, intimidation and humiliation, while 70% also underwent strip searches.
- Mental health services remains a very under-funded sect of public health, in part because of the stigma that still remains around mental disorders, much of which comes from religious views that say mental illness is a test or punishment by God and is something to be shameful about.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly hard on the mental health of Palestinian health care workers working under decades of occupation and

blockade with shortages of medicines and personal protective equipment, and with a vaccination rate just a fraction of their Israeli counterparts.

- A June 2021 op-ed piece in Scientific American, “As Health Care Workers, We Stand in Solidarity with Palestine”, was retracted after protests from Israeli groups, despite the magazine acknowledging there were no factual errors in the piece.

Source

- [“The Burden of Mental Disorders in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 1990-2013”](#) from **PLOS ONE**
- [“Mental Health in Palestine: The Hidden Plague”](#) from the **Borgen Project**
- [“Dealing with death and distress: The impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of Palestinian healthcare workers”](#) from **MAP UK**
- [“Mental health in Palestine among world's worst”](#) from the **New Arab**
- The original Scientific American op-ed is available as a [PDF](#).
- An article by Alice Rothchild about the retraction can be found in the Health and Human Rights Journal, [“Ghosting Palestine: Hiding Health and Human Rights Violations”](#).

Learning More

- To learn more about mental health issues in Palestine, we suggest you watch **Dr. Hala Alyan** on [“Mental Health in Palestinian Communities”](#) from the **Palestinian American Community Center**.
- And consider signing up for the **USA-Palestine Mental Health Network's** upcoming webinar “Under Siege & Under Bombs; Children’s Mental Health in Gaza” on November 6th. Details [here](#).

To go deeper, we will be developing an extensive list of [Additional Resources](#) at the bottom of this week’s entry as well as a [YouTube playlist](#) on the subject.

Once you understand the situation you'll want to get involved. Here's the Kumi Action for this week:

Kumi Action



This week, help us inform mental health workers around the globe of the mental health crisis in Palestine. You can help by reaching out to your local mental health clinics and practitioners and doing the following:

- Letting them know that organizations such as the [USA Palestine Mental Health Network](#) and the [UK Palestine Mental Health Network](#) exist and need their support.
- Asking that they [read and sign the Mental Health Workers’ Pledge for Palestine](#).
- Telling them that USA-P MHN and the UK-P MHN send delegations of clinicians and human rights workers to Palestine to introduce them to their colleagues in the West Bank and East Jerusalem who are involved in the daily work of mental health practice and human rights advocacy.
- Sharing a report with them on mental health in Palestine. You could print out a

copy and/or send it to them digitally. We suggest:

- [“Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan”](#) from the WHO.
- [“A Decade of Distress: The harsh and unchanging reality for children living in the Gaza Strip”](#) from Save the Children.

Share your messages to local mental health providers on social media, tagging them whenever possible. Include a link to [this page](#) of the Kumi Now website along with the hashtags #KumiNow and #Kumi41.

You Should Know

One or two people, companies, or organizations generally related to the issue of the week you should know, and how you can follow them online.



Gaza Community Mental Health Programme

Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP) is a non-profit civil organisation which was established in 1990. Working in the fields of Mental Health and Human Rights, we strive to improve the Palestinian community’s mental health through providing clinical, social, research and training services in addition to gathering support and advocating for the rights of women, children, and victims of violence and human rights violations.

You can find GCMHP on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).



Palestinian Counseling Center

The **Palestinian Counseling Center (PCC)** was established in 1983 by a group of psychologists, educators and community activists to provide professional and quality mental health care to Palestinians in Jerusalem and the West Bank. Since its inception, and through its team of multi-disciplinary counselors and experts, the PCC has served as a catalyst in promoting community-based development and introducing the concept of mental health in Palestine. At the time of its founding, mental health services in the region were restricted to psychiatric treatment for mental disorders at mental health hospitals and private clinics operated by psychiatrists. Treatment methods used were largely archaic, limited to bio-medical approaches, including medication and electric shock therapy. To counter these potentially harmful tactics, work at the center began, on a voluntary basis, through awareness-raising efforts in schools on the importance of mental health counseling and working with children exposed to physical and political violence. Since then, the PCC has passed through a number of phases in its development process that have led to its

present shape and character.

You can find PCC on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).



USA-Palestine Mental Health Network

The **USA-Palestine Mental Health Network** is a volunteer-run organization based in the USA which works closely with professional colleagues in Palestine. Our mission is to engage in information campaigns and public advocacy regarding the struggles facing the Palestinian people. We target a specific audience of mental health workers and professionals: psychologists, nurses, social workers, physicians, public health researchers, and others in related fields.

The USA-Palestine Mental Health Network will hold a webinar titled “Under Siege & Under Bombs; Children’s Mental Health in Gaza” on November 6th. Details here. <https://usapalmhn.com/portfolio-item/under-siege-childrens-mental-health-in-gaza/>

You can find USA-Palestine Mental Health Network on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Upcoming Weeks

And here's what we have coming up in October so you can plan ahead and decide how you want to be a part of Kumi Now:

KUMI NOW ONLINE: OCTOBER, 2021

Week 40	Week 41	Week 42	Week 43
			
October 5 <i>Nonviolence in Palestine</i>	October 12 <i>Mental Health</i>	October 19 <i>Profiting from Occupation</i>	October 26 <i>Women in Conflict</i>

EVERY TUESDAY | 6PM PALESTINE TIME | KUMINOW.COM

Each week below will have an online gathering with a guest or guests speaking on the topic. The time and Zoom link are the same each week.

The weekly newsletter will always contain reminders of the upcoming online gatherings and the Zoom link. But if you're like me and need a reminder right before the sessions begin, you can [register to receive a reminder email one hour prior to each online gathering](#). And no more digging through your inbox looking for the Zoom link! Just [use](#)

[the registration form at the bottom of the page.](#)



October 19: Week 42 - Profiting from Occupation

[Read the full entry online.](#)

Every week, hundreds of companies and corporations are profiting off the occupation. Sadly, these profits are at the cost of the rights and livelihoods of the Palestinian people. On October 21, 2003 the United Nations condemned the Israeli Apartheid Wall, demanding “that Israel stop and reverse the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.” Building of that wall continues, and it is just one way that outside corporations are directly profiting off the occupation, aiding in its construction and flocking to the industrial zones and settlements it enables.

For our Kumi Action we will make acronyms out of the names of companies profiting from the occupation.



October 26: Week 43 - Women in Conflict

[Read the full entry online.](#)

There is a twisted irony at the intersection of war and gender: war is almost always declared and fought by men. But it is women and children that suffer much of the violence. The end of war is no different: men negotiate treaties, while the voices, needs, and expertise of women are ignored. In reality, however, women, and by extension children, bear unbelievable levels of violence and harm, especially in refugee camps, military occupations, and the ongoing crisis in Gaza.

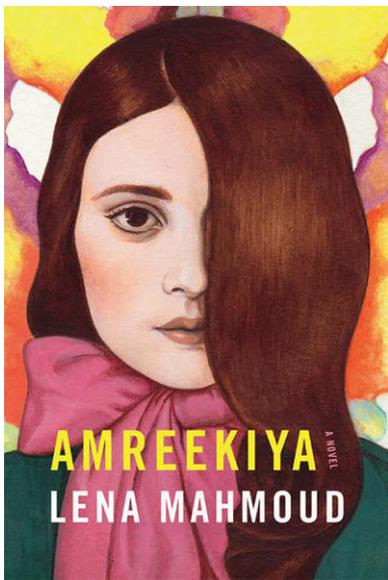
For our Kumi Action we will hold our own vigils or contact women's organizations to see how they can help the struggle of Palestinian women.

You Should Watch or Read...

One (or maybe two) recent or not-so-recent film, book, video, article, or other piece of art that you should consider reading or watching this week. Have a recommendation? Let us know.

Amreekiya

Amreekiya, by **Lena Mahmoud**, is the wonderful 2018 novel about the Palestinian diaspora. More about the book:



“In Amreekiya, author Lena Mahmoud deftly juggles two storylines, alternating between Isra's youth and her current life as a married twentysomething who is torn between cultures and trying to define herself. The chapters chronicle various moments in Isra's narrative, including the volatile relationship of her parents and the trials and joys of forging a partnership with Yusef. Mahmoud also examines Isra's first visit to Palestine, the effects of sexism, how language affects identity, and what it means to have a love that overcomes unbearable pain.”

You can learn more about Lena on her [website](#) and more about the book on the publisher's [website](#). Please buy the book through your favorite independent book store. It is also, at least in some markets, on sale in digital formats for only two or three dollars/euros/etc.

What's Next

We hope to see you in the online gathering on Tuesday, after which you'll receive another newsletter next Friday/Saturday, focused on our next topic, [Profiting from Occupation](#). As always, there is more to come!

Sincerely,

The Kumi Now Team

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kumi@kuminow.com



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