

Late-Life Depression

edited by Steven P. Roose, M.D., and Harold A. Sackeim, Ph.D.
Oxford University Press, London, England, 2004, 388 pages,
\$89.50.

This is an outstanding 388-page textbook dedicated to the subject of depression in the elderly. What is remarkable about this book is that it strives to use an evidence-based approach to describe illness models and clinical treatments. The editors have assembled a distinguished group of experts as chapter contributors that include George Alexopoulos, Dan Blazer, Yeates Conwell, Murali Doraiswamy, Ellen Frank, Dilip Jeste, Ira Katz, Ranga Krishnan, Barry Lebowitz, Charles Reynolds III, Carl Salzman, and Gary Small. The book is organized into 5 major divisions including epidemiology and burden of illness, phenomenology and differential diagnosis, psychobiology, treatment, and depression comorbid with other illnesses. There are dedicated chapters covering, as examples, unipolar depression, bipolar depression, dysthymia, nonmajor clinically significant depression, mixed cognitive and depressive syndromes, suicide, bereavement, neuropsychological assessment, imaging, vascular hypothesis, hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis activity, neuroendocrinology, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics, medications, side effects, mood stabilizers, stimulants, antipsychotics, electroconvulsive therapy, and psychotherapy.

The book is ideally suited for psychiatric residents and clinicians who treat geriatric patients. The book also is an excellent reference source for those studying for certification or recertification in geriatric psychiatry. The editors achieved their stated goal of providing a book that would be "accessible, useful, and stimulating to the clinician who strives to understand the multiple dimensions of aging and the complexity of late-life depression and who aspires to practice evidence-based interventions" (p. vii).

Depression is a recognized major health issue for medicine in the 21st century. There is heterogeneity in signs and symptoms, treatment outcomes, and long-term course in patients with depression. Because of this heterogeneity, accurate diagnosis and treatment selection may be suboptimal. A textbook dedicated to late-life depression and using the best evidence-based studies provides one the means to assemble the current knowledge for the identification, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up management of this disorder; this book is currently the gold standard.

The most important attribute of this book is that it provides information that a clinician can use in active clinical care of the patient with late-life depression. The book is organized very well with a contents outline and a subject index that can quickly lead to the area of interest. The chapters are concisely written, providing in-depth references. There were only 2 minor disadvantages to an otherwise outstanding book. The first is that the chapter on bipolar disorder had a confusing use of subheadings. The second disadvantage is the use of 4-color figures that are located in the middle of the book: once a reference is made to a color figure, searching for the figure is time-consuming.

Overall, *Late-Life Depression* is an excellent textbook that can be used as a clinical resource, a study aid for the boards, or a review of the evidence-based research in late-life depression.

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College of the Overwhelmed: The Campus Mental Health Crisis and What to Do About It

by Richard D. Kadison, M.D., and Theresa Foy DiGeronimo,
Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, Calif., 2004, 296 pages, \$24.95.

Much recent attention has been directed toward the diagnosis of adolescent and young adult depression and measures to prevent suicide. *College of the Overwhelmed: The Campus Mental Health Crisis and What to Do About It* explores the factors that contribute to mental illness in the college population and how to recognize and treat these problems in a manner that is accessible to parents, students, and mental health providers.

The book is broken into 2 parts. Part I describes the nature of the college mental health problem and how to recognize a student who may be having a problem. It outlines the many stresses that can add up to overwhelm a college student. Stresses include new social roles, money problems, personal and family expectations, sexual identity, and cultural differences. Throughout the chapters that comprise Part I are case examples showing how these stresses can spiral into mood or other mental health disorders. Part I also describes the characteristics of some of the more common mental health problems that begin in college including depression, eating disorders, anxiety disorders, suicidality, and cutting.

Part II discusses solutions to the campus mental health problem. It addresses what campus mental health centers, parents, and college students can do to recognize or, if possible, prevent common mental health problems. One chapter describes resources that should be available in a campus mental health program. Another describes how parents can recognize mental health problems and what they can do about them. Particularly useful in this chapter is a set of behavior checklists parents can use to help them determine if there may be a problem. Part II also includes lists of questions parents should ask of the college health center or other mental health providers involved in their young adult's care.

Finally, there is a very nice chapter directed toward college students who have developed mental health problems. It speaks directly to the students and includes a discussion of the stigma that they may feel when dealing with their personal mental health issues. There is a first-person account of a college student who had difficulties adapting to her new academic and social environment and who benefited from getting mental health treatment. The chapter also includes tips on exercise, eating, sleeping, time management, stress management, and developing sources of emotional support.

College of the Overwhelmed also includes several appendices with information on medications, guidelines for effective student health service delivery, contact information for organizations involved with specific diagnoses, and further recommended reading. The book is written in an easy-to-read, accessible style. It would be valuable as "bibliotherapy" for troubled college students and their parents, and also a good resource for college therapists, psychiatrists, housing managers, and others involved in the care of the college student.

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