

# DEPRESSIVE DISORDER Harvard Case Solution & Analysis



# DEPRESSIVE DISORDER Harvard Case Solution & Analysis

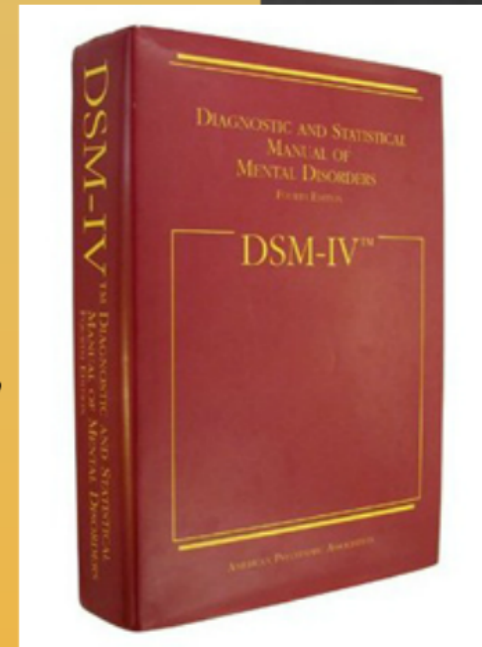


# THESIS

Major Depressive Disorder has been around for a while but just recently actually recognized as a psychological disorder; the increase of awareness is important so that it can be prevented, since life with MDD is difficult, sad and mostly lonely and it affects everyone that surrounds them.

# History

- Group of US clinicians in mid-1970s
  - A person who has depression symptoms such as either have a depressed mood or a loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities for at least a two week period  
(American Psychiatric Association, 1994)
- Early usage: French psychiatrist, Louis Delasiauve (1856)
- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders



# Symptoms/Diagnosis

- The person experiences a single major depressive episode
  - The person must have experienced at least five of the nine symptoms below for the same two weeks or more, for most of the time almost every day. One of the symptoms must be either depressed mood, or loss of interest.
    - Persistent depressed mood for most of the day.
    - Loss of interest in all, or almost all, activities.
    - Significant weight loss or gain due to changes in appetite.
    - Sleeping more or less than usual.
    - Speeding up or slowing down of physical and emotional reactions.
    - Fatigued or loss of energy.
    - Feelings of worthlessness or unfounded guilt.
    - Reduced ability to concentrate or make meaningful decisions.
    - Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempt.
- The person's symptoms do not indicate a mixed episode.
- The person's symptoms are a cause of great distress or difficulty in functioning at home, work, or other important areas.
- The person's symptoms are not caused by substance use or a medical disorder.
- The person's symptoms are not due to normal grief or bereavement over the death of a loved one, they continue for more than two months, or they include great difficulty in functioning, frequent thoughts of worthlessness, thoughts of suicide, symptoms that are psychotic, or behavior that is slowed down.
- Another disorder does not better explain the major depressive episode.
- The person has never had a manic, mixed, or a hypomanic episode.

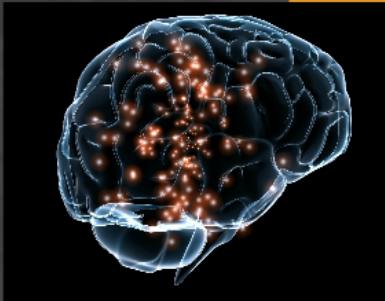


# Associated Features/Risk Factors and Prevalence

- Mimic or Co-Exist
  - Substance Abuse
  - Medical Illness
  - Other Psychiatric Disorders
  - Bereavement
- Risk Factors
  - Biological relatives with depression
  - Traumatic childhood experience
  - Stressful life events
  - Certain personality traits (low self-esteem, pessimism, etc)
  - Having had depression in the past
  - Abusing drugs/alcohol/certain types of medications
- Prevalence
  - "Globally, more than 350 million people of all ages suffer from depression." (WHO, 2012)
  - Africans and Mexican Americans
  - 2 x as many women as men
  - Average age: mid-20s

# Causes

- Genetics
  - 1st degree relative
  - No specific gene
- Brain Chemistry Imbalance
  - Serotonin deficit (low levels neurotransmitters)
- Medical Illnesses
  - Stress
- Environment
  - Bereavement
- Intrapsychic
  - Interpretations of situations



# Differential Diagnosis

- Not a mixed episode or manic or hypomanic
- > 2 weeks
  - Constant symptoms
- Not caused by substance abuse
- Not bereavement (DSM IV)
  - Except in DSM V

