

Preface

Preface to first edition:

Is there a need for yet another book about depression? This is the question we asked ourselves in the planning stages of this book. Given that you are now reading this preface, we obviously thought there was — but why? Developments in the field are currently evolutionary rather than revolutionary but new treatments do become available, old and new treatments are reevaluated, and patient choice and the structure of treatment delivery are increasingly emphasized. This means that there is a need for updated accessible summaries for those who need to keep abreast of current thinking and apply their knowledge in practice. As our backgrounds are from both sides of the Atlantic, we have tried to keep both perspectives in mind. We have had to be necessarily brief and emphasize areas that we believe are important. Inevitably, we have had to skate over complexities, but we have tried not to oversimplify and to provide key references for further reading. Although primarily aimed at nonspecialists and students, we hope that, for more experienced practitioners, this book also provides a useful overview of the subject.

Preface to second edition:

The second edition of the *Handbook of Depression* has been prompted by the publication of American *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th edition (DSM-5) and the need to update the sections on diagnostic criteria. We have also taken the opportunity to correct mistakes that crept into the first edition and to update elsewhere where necessary, including the chapter on antidepressants. We hope that this new edition will continue to provide an up-to-date balanced summary of current thinking and knowledge about depression and its treatment.



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Handbook of Depression

Second Edition

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