



# Depression: Causes and Treatment

*Aaron T. Beck M.D., Ph.D., Brad A. Alford*

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More than forty years ago, Dr. Aaron T. Beck's pioneering *Depression: Causes and Treatment* presented the first comprehensive account of all aspects of depression and introduced cognitive therapy to health care providers and patients struggling with one of the most common and devastating diseases of the modern age. Since that classic text first appeared, the appreciation of the multifaceted nature of mood disorders has grown, and the phenomenological and biological aspects of psychology are increasingly seen as intertwined. Taking these developments into account, Beck and his colleague Brad A. Alford have written a second edition of *Depression* that will help patients and caregivers understand depression as a cognitive disorder.

The new edition of *Depression* builds on the original research and approach of the seminal first edition, including the tests of Freud's theory that led to a new system of psychological theory and therapy, one that addresses the negative schema and automatic thoughts that can trap people in painful emotional states. Beck and Alford examine selected scientific tests and randomized controlled trials that have enhanced the cognitive approach since the time it was first introduced.

Incorporating accepted changes in the definitions and categories of the various mood disorders into its discussion, *Depression* addresses the treatment role of revolutionary drugs, such as the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), and transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) in relation to cognitive approaches. Beck and Alford explore research on neurotrophic and neurogenesis theories of depression. They also report on advances in psychosocial treatment of depression, including the value of cognitive therapy in the prevention of relapse.

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