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Beat Depression to Stay Healthier and Live Longer: A Guide for Older Adults and Their Families

Gary S. Moak M.D.

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Clinical depression is a serious medical illness that not only can turn a happy retirement into a time of misery, but also leads to a wide range of health problems. Depression increases the rate of disease such as stroke, heart disease, and Alzheimer's disease and worsens the course of others such as diabetes, chronic lung disease, and cancer. It also contributes to avoidable disability and premature death.

Beat Depression to Stay Healthier and Live Longer alerts readers to this untold story. It challenges beliefs that depression is normal in old age because old age is depressing, instead helping readers see that depression is a serious brain disease, often related to changes in the brain associated with the aging process. Gary S. Moak clearly and compassionately explains depression as a physically destructive state, in which a brain on overdrive runs the body ragged, accelerating age-related wear and tear. Depression is not a harmless condition older adults can live with, and Dr. Moak addresses the impact of depression on specific geriatric health problems. Case stories, taken from the author's experience practicing geriatric psychiatry for thirty years, are used to illustrate the physically and mentally harmful effects of depression and the road to recovering well.

The book is a call to action. It encourages readers to seek treatment for depression, offering hope that older adults can get their lives back before it is too late. It provides practical guidance and advice for patients and family members about working with healthcare professionals to ensure that sufferers receive effective treatment for their depression and appropriate medical care for their physical needs. By shedding light on the impact of depression on physical health, Dr. Moak spotlights the importance of recognizing the signs and symptoms of depression and brings much needed attention to a subject that is so often overlooked.

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