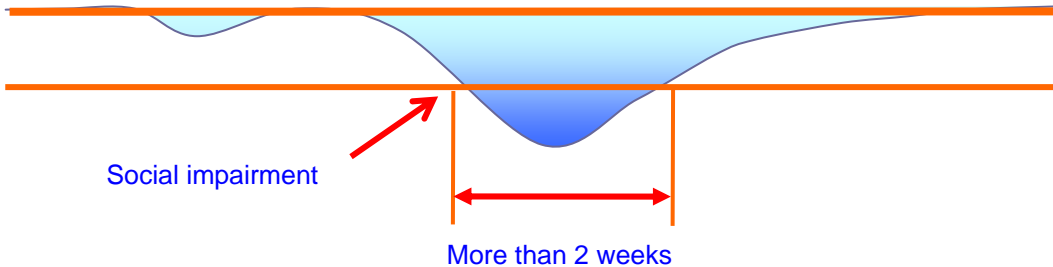


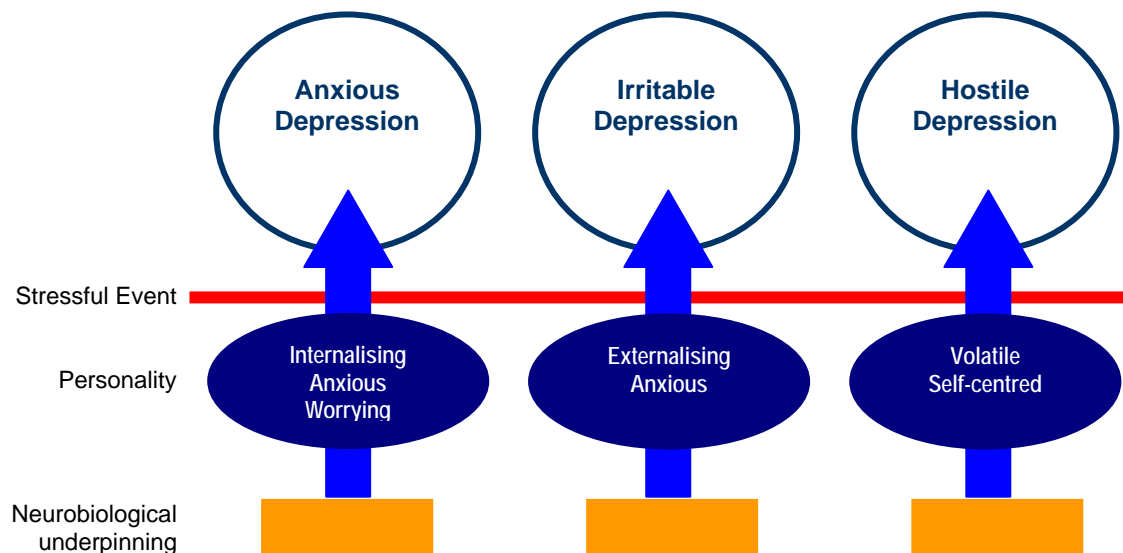
About Non-Melancholic Depression

Non-melancholic depression is the most 'common' type of depression seen by general practitioners in Australia. It is also referred to as 'major depression', 'clinical depression', and 'mixed anxiety and depression' and is characterised by depressed mood for more than two weeks. Individuals with non-melancholic depression tend to exhibit key features such as a decline in self-esteem, self-criticism, a depressed mood, as well as non-specific features, such as a change in appetite, fatigue or sleep disturbance.



People with non-melancholic depression do not have the marked psychomotor disturbance seen in melancholic depression and are less likely to report major problems with memory or concentration. However, the challenge faced by general practitioners in treating this group, is the *high* rate of 'spontaneous remission'; hence, accurate assessment of treatment can be difficult (Parker, 2002).

Serotonergic dysfunction most likely underpins depressed mood features, and commonly drives anxiety. The diagram below illustrates that sub-typing is based on temperament and personality influences. It assumes that underlying personality features are amplified when the person is depressed. It shows the link between personality and phenotypic expression of depression, as well as hinting at personality causes that may need to be modified by a relevant treatment approach.



Common At-risk Personality Styles

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internalising anxious worrying ▪ Externalising irritability ▪ Volatile, self-centered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shy and behaviourally inhibited ▪ Perfectionistic ▪ Interpersonally sensitive to rejection.
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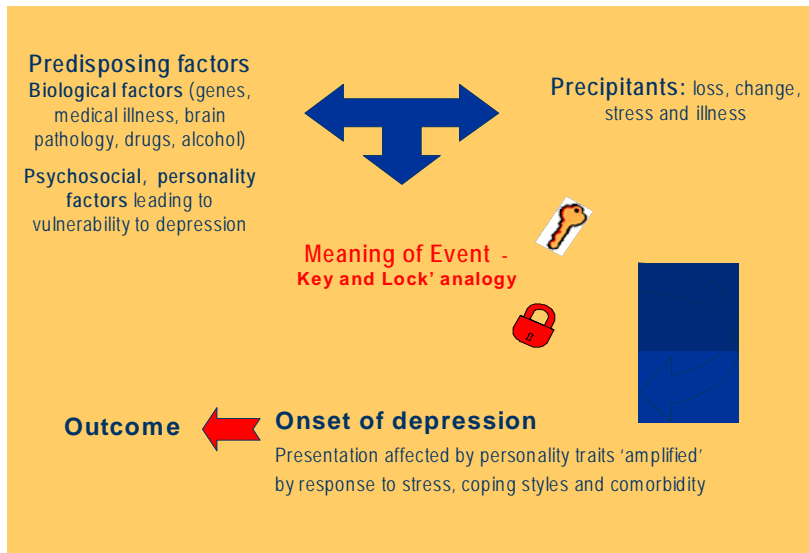


Important Questions for the Patient

When a patient with non-melancholic depression presents to their general practitioner, there are a number of important questions which they will seek to have answered:

- Why me?
- Why now?
- What type of depression?
- What will help?
- How can I ensure that this episode: Improves? Finishes? Doesn't relapse? Doesn't recur?

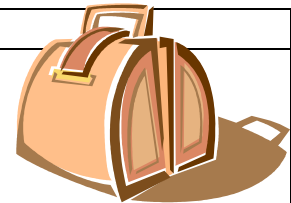
A New Approach to Non-melancholic Depressive Disorders



Psychological Tool Kit

A Psychological Tool Kit has been compiled to assist the general practitioner in assessing, diagnosing, and managing patients with non-melancholic depression who present to their clinic.

Psychological Tool Kit	
✂ Prompt Sheet	✂ Mood Chart
✂ Priorities Sheet	✂ Changing Behaviour
✂ Problem-solving Sheet	✂ Relaxation Sheet
✂ Goal Setting	✂ Mindfulness Sheet
✂ List of books, websites	✂ Relapse Prevention Signs and Plan
✂ Depression Booklet and Info Sheets	✂ Outcome measures: DMI-10, K-10, lifestyle



Whilst psychiatrists are familiar with psychotic and melancholic depression, it is important to realise that these conditions are relatively rare in general practice. The conditions can lead to profound mood change and possible suicidal ideation. Therefore, it is important to identify these conditions and, in turn, treat the patient assertively. Other medications (eg. antipsychotics, lithium) and ECT may be required, in addition to antidepressants.

Depressive Disorders in General Practice

