

Case Scenario #1

Mr. S. is a 49 year old divorced man who has come in to the local Social Services Agency. He is currently living in a cheap motel on the edge of town and is very distressed to find himself in this situation. He reports that his mother and his sister “conspired” to have him evicted from his apartment about four months ago. “My world is falling apart. I feel like I’m at the end of my rope. I need help sleeping and I need a decent place to live.

He lost his job about six months ago. He is currently receiving food support and living off savings. Since losing his job, Mr. S. reports an increase in emotional and physical fatigue, very low mood, weight loss and disrupted sleep. He describes a very negative outlook and states that just when things were looking up he gets “knocked down” again. His comments indicate suicidal ideation but he doesn’t have a specific plan.

Mr. S. reports that he has struggled with depression for 15 years. There are also symptoms suggesting manic episodes (feeling high, inability to sleep) but nothing more definite. He has been hospitalized for psychiatric reasons but not for several years and doesn’t really remember why he was hospitalized. He has also received outpatient treatment in numerous settings. He does not currently take any medications.

Case Scenario #2

D.M. is a 32 year old Caucasian female who presented to the mental health center due to depression and suicidal ideation. She reported that over the past couple of weeks, she has had increasing problems with depression with occasional episodes of irritability and increasing use of alcohol and cocaine. She is apathetic and unmotivated with poor concentration and self esteem.

She lives with her boyfriend, who is abusive when he is intoxicated. She has left him several times only to return after he promises to change. She has no relationship with her extended family. She recently lost her job due to substance abuse.

She has had multiple hospital admissions over the past 1 1/2 years, both for substance use and mood disorder. She has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. She states that while she maintains herself on her medications and when not using, that she does fairly well. She denies past suicide attempts with the exception of one attempt during her teen years. Other than some improvement in response to medications, she does not feel that her past treatment experiences have been helpful. She has not been consistent in following treatment recommendations.