

Bipolar Disorder



Abboud Antoine Assaf
Availability Amability Ability

What is bipolar disorder?

- Bipolar disorder is a mood disorder characterized by episodes ranging from the **positive** pole of mania to the **negative** pole of depression, with all the intermediates possible.
- For information about depression, please refer to the “depression” section in “psychiatric disorders”

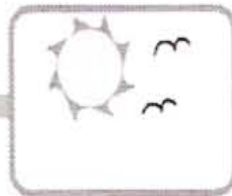
Mood Chart

mania



HYPOMANIA

euthymia
(normal mood)

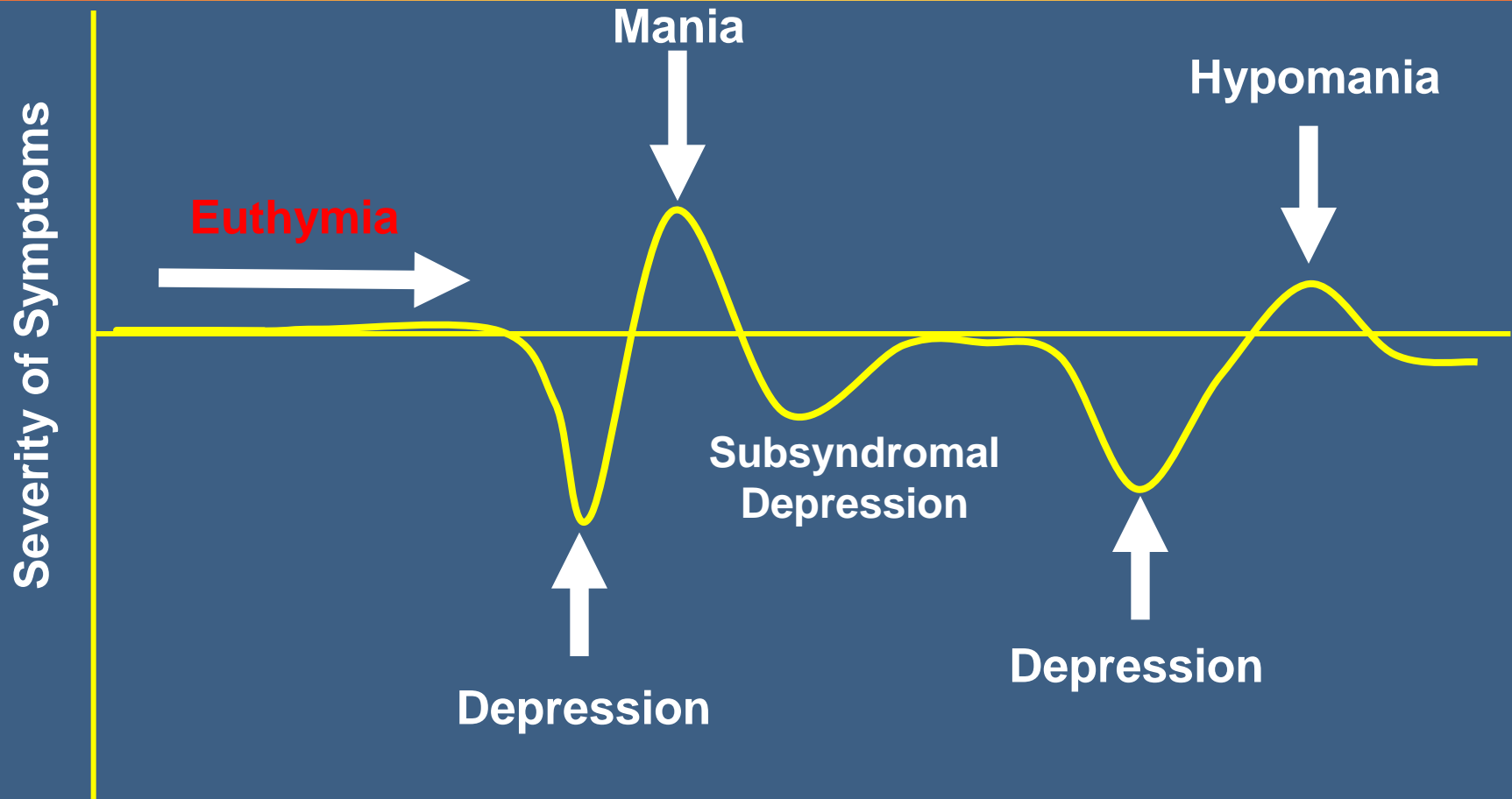


DYSTHYMIA

depression



Bipolar patients may pass by periods of normal mood **Euthymia**



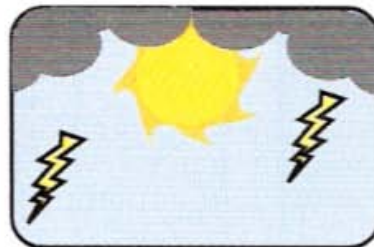
Frank E, Swartz HA, Kupfer DJ. Interpersonal and social rhythm therapy: managing the chaos of bipolar disorder. *Biol Psychiatry*. 2000;48:593-604.

What is mania?

DSM-IV Symptom Dimensions of a Manic Episode

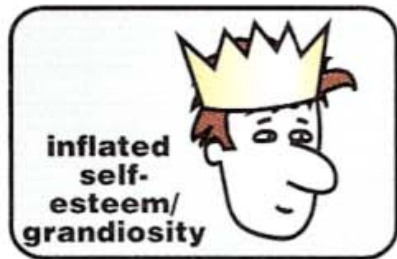


elevated/expansive mood



irritable mood

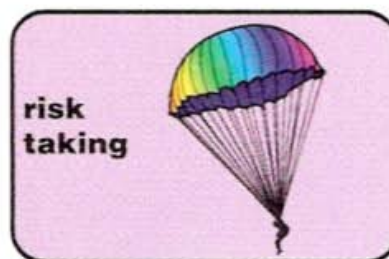
symptoms necessary for diagnosis



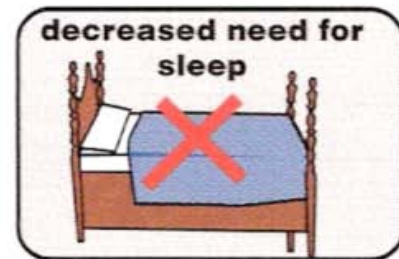
inflated self-esteem/grandiosity



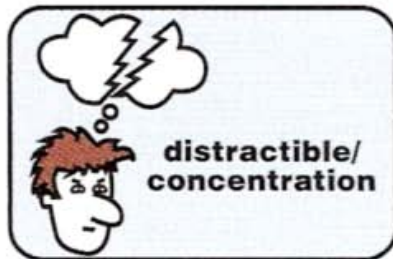
increased goal-directed activity or agitation



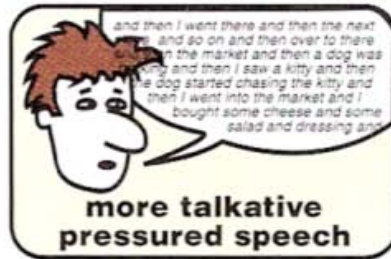
risk taking



decreased need for sleep



distractible/concentration



more talkative/pressured speech



flight of ideas/racing thoughts

plus three or more of these (four if mood is only irritable)

A way to remember mania: **DIG FAST**

Euphoric mood + (3)

or

Irritable mood + (4)

D Distractibility

I Insomnia

G Grandiosity

F Flight of ideas

A Activities (goal-directed)

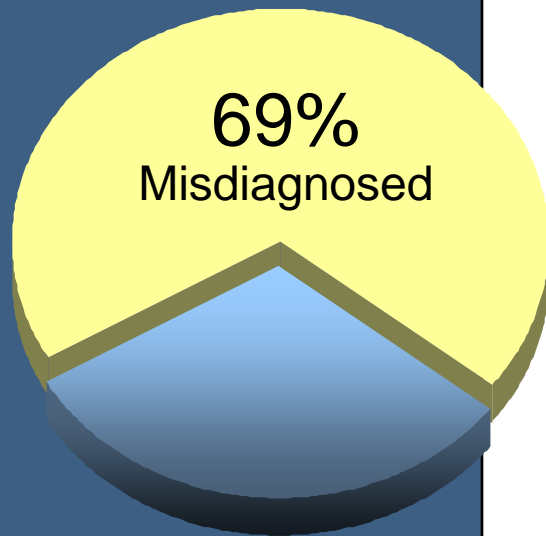
S Speech (pressured)

T Thoughtlessness

Depression: the bipolar trick

- **When a patient presents with depression, it is very difficult to know if he has the “normal” depression (also called unipolar depression) or the bipolar depression.**
- **Unless he has previously had a manic or hypomanic episode, the distinction is never that easy.**

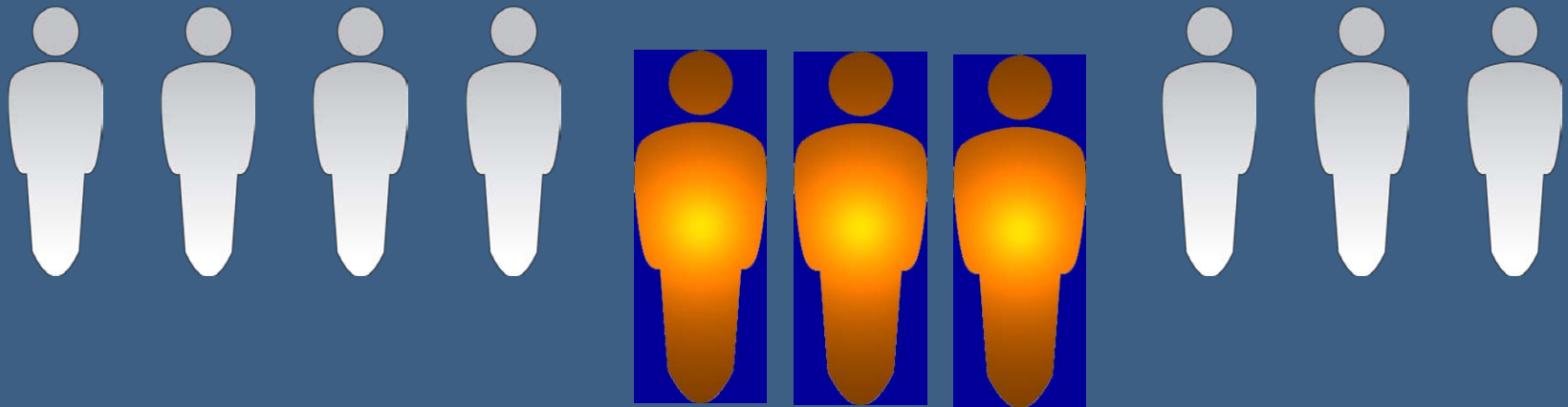
Misdiagnosis of Bipolar Disorder: NDMDA Survey (2000)



Patients were incorrectly diagnosed with:

- ***Unipolar depression*** **60%**
- ***Anxiety disorders*** **26%**
- ***Schizophrenia*** **18%**
- ***Borderline or antisocial PD*** **17%**
- ***Alcohol abuse/dependence*** **14%**
- ***Schizoaffective disorder*** **11%**

Depression: 30% bipolar

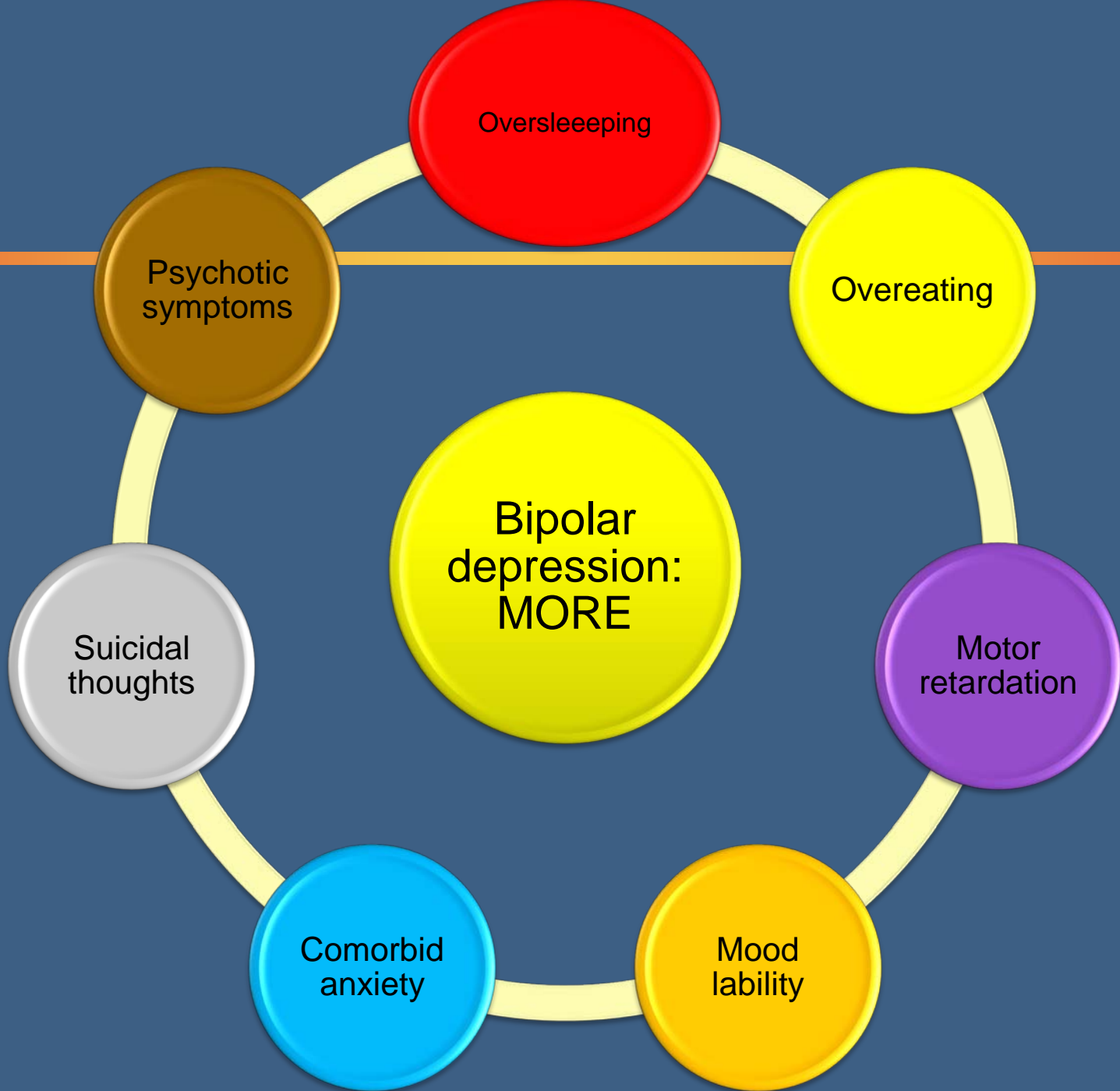


For every 10 people with a diagnosis of depression or anxiety, as many as 3 may actually have bipolar disorder*

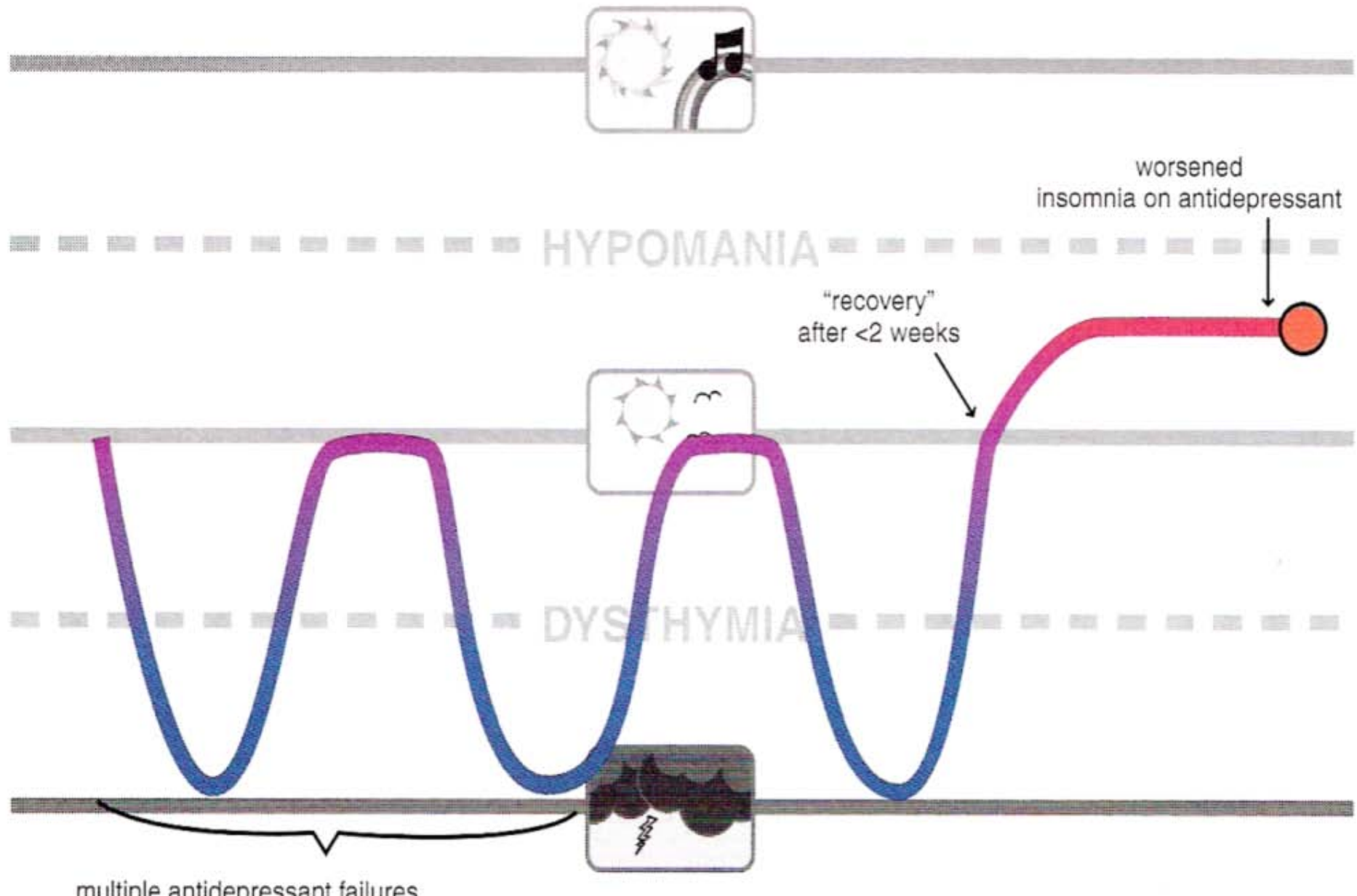
*Includes bipolar I, bipolar II, and bipolar NOS

How to distinguish bipolar depression?

- In patients with no previous history of mania or hypomania, there are no clearly cut criteria to differentiate unipolar from bipolar depression
- However, certain facts orient more towards a bipolar depression



Identifying Bipolar Depression: Response to Antidepressants



Identifying Bipolar Depression: History



HYPOMANIA

DYSTHYMIA

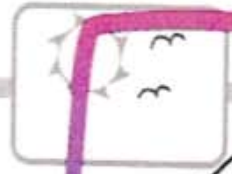
early age of onset

divorce

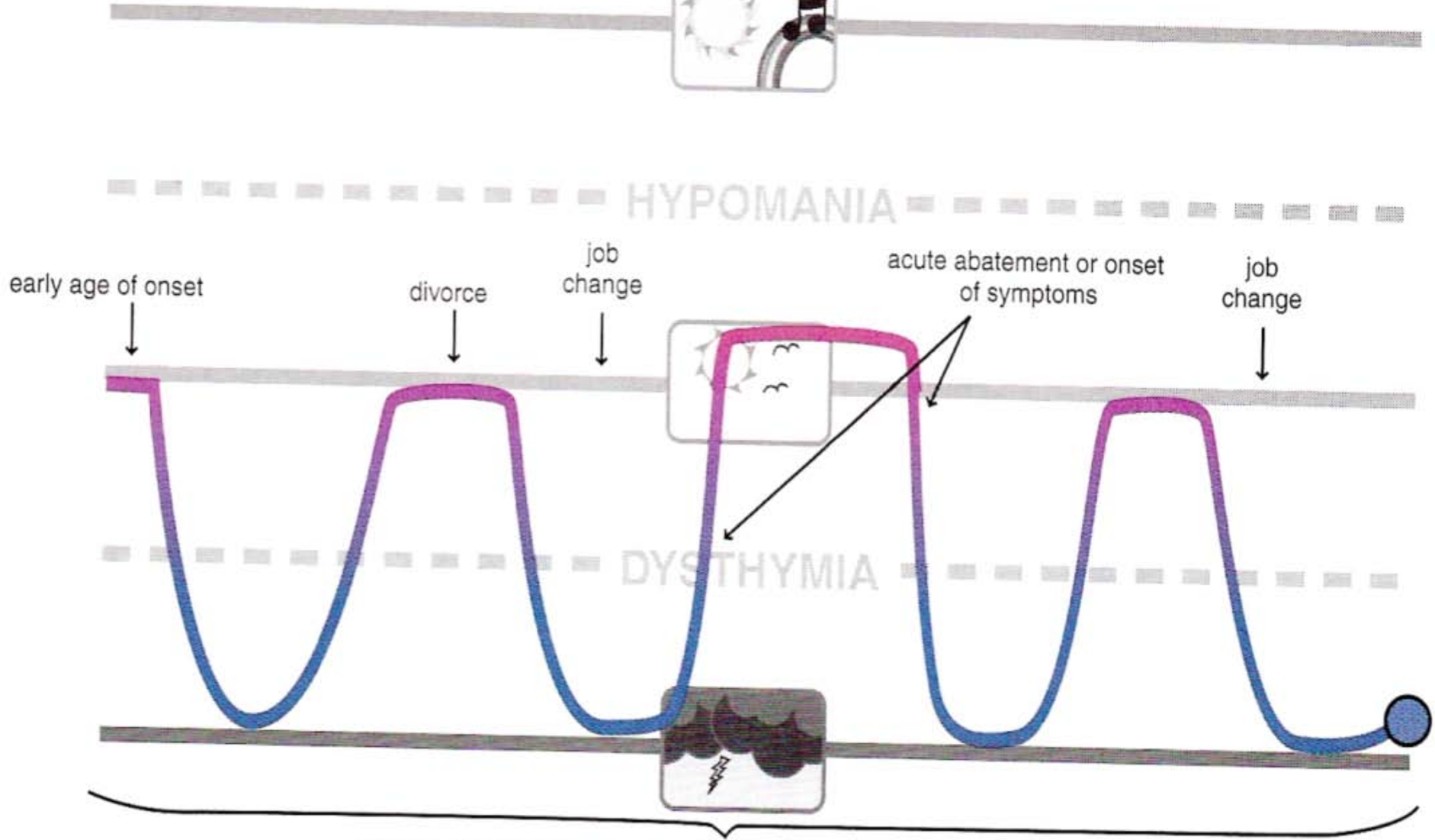
job change

acute abatement or onset of symptoms

job change



high frequency of depressive episodes, high proportion of time spent ill



Why is it crucial to differentiate unipolar from bipolar depression?

- It is crucial to pose the diagnosis of bipolar depression...
- If not, the patient will be diagnosed as having a unipolar depression and will be prescribed antidepressants which:
 - 1- Are not effective in bipolar depression
 - 2- Accelerate the frequency of bipolar disorder
 - 3- Induce hypomania or mania
 - 4- Induce psychotic episodes (hallucinations, delusions)
- **Bipolar depression is treated by mood stabilizers and not antidepressants.**

The bipolar spectrum

- Very recent data indicate that there are intermediates between MDD (Major Depressive Disorder) where patients only have recurrent episodes of unipolar depression and Bipolar Disorder where they also present hypomanic or manic episodes.
- These Bipolar Spectrum Disorders are characterized by “special” cases that are currently not classified as bipolar but whose response to treatment is similar to that of bipolar patients
- This new “Bipolar Spectrum” has **11** subtypes

Bipolar spectrum: One out of **thirteen** people

