



Balint Bulletin No. 6

January, 2006

Balint groups are a well established and unique approach to training GPs in psychological aspects of general practice. This is an electronic newsletter circulated by the Balint Society of Australia. Its purpose is to disseminate information and news about Balint work to interested people in Australia. Contributions are welcome. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know and we will remove you from the mailing list. To contact us, email Dr Marion Lustig<mlustig@optusnet.com.au>

Balint Society of Australia

At our first general meeting in Melbourne on November 7, the following office-holders were elected and constitute the Committee of Management:

Marion Lustig - president

John Barton - vice-president

Larry Osborne - secretary

Ruth Dunn - treasurer

Kate Strasser - website liaison

Anne-Marie Diggins, Bill Betts, Lynette Chazen, Michael Hampton - ordinary members.

Laurie Lovell-Symons has been co-opted as an ordinary member representing the N.S.W. steering committee.

Kate Strasser has subsequently resigned as a committee member and Michael Hampton has taken over website liaison.

Plans are well underway to establish a website. The URL will be www.balint.com.au - look out for it!

Sydney developments

A steering committee has been established in Sydney to develop and foster Balint Groups in NSW, and met for the first time in December. A second meeting is being held on Friday 3rd February at 3pm. Please contact Laurie Lovell-Simons on 02 9427 6610 or lauriels@tpg.com.au for details of this meeting and if you would like to be on our contact list for local developments.

American Balint Society

The next of the American Balint Society Leadership Intensive workshops, held twice yearly, will be in Portland, Oregon from March 3-6. These workshops are invaluable for anyone leading or interested in leading Balint groups. Two of our members from Melbourne will be attending.

Further information is available on the ABS website:
<http://famed.musc.edu/balint>

International Balint Federation

There will be a Balint leaders meeting in Israel in June, 2006.

The next International Balint Federation Congress (held every two years) will be held in Lisbon, Portugal from September 1-5, 2007.

Ascona Prize for Students

The following is taken from the International Balint Federation Congress website. An Australian student won third prize in this year's award.

INTERNATIONAL "BALINT" AWARD 2007 FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS ASCONA M

For the 31th year the "Foundation for Psychosomatic and Social Medicine" invites medical students to apply for the International Balint Award 2007. Prize monies of SFR 5.000 are available for the authors of the best essays. Papers in English, French, Italian and German will be accepted. They should describe a student-patient-relationship -an experience, or experiences from the student's medical studies and include critical reflection. They should be approximately 15 pages in length. The criteria by which the reports will be judged are as follows: **1.Exposition** The presentation of a truly personal experience of a student-patient relationship. (Manuscripts of a former medical thesis or diploma cannot be accepted) **2.Reflection:** A description of how a student actually experienced such a relationship, either individually or as part of a medical team. This could reflect multiple relations between students and the staff of various specialities, and working routine within different institutions. **3. Action** The student`s perception of the demands he (or she) felt exposed to, and an illustration of how he then actually responded. **4. Progression** A discussion of possible ways in which future medical training might enhance the state of awareness for individual students, a procedure which tends to be neglected at present.

Details on the new [IBF website](#)

The Balint Society (U.K.)

This Society awards an annual prize of 500 pounds for the best essay on the Balint group and the doctor-patient relationship, based on the writer's personal experience and open to anyone. Details on the Balint Society website www.balint.co.uk

A reminder that the Journal of the Balint Society, published annually and with this year's edition recently published, is available from the secretary of the Balint Society (U.K.), David Watt <David.Watt@gp-f84093.nhs.uk>

Publications

There was an article in Australian Doctor on January 13, page 8 "Whinge-free zone" highlighting a GP who is a Balint group member.

4th National Doctors' Dentists' and Vets' Health Conference

This conference was held in Melbourne from November 3-5. Larry Osborne and Marion Lustig presented a paper entitled: "Balint groups can enhance doctors' satisfaction in treating complex patients."

General Practitioner Exhibition and Conference

For the first time, we will be offering a 5 session Balint workshop at this conference to be held in Sydney from May 26-28. Enquiries to John Barton John Barton <jbarton@aapt.net.au>

What is my client *really* trying to tell me?

The Victorian Association of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapists offers a 32 week 'Introduction to Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy' course of readings and case discussions in Richmond (Melbourne), Tuesdays 6-8 p.m. commencing March

28, 2006. Several GPs did this course in 2005 and found it enjoyable and highly relevant to general practice. Enquiries: Marilyn Gross. Tel. 03 5968608 or mgross@hotmail.net.au

Balint group opportunities

There are currently vacancies for groups in Melbourne in Caulfield, Heidelberg, Kew, Western suburbs and a new group forming in the Hawthorn/Richmond area. There are a number of people interested in starting groups in and around Sydney, and an existing group in the Central Coast of N.S.W. There is a new group in Hobart and interest in starting a new group in Brisbane We also have contacts in Perth, Darwin and Adelaide. Please contact us for further details.

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