

International Balint Federation

The e-IBJ

« e- International Balint Journal »

n°1 2006-March

BAKA TUNDE

ROMANIAN BULLETIN

BULETINUL ASOCIATIEI BALINT n°27 octobree 2005
Periodic trimestrial Vol VII

In the article “*Elements of palliative medicine*”, the author *Ovidiu Popa- Velea (Univ. Carol Davila-Bucharest)* describes some of the key issues in palliative medicine, including the new developments of this domain in the last decades, typical individual models and reactions to incurability, factors that moderate the representations of incurability, or the modulating role of hope. An emphasis is made upon the realistic and unrealistic transactions between doctor and the patient and on the role of psychologists as members of teams dedicated to the treatment of incurable patients. Some of the institutional forms of palliative assistance are briefly discussed and comparatively analyzed, in terms of psychological benefits for patients and medical professionals.

Anders Haggmark (Stokholm) at the beginning of his article “*Balint work in the everyday crisis of the health care system*” presents us his own Balint story including a time of crisis in his decisions referring to Balint work, and ending with the image of “an ordinary doctor looking for a Balint group”. After presenting us some significant changes in the health care system in Stockholm during the last years, as elements of a crisis of today, he underlines the Balint work’s benefits for doctors and patients, leading even to “an economic gain for Society”.

“*What effect does a Balint group have on medical students?*” is a study containing not only a lot of questions referring to Balint work with students, their opinions, feelings, emotions, but a very interesting and useful collection of answers given by medical students or by the authors themselves. Having the opportunity to lead a Balint group of nine students to a *medical school of London*, the authors *Heather Suckling and Peter Shoenberg*, present us a selective synthesis of their work using evaluation questionnaires before and after the 13 hours of Balint work. They conclude that “it was a very worthwhile and enjoyable experience and that it fulfilled the aims of encouraging the exploration of emotional aspects of the students work, improving communication between students and patients and above all in valuing reflection”

Following an objectively measurable parameter like self-esteem, *Tunde Baka (Romania)* in her study “*Self-esteem in the Balint work*” try to make perceivable those changes which are taking place in the Balint group’s participants, and to prove that a concentrated Balint work like a Balint Weekend is able to function as a situational determinant of participant’s self-esteem. The results of this study draw our attention to the enforcement of the protective role of the Balint group and to the importance of the Balint-leader’s formation.

“*What did I know?*” is the title of *Simona Negoias’s (medical student, Cluj Napoca)* article and in the same time it is the question able to captivate our attention, to make us curious and to suggest us a next question “What does she know now?” At the beginning of her medical studies the author really appreciated the importance of the psychical factor in the determination and maintenance of somatic pathology, and now being a balintian she presents us the basic ideas and the importance of the psychosomatic discipline in medicine.

Ioana Omer (psychologist, Bucharest) describes the *cognitive-behavior approach* of a case, presenting in fact what this type of psychotherapy means, what this therapy’s steps consist in and how can they lead the therapist to a positive result, like in this concrete case.

“*Balint groups in Israel*” is a precious and highly colored picture of the Balint activity in this country, made by a senior of the Balint movement, *Benyamin Maoz (Professor of Psychiatry, Ben Gurion University of the Negev Beer Sheva Israel)*.

The author describes “this general situation in some details” referring to their health care system, local history of Balint group’s activity, specific problems and goals in Family Medicine, the problem of immigrated physicians, considering that “the content of Balint groups reflects somehow the social problematic of the society in which they exist”. The last phrase reveals a confession: “I am convinced that there is a common international Balint culture and that we all have a common language and thus understand each other easily”

Hegy Csilla (GP, Odorheiu-Secuiesc) describes a Balint group’s work which took place at the last winter-weekend of the Romanian Balint Society, in Gheorgheni. The relation between an alcoholic patient and his devoted psychiatrist seems to be one of the most difficult in a society where the chronic alcoholism represents serious problems for the public health care system.

The authors of the last study, *Carmen Galan (psychologist)* and *Nicolae Vlad (psychiatrist, Botosani)*, describe a psychosomatic case in their paper named “*The importance of emotional and conflicting factors in causing and maintaining the asthmatic crisis*”. After some theoretical elements about psychosomatic disorders, they present us the dialog between the patient suffering by bronchial asthma and her therapist in the occasion of their first meeting. The Balint’s approach of this case renders evident the fact that “more than the feelings, susceptible to cause the asthma crisis is the inadequate expression of them which appears like a continuous fear, like an aggressiveness and like a need of permanent love”.

A very sad and originally goodbye letter, written by our Balint president *Berczy (Albert) Veress*, informs us about our Balint friend's death, who was *Robert Torok*, psychiatrist and poet.

DAVID WATT BALINT JOURNAL 2005 (UNITED KINGDOM)

Clive Brock TITLE

This paper used cases presented in a family medicine residency Balint group over 15 months to try to establish typical characteristics of patients whom young doctors find it difficult to care for. It used qualitative methods and described 10 patient types.

Sotiris Zalidis TITLE

In this essay John Berger’s use of the term “fortunate man” is shown to mean that the doctor as “universal man” was a very rewarding role. Unfortunately, it carried great stress and the doctor described in the book committed suicide after retirement. Perhaps he could have looked after himself more, for instance in a Balint group.

Sonja Baksi T

A retired paediatrician, who was in Balint’s first student group reflects on how different it was from anything else in the medical curriculum in the late 50s, encouraging students to look at patients as people rather than as diseases.

Andrew Turner T

This paper discusses the setting up of a Balint group in a family medicine residency in great detail. It illustrates the group work with case material and then points out what other factors might be necessary for the students to support their work in a Balint group and make it valuable.

Paul Sackin T

Dr Sackin describes his life of interest in group work for teaching doctors, sparked by membership of a student Balint group with Michael Balint at University College Hospital in the 60s. He did research on Vocational Training Groups in the 80s, co-authored "What am I Feeling Doctor", a book describing a Balint Research group, and has been involved with current British research on the nature of the Balint group.

Peter Schoenberg T

A psychotherapist at University College Hospital describes his department's two special contributions to medical student teaching. They allow students to do individual psychotherapy with selected patients under supervision. This has been ongoing for 40 years. Recently, they introduced voluntary Balint groups for first year clinical students.

Andrew Elder T

Explores the concept that Balint work integrates psychological and physical medicine ideally, and that the current general medical culture continues to work against this.

MARIE-ANNE PUEL

BULLETIN BALINT n° 48 WINTER 2005 (FRANCE)

BALINT FRANCE

« Birth of an association »: historic realities and fantasies by Roger Delasnerie
(ex general practitioner)

Where a well-known ancient balintian tries to remember how was the source of the french Balint society in the late sixties.

Key words: Balint groups, Balint groups' leaders

“Free paper”: Recurrent set of themes by Jacky Goimier (psychologist
psychoanalyst)

Where a psychologist psychoanalyst writes what he have been observing (staying dumb) a Balint group for a year: the main themes that occur in a Balint group

Key words :internal conflicts, external conflicts, transference, countertransference

WHO'S GOT A CASE?

“I'll name her ...Lise” by Françoise Auger (GP)

Where a case presented during a Balint congress echos back to a GP in front of one of her patients

Key words: congress case and personal case

“ Stop this circus game...” by Martin Breuer (male nurse)

Where a sudden tiredness and anger can become therapeutic in front of a hyperventilation crisis of a patient; where the male nurse may ask (and makes us think) about kindness and patience which are not always usefull ways

Key words: anger, directivity, effectiveness

FROM THE LATTER CONGRESS (METZ) TO THE NEXT ONE (LILLE)

“Post congress impressions” by Mohamed Kara (linguistic professor)

When a naïve person tells his own feelings after the Metz Congress

“Border lines perceptions” by David Bromann (journalist)

When a second naïve person writes a poem about it.

“Un congrès plus loin” by Jean-Daniel Gradeler (GP)

Where a congress organizer (the Metz ‘s one) tells his history during more than one year preparing the congress and invite us to the next one.

“All together, all together (to do what?)” by Louis Velluet (psychoanalyst)

Network healthcare is more and more developped in France. It presents advantages and disadvantages for the patient/doctor relationship. Beyond advantages: to improve the professional effectiveness beside the main public health care problems; to get out from one’s loneliness; to make the most of sharing knowledge. Beyond disadvantages: to conform too strictly to the guidelines ; to loose the” real life” reality, to favour the collusion of anonymity. A preamble to our next congress in Lille (October 2006)

Key words: health network, guide-lines, collusion of anonymity, dilution of responsibility

BOOKS

« Comment vivre le deuil au jour le jour » Christophe Fauré (psychiatrist)

« Le médecin, un psy qui s’ignore » Louis Velluet (GP, psychoanalyst)

« Les cas de conscience de votre médecin, éthique clinique au quotidien » François Baumann (GP)

BALINT INTERNATIONAL

“Learning from dying” an article from the New Engl Journ of Med (2005; **353**:1313-1315) translated by Luc Canet (ex rheumatologist) about how much we can learn near the dying patients

“ Group dynamics and Balint groups” by Roger van Laethem (GP) about the two previous articles in the French bulletin

“ Ah! If you have been there!” about the international congress in Stockholm