

Workshop –034 Wonca Basel Congress, Sept 17, 2009
Organised by the IBF in cooperation with the Vasco da Gama Movement
Theme: Meeting with the patient:
Between fascination and routine, certainty and doubt –
how do doctors cope and
develop emotionally and cognitively?

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The Balint method is one, among others, in which doctors can develop their own personal psychological and relational capacities. Thus it helps the doctor by experiential learning to integrate the medical technical aspects on the one hand, with the personal understanding of the patient, the interplay between the doctor and his patient, on the other. A controlled study showed that participation in a Balint group increases the doctor's professional self esteem and work satisfaction. The doctor-patient-relation is essential to safe-guard a proper medical care for the ordinary citizen. How do doctors handle the span between protecting the patient against authorities and protecting public welfare values from individual excessive demands? How are doctor-patient relations affected by cultural differences? How do we cope with the complexity and fascination about an individual patient? Do the drugs available today combined with the work load tempt the doctor to prescribe a more or less standardised treatment programme to his patient rather than relating? How can we maintain and develop a holistic approach to our patients? We will highlight a number of everyday issues which GP colleagues are wrestling with in their clinical practice and which they bring to discuss in Balint groups all over Europe. These are meetings that can be challenging to even very experienced GPs. We will present and discuss

- Research on the effects of Balint group work.
- The psychosomatic patient and the doctor-patient relationship.
- The problem of feelings in general practice: Balint and the move towards a more personal evidence-based medicine.
- What is about patients – what is about doctors? Thoughts about relational uncertainty in complicated consultations.
- Personal gap and cultural gap – fascination and uncertainty in a relational context.

The contributors to this workshop have a long experience as leaders of Balint groups and other educational forms.