

A New Balint Group for Psychiatry Trainees and Junior Doctors

*Are you looking for a safe confidential environment to explore troubling clinical relationships?
A Balint group can provide this experience.*

Why a Reflective Practice Group?

Current psychotherapy research and clinical experience show us that the efficacy of any treatment relies largely on the quality of the therapeutic relationship. However we may feel confused and even disarmed in understanding what is going on in the experience with our patient or client and how to make sense of it. A case-based reflective practice group process supports growth in our emotional understanding of our patients or clients, ourselves as mental health professionals and of what is occurring between us. It enhances our competence in working therapeutically within the relationship that has developed with our patient or client.

What is a Balint Group?

It is a small experiential, educational group in which participants meet to discuss difficult and intriguing cases. The focus of the group is on the emotional aspects of the case, particularly the client-practitioner relationship.

- The group is co-led by Psychologist and Psychotherapist Accredited Balint Leader and a Senior Psychiatrist .
- The group is a form of peer supervision, though not intended to encompass full clinical case supervision. It is not for personal therapy.
- It provides a confidential and safe thinking space with colleagues.
- For more information on Balint Groups visit www.balintaustralianewzealand.org
- We meet fortnightly on a Wednesdays evening at 7pm by Zoom video conferencing software.
- You will receive an email prior to the meeting with instructions on how to freely download the connection software. This is an easy task. Then before each meeting you need just to click on the link that will be sent in an email to join that meeting. The software is reliable and allows for all participants to be seen on screen at once.
- Participants who are currently involved in clinical work or casework;
- who professionally meet with emotionally difficult situations, relationships or interactions;
- who work with trauma and complex trauma;
- who would value a supportive and safe setting in which to explore and reflect on what is happening in their work without judgment,
- who are interested in developing their reflective practice skills.

The benefits of a Balint Group are:

- feeling your work is less stressful and more interesting;
- feeling professionally validated and supported;
- hearing different perspectives on the case;
- becoming attuned to your own 'gut feelings';
- gaining confidence in using your feelings to contribute to an assessment,
- a deeper understanding about the therapist and patient/client relationship,
- a deeper understanding about the patient/client as a person;
- rediscovering the human side of your work;
- developing a reflective way of thinking.
- The greatest benefit of Balint work comes from being in an ongoing group.
- Participants are expected to be committed to attending the group for the year
- Alexa and Nick value the benefits of Balint Group work in fostering and developing the quality of clinical practice and casework as well as for the prevention of burn out.

Leaders :- Dr Nick Kowalenko is the New South Wales Director and founding Deputy Chair, Emerging Minds Board of Directors .He is the immediate past Chair, Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. He chairs the Tresillian Family Care Centres Council in New South Wales and is Senior Clinical Lecturer, University of Sydney and Head of Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Studies at the NSW Institute of Psychiatry. He is the Oceania Regional Coordinator, IACAPAP and he co-edited the Medical Journal of Australia's (MJA's) supplement 'Children of Parents with a Mental Illness' and champions mental health early intervention and illness prevention in young people.

Alexa Gilbert-Obrart is a UK trained psychologist and teaching hospital- based psychotherapist , former Visiting Lecturer at Tavistock Centre London, UK Accredited Balint Leader and BSANZ Accredited Leader Trainer and former international Liaison for BSANZ .She has enjoyed facilitating leadership training groups in Oxford and Bristol and the International Balint Federation as well as working with Nick leading medical student groups . She is the Chair of the Collaborative Balint in Medical Schools Strategy Group and co-curator of BSANZ Medical Student Reflective Essay Competition.

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