

# Psychoanalytic Dimensions

## INTRODUCTION TO BALINT GROUP METHOD

**David B. Doolittle, Psy.D.**

I have been co-leading a Balint Group for Fellows in Palliative Care at Mass General Hospital as part of their Professional Development Group for several years. I am taking a break from that currently and decided to do a Balint Group Leader intensive which was held at Babson College last October. I learned a lot about the value of what my co-leader and I had done and also learned more on how the Balint Group method can be of help in situations of health care dilemmas, conflicts and futility. The method as taught by the American Balint Group Society is entirely case based and utilizes a structured approach to present, clarify and then imaginatively speculate about the case and the individuals involved. Stuck perspectives are opened up as the members of the group empathically imagine themselves in the positions (shoes) of the clinician, patient, family members, and the relationships between these individuals. The presenter pushes back from the group for most of this discussion freeing the group and the presenter to reflect deeply on the individuals and process of the case presented. A unique feature of this method is that there is no conclusion or summing up of the case at the end. The presenter and group members are left free to integrate aspects of the case as they will individually. In that sense, the group ends as an analytic session ends. The foundations of the method are safety, respect and confidentiality for the presenter and the group members.

There will be no assigned reading in this course.

6 Fridays: January 10, 17, 24, 31 & Feb. 7, 14, 2020

1:00 -- 2:15PM

20 Lincoln Street, Watertown

Enrollment limit: 9 participants

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will learn the objectives and methods of the Balint Group process. 2. Participants will have the experience of being involved in a Balint Group. 3. Participants will have the opportunity to present cases and hear feedback within this method.

Dr. Doolittle graduated with a doctorate in clinical psychology from the Virginia Consortium for Professional Psychology, Norfolk, Virginia in May, 1985. He has worked in the specialized area of sexual abuse and sexual offenders for the past 18 years. In addition to clinical practice in forensic evaluations and specialized treatment concerning sexual deviance, Dr. Doolittle pursued training as a psychoanalyst at the Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis. He now teaches and supervises at MIP as well as the Boston Institute for Psychotherapy. Dr. Doolittle has lectured and published regarding forensic evaluations, sexual deviance and psychoanalytic treatment. He was on the staff and faculty of New England Medical Center / Tufts University School of Medicine for eight years and was Coordinator of Sexual Abuse Services for four of those years. Presently Dr. Doolittle is a Clinical Associate and Clinical Instructor in Psychology at the Law and Psychiatry Service of Harvard Medical School at Massachusetts General Hospital. He also maintains a private practice in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis in Brookline, Massachusetts.

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