



# Balint Groups and 'The Joy of Being a Doctor'

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## HOW IT WORKS

In each issue, the *Annals* selects an article or articles and provides discussion tips and questions. We encourage you to take a RADICAL approach to these materials, and to post a summary of your conversation in our online discussion. (Open the article online and click on "TRACK Comments: Submit a response.") You can find discussion questions and more information online at: <http://www.AnnFamMed.org/AJC>.



## CURRENT SELECTION

### Article for Discussion

Kjeldmand D, Holmström I. Balint groups as a means to increase job satisfaction and prevent burnout among general practitioners. *Ann Fam Med*. 2008;6(2):138-145.

### Discussion Tips

Balint groups are commonly used in family medicine training programs but actually had their roots in general practice.<sup>2,3</sup> It may be worthwhile to consider how this study of long-term practicing generalist physicians might affect your current opportunity to develop or

participate in a Balint group. Balint Societies exist in more than 20 countries.<sup>4,5</sup>

### Discussion Questions

- What questions are addressed by the article? Why do they matter?
- How well does the study design fit the research questions?
- What are the main findings?
- To what degree can the findings can be accounted for by:
  - How participants were selected?
  - How information was gathered?
  - Confounding (false attribution of causality because two factors thought to be associated actually are associated with a third factor)?
- How well are data sources and analysis triangulated; that is, how well are multiple sources of information and viewpoints used to generate trustworthiness?
- How transportable are the findings to your practice setting? How might they be adapted?
- What are the implications of the findings for training, development, and preventing burnout?
- What questions do you have for further research or application?

### References

1. Stange KC, Miller WL, McLellan LA, et al. *Annals Journal Club: It's time to get RADICAL.* *Ann Fam Med*. 2006;4(3):196-197. <http://annfammed.org/cgi/content/full/4/3/196>.
2. Lakasing, E. Michael Balint—an outstanding medical life. *Br J Gen Pract*. 2005; 55(518):724-725. <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=1464079>.
3. Balint, Michael. *The Doctor, His Patient, and the Illness*. New York, NY: International Universities Press; 1957.
4. The Balint Society. <http://www.balint.co.uk/>. Accessed Jan 27, 2008.
5. The American Balint Society. <http://americanbalintsociety.org/>. Accessed Jan 27, 2008.