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**A Short Response to Andrew Elder
'Balint Group Leadership: Where Are We Now?' (2011)**

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In reading this interesting piece by Andrew Elder, I enjoyed his approach and the thoughtful overview and description of the varying aspects of Balint group leadership. I particularly appreciated Andrew's pertinent questions.

I believe the International Balint Federation have recently done a further survey looking at leaders and leadership training across the various international Balint societies and it will be interesting to note the results and compare with the 2009 survey – we know the societies are changing with changing membership and times and this will have to be reflected in various ways.

There are a range of leadership styles with differences in leadership due to the discipline, experience and personality of the leaders.

In my view, leaders need time in a range of Balint settings to take in the Balint model and a robust leadership training is essential. I would hope that leaders take on the important tasks and 'essential characteristics' as described in the article and particularly allow themselves to help the group – if and when it needs it – note the unconscious communication that becomes apparent from the clinician's presentation of the patient and the ensuing and evolving discussion.

To build on Andrew's points I would be wanting leaders to be attentive to what they observe and experience in the group and to allow themselves the space and time to think what might be a useful intervention for the particular group they are leading. I would want leaders to notice the feelings that get stirred up within themselves as they listen to and observe the group and to consider what these feelings might be indicating about the presented clinician patient relationship.

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