

Geleitwort

It is a great pleasure to be asked to write this preface to the selection of the best essays collected during 20 years of Balint prize competition at Ascona. This competition is an important vehicle for both enriching the Balint movement and ensuring that the legacy of Balint work is passed on to the next generation of medical students. Through exposure to Balint work, students are given the opportunity to learn to be present for patients in the way the patient needs them at that time.

Each year prizes are given to the students who exhibit most clearly how their learning in groups has helped them to be more empathic, how that empathy has enabled them to be more effective in the student/patient relationship, how they have come to the realization that many of the feelings evoked in them originate in the patient, and how they have used their empathy to inform their interventions so that they are more effective in their relationship with the patient and in the life-world of the patient.

The International Balint Federation is proud of its relationship with the student body and we look forward each year to the entries in the competition. The excellent prize-winning entries often provide lenses through which we can view our work in fresh and novel ways, and demonstrate the value of the Balint approach to students as they reach a better understanding of themselves, their patients, and the student/patient relationship.

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