

## **Balint and supervision groups in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences. Evaluation research based on a standardised questionnaire**

Jelinek B.<sup>1</sup>, Uhl G.<sup>1</sup>, Paß P.<sup>1</sup>, Baumann H.<sup>1</sup>, Mesenholl-Strehler E.<sup>1</sup>, Endler P.C.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Interuniversity College for Health and Development, Graz / Castle of Seggau, Austria

### **Objective**

To assess the efficiency of Balint and supervision group work in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences in relation to oneself, one's way of working with clients and one's general professional situation.

### **Introduction**

The purpose of *Balint groups or supervision groups oriented to depth psychology* is to help participants develop new views on existing problems. The integration of such groups in the further training of professionals in the areas of complementary therapies is one objective of a Master's Program funded by the European Commission. The Interuniversity College for Health and Development ([www.inter-uni.net](http://www.inter-uni.net)) offers study programmes extending over six semesters in which 12 workshops each comprising 2 – 3 double sessions of Balint or supervision work are held in small groups of ca. 12 participants and one duly qualified leader. The present project evaluates the effectiveness of this group work.

### **Methods**

39 (of altogether 44) students who had completed their fourth semester were interviewed with a standardised questionnaire entitled "Supervision Evaluation Inventory". Participants all came from the helping professions with a background in complementary or reform-oriented methods and in most cases long years of professional experience. The ratio of female to male participants was 3 : 2.

### **Results**

Altogether *the work in the Balint or supervision group* was felt to be inspiring and useful and to encourage participants to reflect on

- *themselves*: 70% experienced a change of view on their own responsibility and in their way of dealing with "blame" for occurrences in the therapeutic process; in general they reported greater self-assurance in dealing professionally with difficult or stressful situations, and a feeling of having received "tools" to work with;
- *their work with clients*: 50% reported positive effects on their work with clients;
- *their general professional situation*: 65% reported a "clarification of their tasks as professionals", and most were better able to communicate constructively with colleagues.

### **Conclusions**

*Work in Balint or supervision groups* in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences appears to be a suitable means of optimising one's way of relating to oneself, to clients, colleagues and one's general professional situation. Further studies on this topic should go beyond self-assessment to include ratings from outside.