

Providing Safe Spaces for Providers that promote connection, empathy and wellbeing

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The Polyclinic

Loss of Meaning



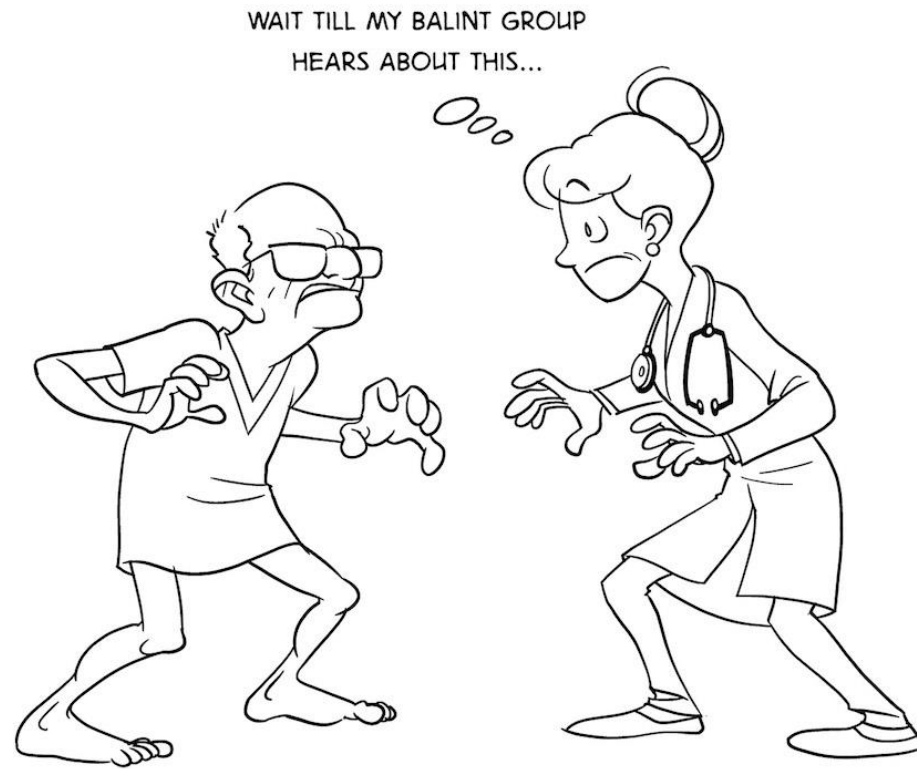
"YES, I OWN THE WORLD, BUT IS IT MEANINGFUL?"

Impoverished Relationships



"THE EARACHE IS IN ROOM NUMBER ONE, DOCTOR."

Increasing Conflict

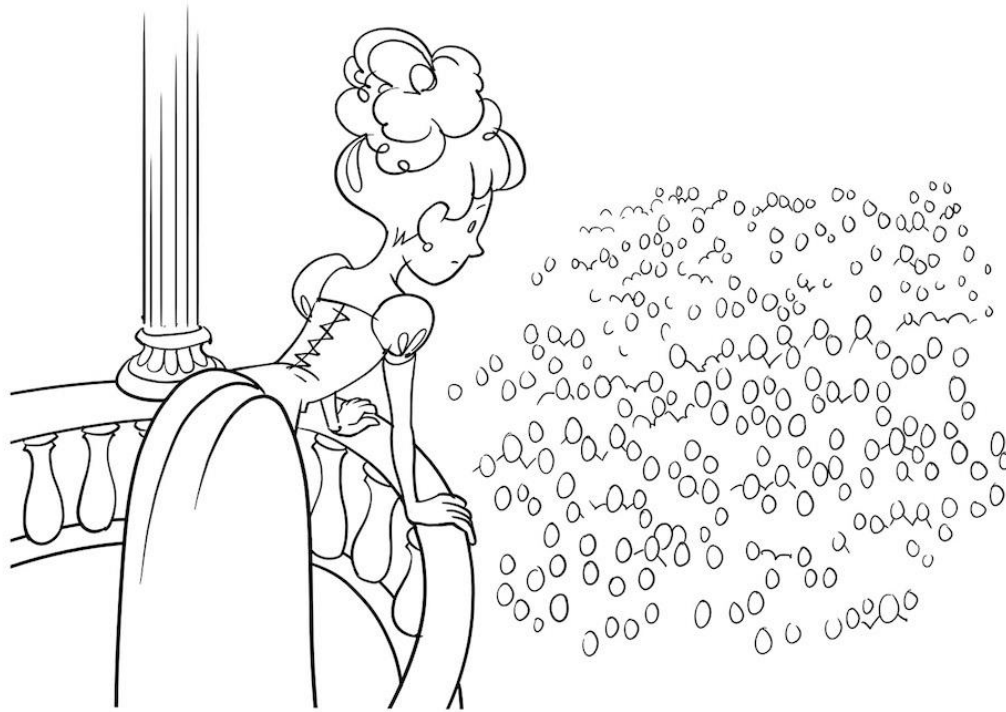


Demoralization



"I KNOW JUST WHAT WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY."

Emotional Distancing



"MAYBE THEY DON'T LIKE CAKE..."

Exhaustion



"MY EVERYTHING IS TIRED."

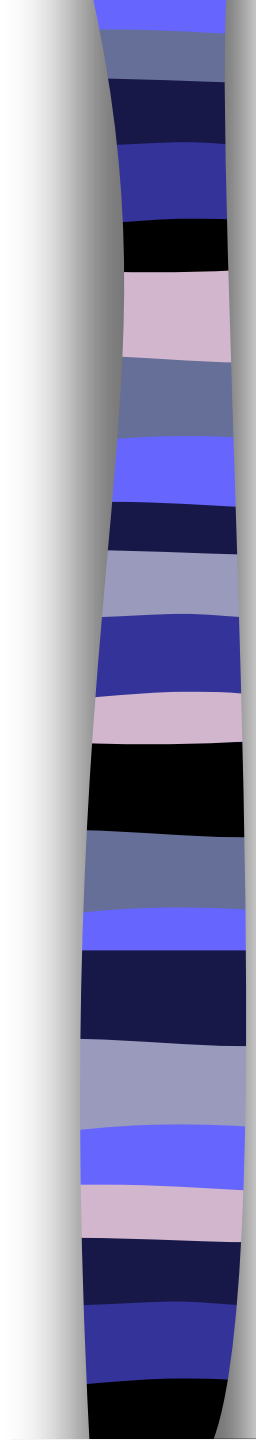
Reset



Balint Groups



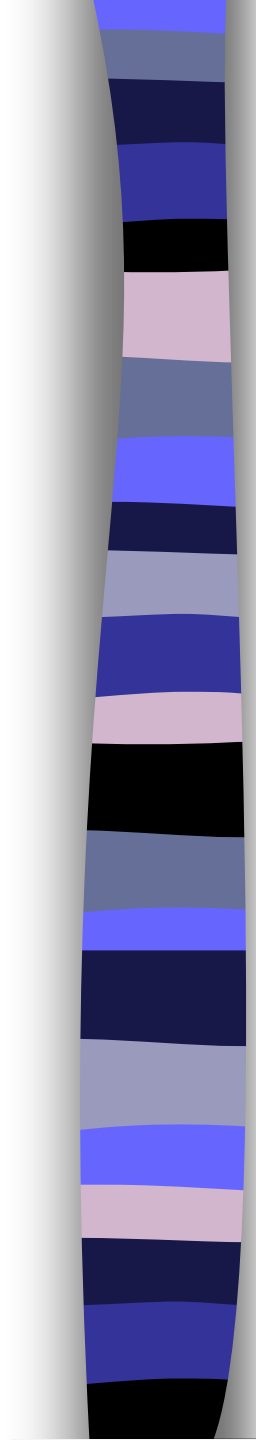
"SO I THOUGHT... I'LL TAKE IT TO MY
BALINT GROUP."



Balint Groups are case based discussion groups for physicians, mental health providers, nurses, chaplains, social workers and others.

The topic of discussion is the relationship.

The emotional content of the case is central rather than the serum sodium or clinical facts.



“At the center of
medicine there is
always a human
relationship
between a patient
and a doctor.”

-Michael Balint



Michael Balint

- Born in 1896 in Budapest, son of a GP
- Psychoanalytic training in Berlin and Budapest, emigrated to London, worked at the Tavistock Clinic
- He and his wife, Enid, began the training/research seminars for GPs after WW II
- 1957 “The Doctor, his Patient and the Illness” published



What a Balint Group is Not

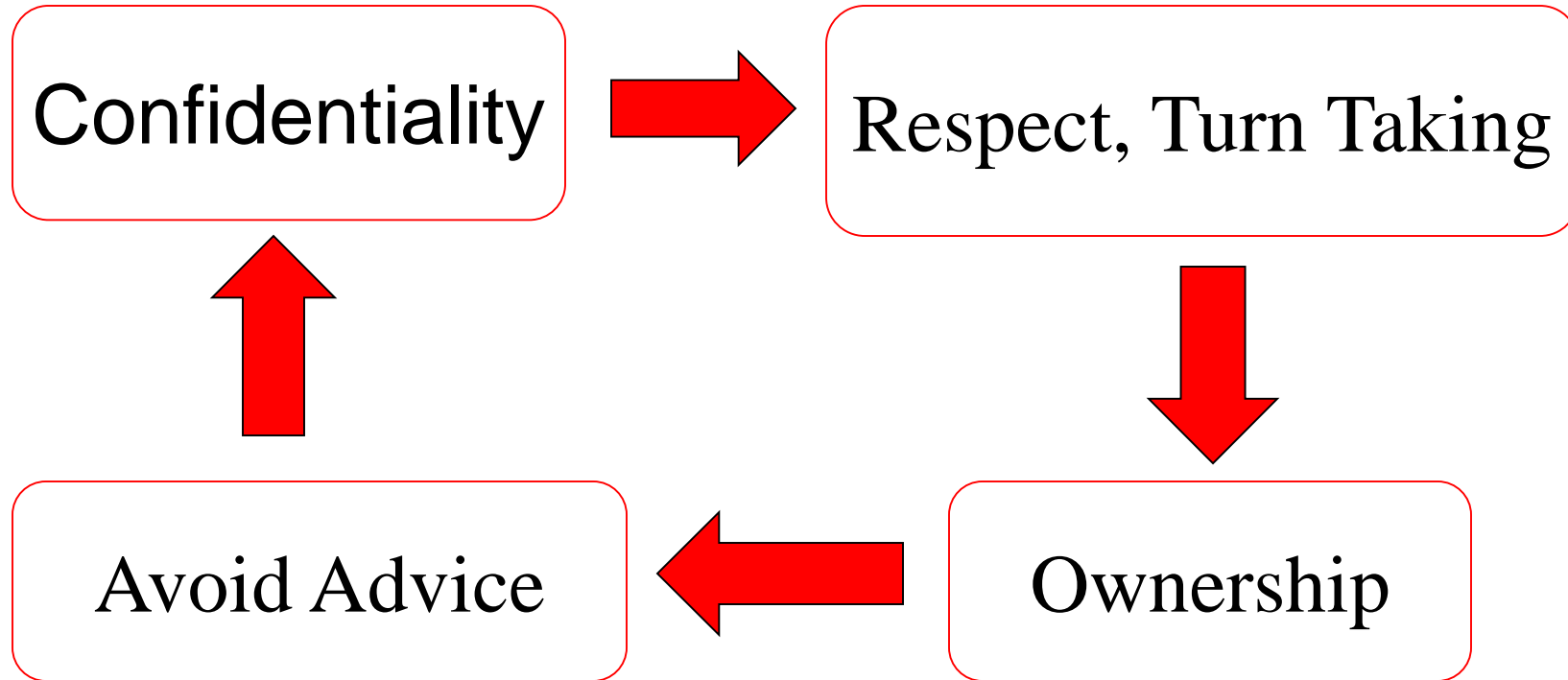
- Psychotherapy Group
- Encounter Group
- Traditional Case Consultation Group
- Topic Discussion Group
- Personal and Professional Development Group
- Not prescriptive, didactic, advice giving



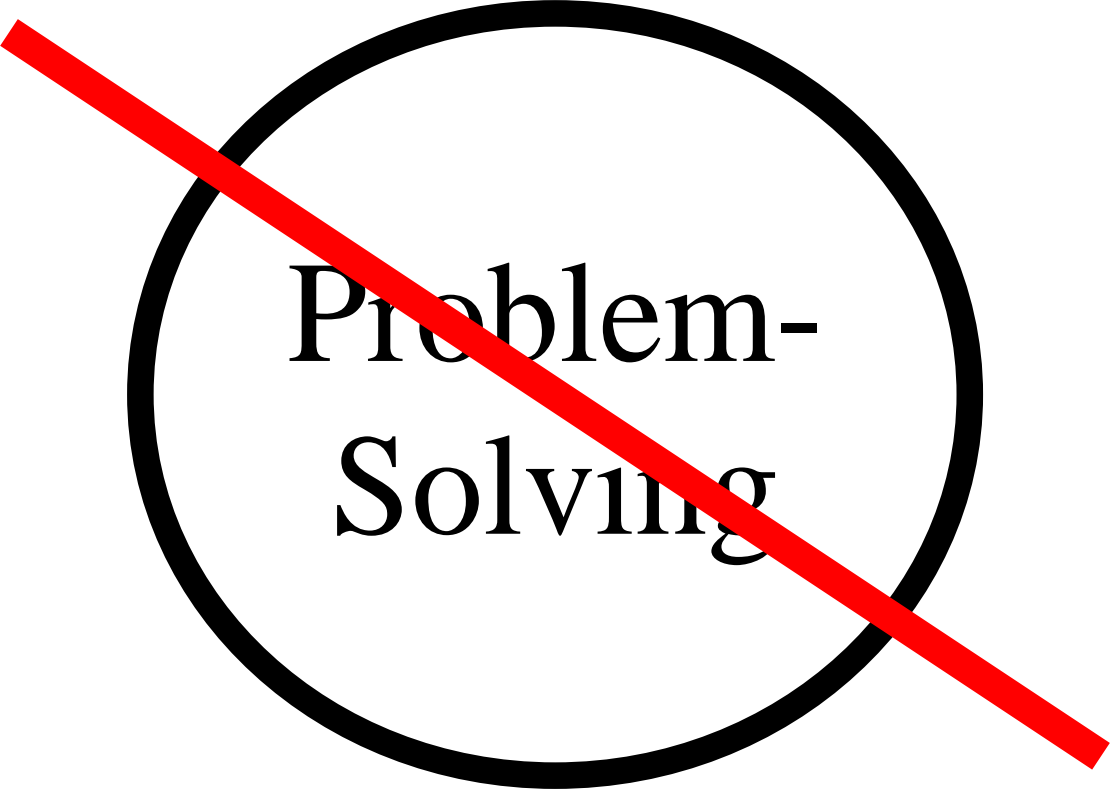
Characteristics of a Balint Group

- Ideally fixed membership
- Two leaders
- Focus on doctor-patient relationship
- Power of the group
- Preference for an ongoing case
- Less conscious aspects of relationship

Ground Rules



The Group's Job: Imagine Alternative Viewpoints

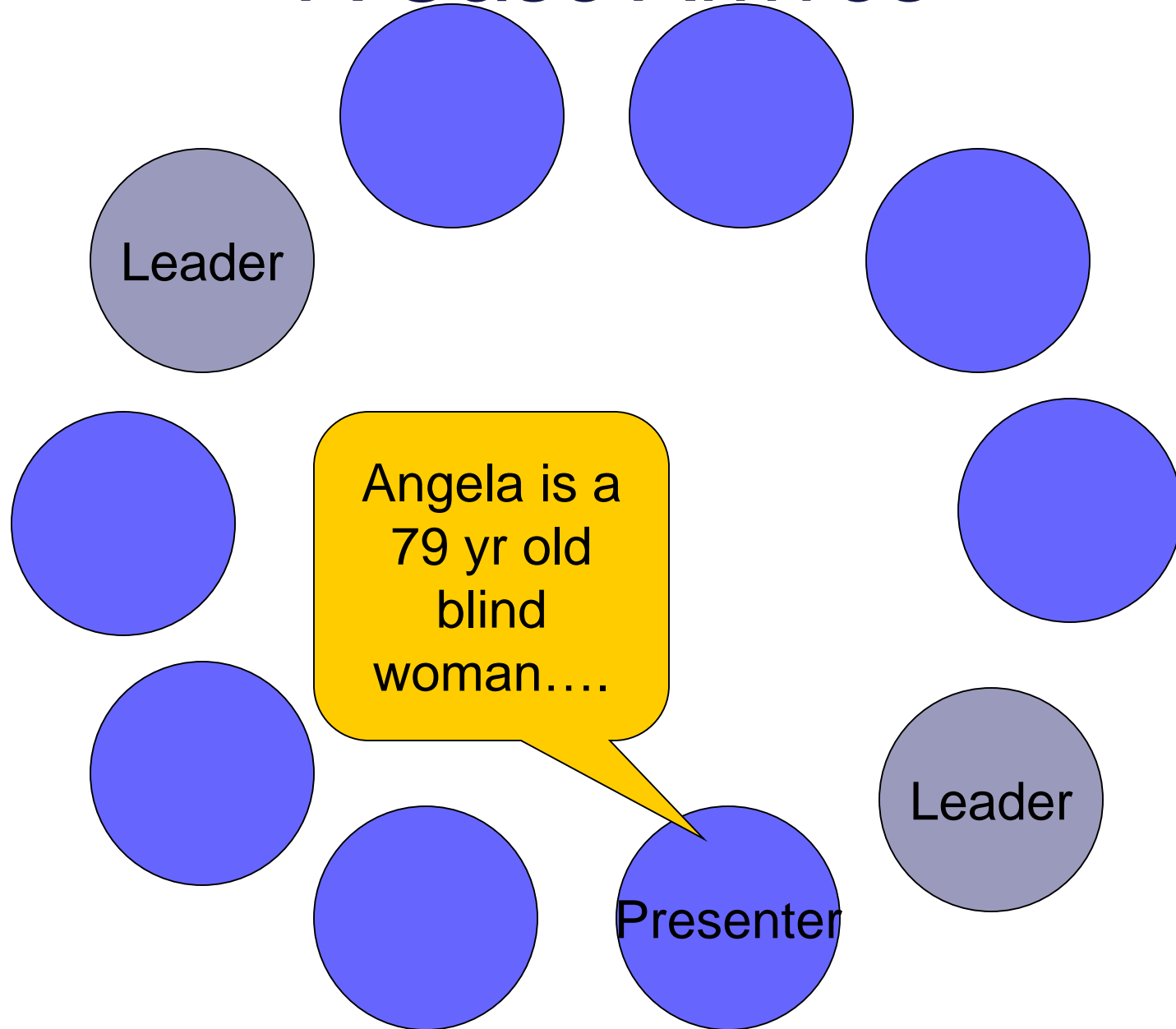


Problem-
Solving

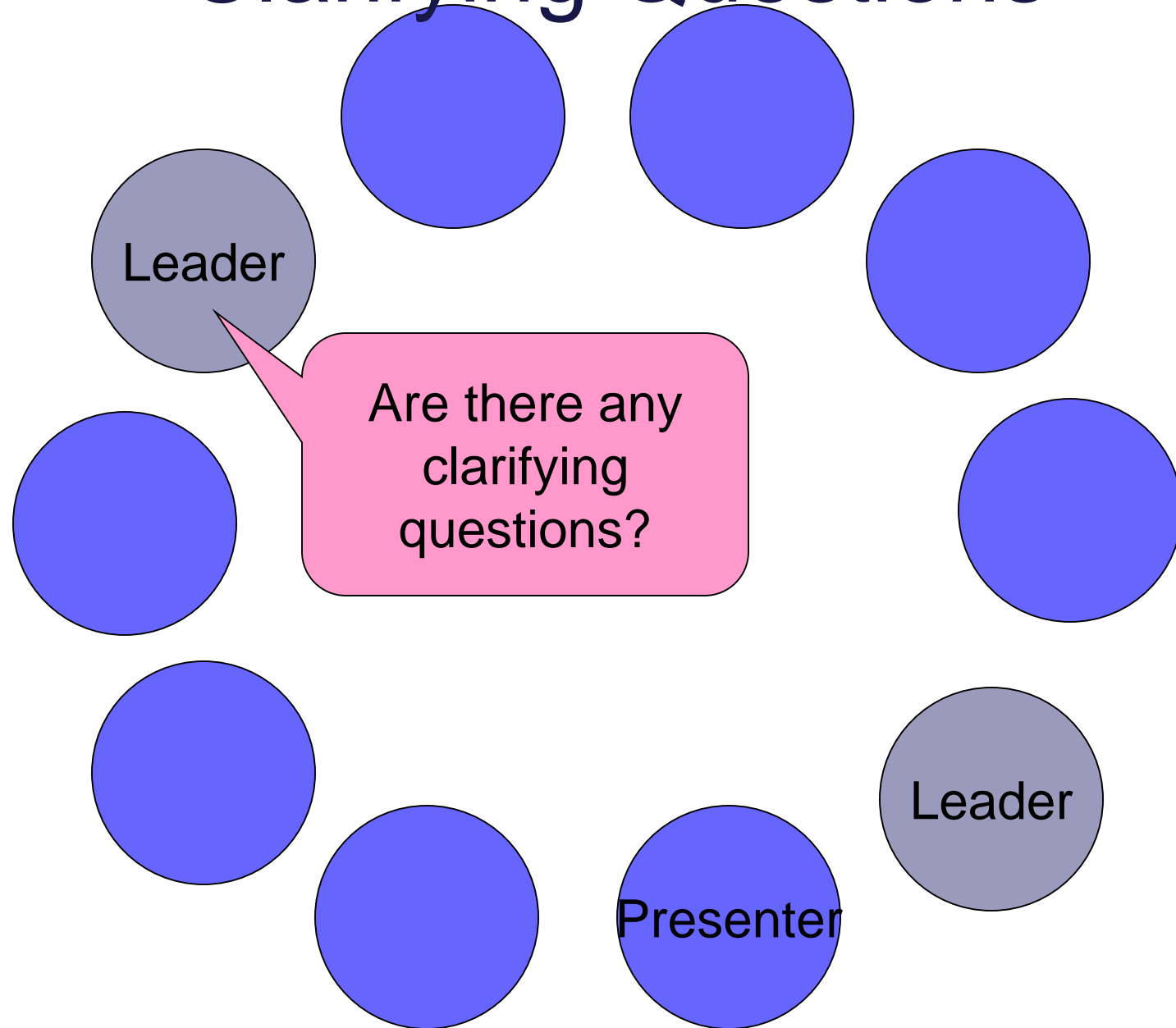
Cases

- ❑ Presentations are spontaneous
- ❑ Patients we have ongoing relationships with
- ❑ Patients who we feel conflicted or strongly about
- ❑ Patients that leave us feeling unfinished, who we lose sleep over
- ❑ Patients that bubble up in the moment

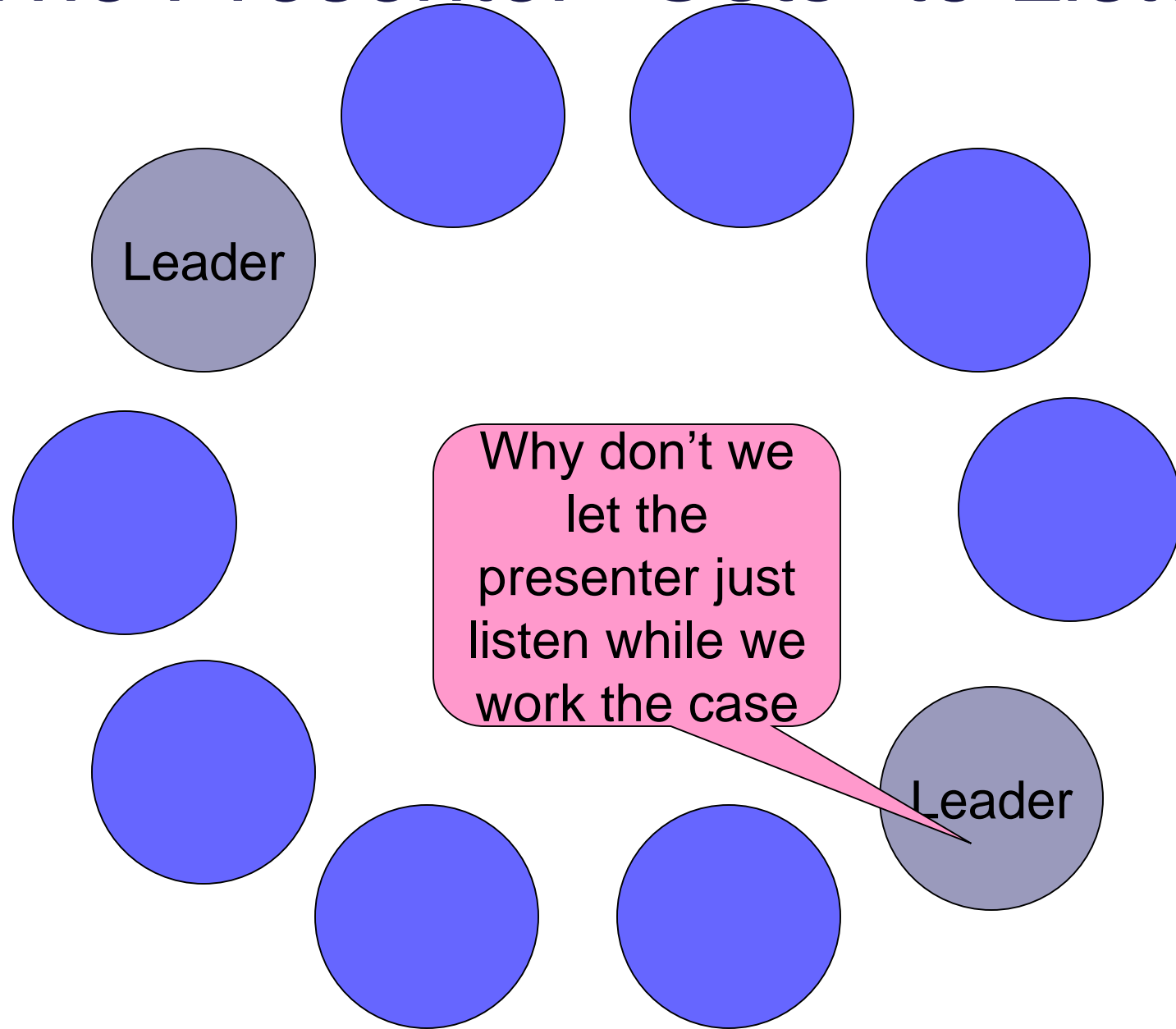
A Case Arrives



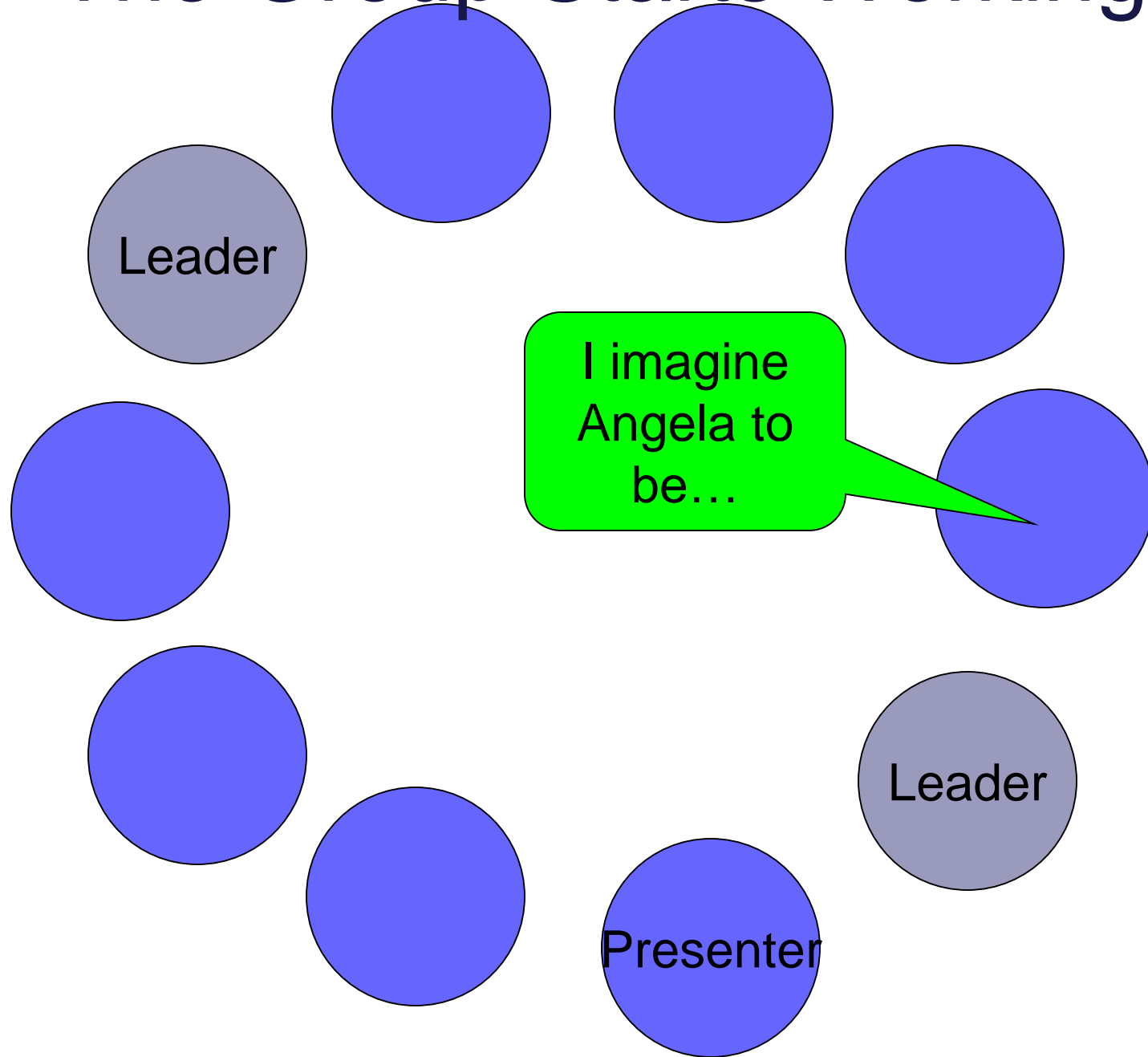
Clarifying Questions



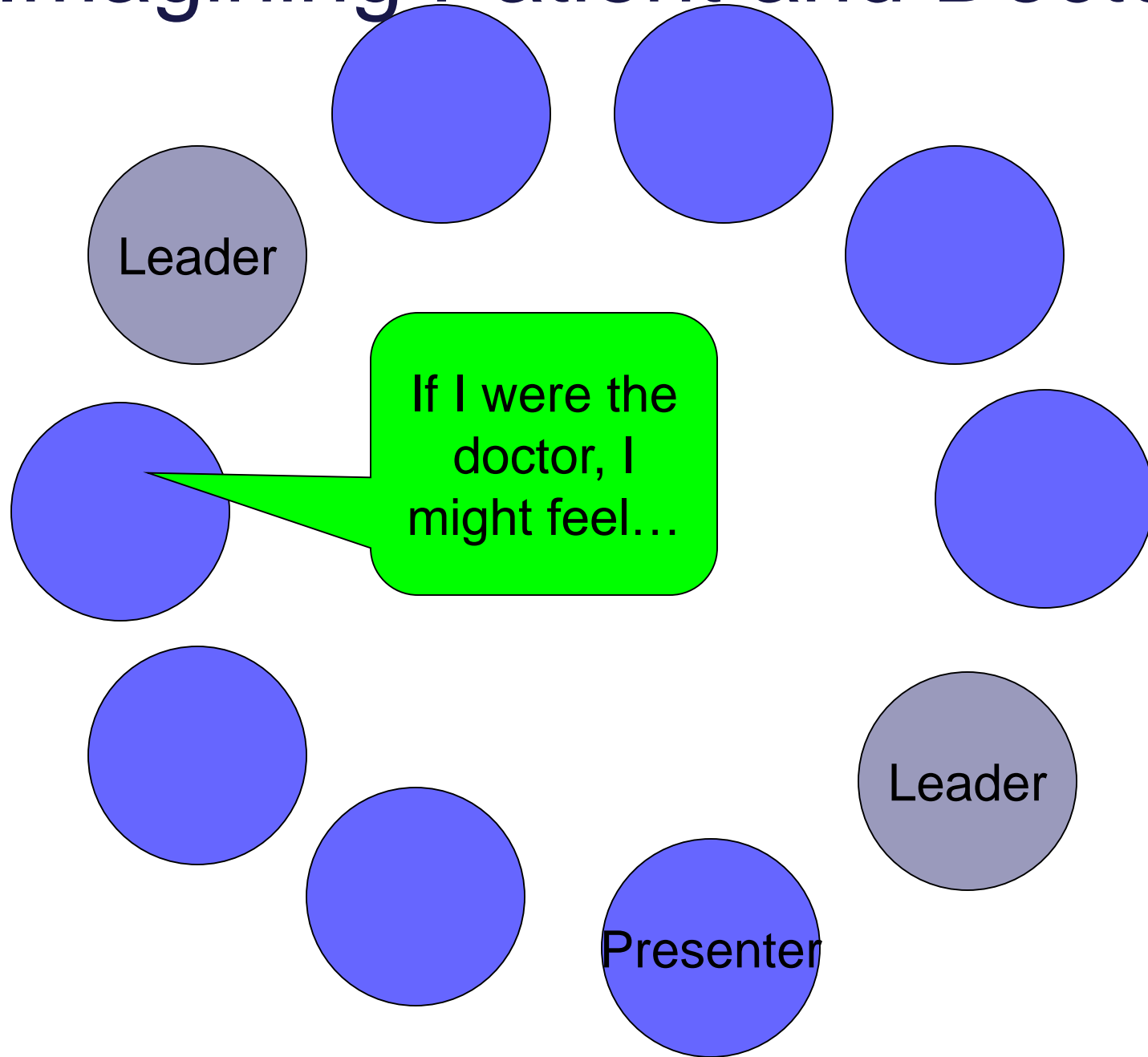
The Presenter "Gets" to Listen



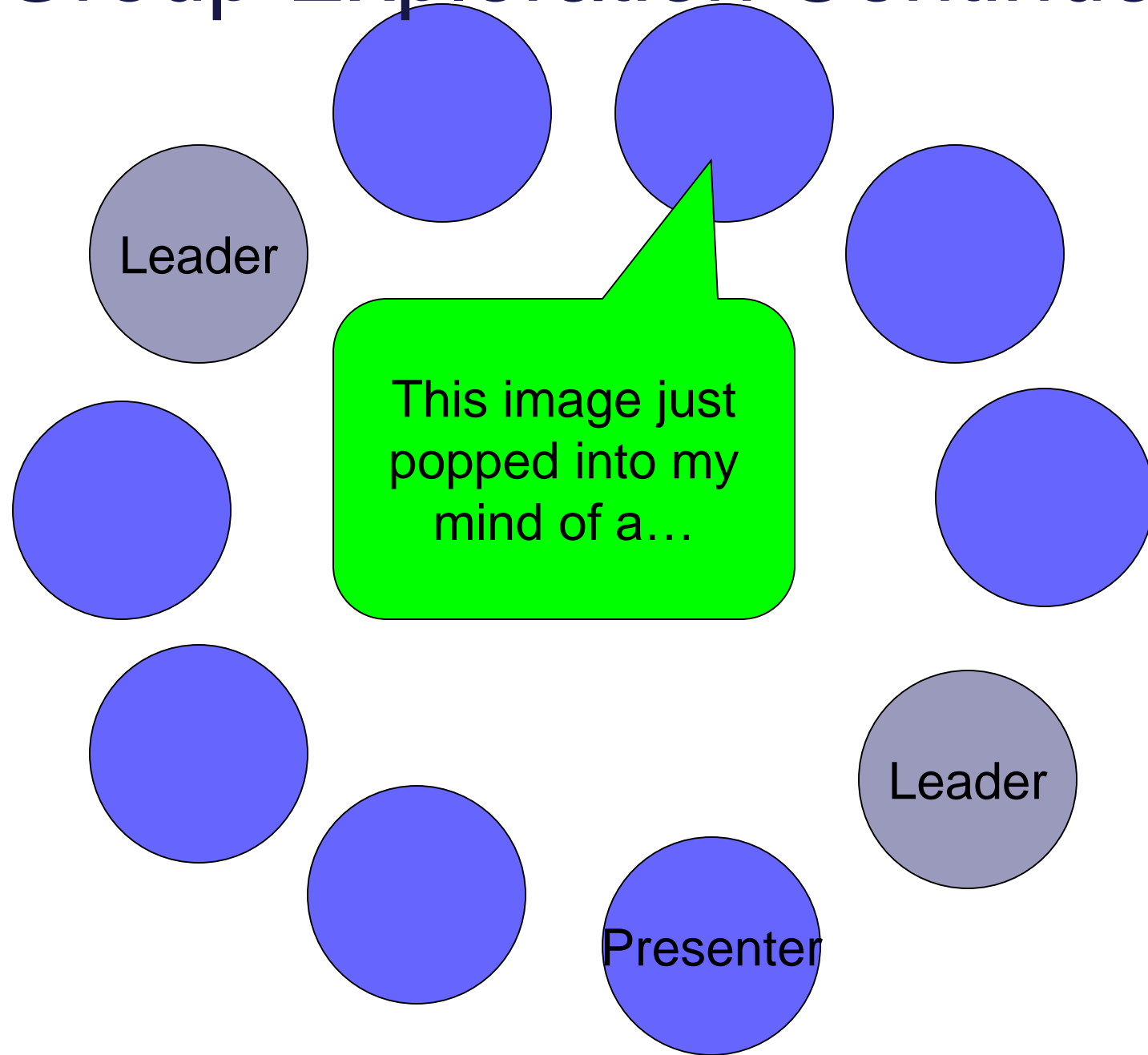
The Group Starts Working



Imagining Patient and Doctor



Group Exploration Continues





Functions of a Balint Group

- To provide a safe place for emotional reflection on troubling cases
- To help presenter consider other understandings about the case
- To look at blind spots, assumptions
- To help members feel less isolated, less shame, more open to learn
- To help members grow and develop



Benefits for Physicians

- Explore difficult or troubling situations
- Refine crucially important patient-doctor relationship skills
- Hear and learn from others' cases
- Connect with others
- Experience the power of a group
- Remember what matters about our work
- Avoid burnout, increase engagement and resilience

Resilience



Cultural Competence



Remoralization





Find Out More About Balint Groups

- The American Balint Society offers training and experiences nationally www.americanbalintsociety.org
- The Northwest Balint Circle is an association of local medical and mental health professionals with Balint training. They offer presentations, demonstrations and ongoing groups. <http://northwestbalintcircle.org/>