

Personal Philosophy -and Supervision Model

Commented [JCT1]: See rubric and comments throughout

Grace-Ann Gibby

Department of Counselor Education and Supervision, Liberty University

Author Note

Grace Ann Gibby

Commented [JCT2]: Author note incorrect

Abstract**Commented [JCT3]:** bold

This paper seeks to present a personal philosophy of supervision and a model that clearly resonates with the author and is most representative of what future supervisory relationships can look like. Supervision provides a unique opportunity to capitalize in a meaningful way, the sum experiences of a supervisor, and allow for this exchange of information in a protected, confidential and trustworthy space. Both parties are encouraged to experience vulnerability and authenticity within the supervisory process as these are key elements to the overall success. The supervisory relationship which is usually characterized by hierarchy, is alternatively being presented from a collaborative perspectives that empowers supervisees and highlights their strengths. Supervisees are encouraged to realize that the supervisor is confident in their abilities and supportive of their growth. Utilizing the theoretical orientations of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Aponte's Person of the Therapist Training, an interconnected philosophy is outlined and discussed.

Commented [JCT4]: Nice.**Commented [JCT5]:** Really nicely done abstract!

Keywords: vulnerability, authenticity, and strengths-based

Commented [JCT6]: Put title there

Supervision, as we know it, began around the mid-late 1920's and was clearly ingrained within psychotherapeutic theories (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013). By the late 1970's and early 1980's, supervision models began to develop separately from the theories themselves (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013). Although this new thrust was the beginning of a new era for supervision; there were still several areas that experienced significant lack including: supervisor's role, discussion of technique or competence, and minimal reference to systematic evaluation (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013). Historically, there were three major facets of supervision: 1. Infrastructure of supervision, 2. Variables that affect supervision relationship such as individual differences, and 3. Execution of supervision itself. However, the fundamental goal of supervision has always remained the same – the supervisee must ultimately learn more, increase awareness and apply improved techniques due to the influence of the supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013).

Personal Definition of Supervision

An intentional relationship between two professionals who choose to adopt a curious, positive posture toward an experience that is designed to bring about developmental growth, interpersonal change, and an improvement of clinical skills.

Personal Philosophy of Supervision

A supervisory relationship that is characterized by empathy, mastery of clinical skills and the adoption of a strengths-based posture helps to build rapport and create a safe space that is essential for growth (McGhee & Stark, 2018). Throughout this journey, a key factor that is fundamental for personal change and growth is vulnerability (Aponte & Ingram, 2018). When both supervisor and supervisee handle vulnerable moments with care and concern, safety is

Commented [JCT7]: Be specific what your model is about and the paper

Bold the heading

Commented [JCT8]: 1 sentence doesn't make a paragraph. Also interact w/lit on def

Commented [JCT9]: Good.

experienced and trust increases. This enhances the growth that is possible within the relationship (Aponte & Ingram, 2018).

Both supervisor and supervisee will bring themselves to the relationship, and considerations of this context should be carefully observed. The person of the therapist is a wonderful perspective that describes how an individual presents themselves as a complete package of strengths, weaknesses, childhood experiences, successes and failures. They have experienced hurt, loss, grief, happiness, and grace. How these experiences intertwine and manifest are critical to the process of supervision; Aponte & Carlsen (2009) best describe this approach as "...marriage of the technical with the personal" (p. ?). The ultimate goal within this philosophy is to improve the skill set of the supervisee which allows for the clients to experience relief and success on their counseling journey.

The role of the supervisor can be conceptualized in several ways. An all-encompassing definition for consideration is: an individual who has effectively practiced the skills of counseling, gained years of mastery experience through practice and their own supervisory process, can accurately identify necessary clinical skills in a supervisee, is committed to continuous education, understands the developmental level of their supervisee, and who seeks to spread their knowledge and wisdom with patience, humility, love and grace.

Research clearly demonstrates that on-going assessments and evaluative processes are extremely beneficial in developing clinical skills (Motley et al., 2014). It serves as the vehicle for which supervisees can ascertain their strengths, weaknesses, and how to improve (Motley et al., 2014). This process is most beneficial when the supervisor feels competent in their abilities to provide accurate feedback, and when the supervisee feels safe enough to receive the feedback and apply it. While the common place for evaluation tends to create an atmosphere of

Commented [JCT10]: Good.

Commented [JCT11]: and

Commented [JCT12]: interact w/lit.

Humility is my best trait

defensiveness, it is hopeful that through the establishment of a rapport, a healthy dialogue of feedback can occur.

The Solution-Focused Supervision Model would eliminate any discussion of negative feedback and encourage the supervisee to become their own expert. While this is the ideal concept, should the client appear to be in **harm's** way, the supervisor must intervene if the supervisee has not gained clarity. Depending on the length of the supervisory period, a biweekly self-**reflection** journal can be a great tool for the supervisee to develop intrapersonal change and growth. A non-judgmental tone towards the supervisee's journal reflection is critical as we want the entire process to be approached with genuine curiosity and support. Following the CBT supervisory model, videotaping and role-playing are explicit ways of providing evaluation that yield precise feedback. Both summative and formative evaluations can fulfill the formal and informal assessment usually required for the supervisee's institution or organization.

Counselor development is ultimately a commitment to continuous growth. It is embracing the idea that there is always room for improvement with an understanding that the process can be viewed from a lifespan perspective. **Counselors are encouraged to increase their awareness so that interpersonal growth can occur. A study conducted in 2014 concluded that counselor professional identity is a lifelong process** and as counselors become more aware of this, they experience greater job satisfaction (Moss et al., 2014). As counselors embrace this awareness, they are two factors that significantly contribute to this **process: authenticity and vulnerability.** When counselors present themselves as authentic, they are better able to engage in growth fostering relationships (Li et al., 2020). When we consider the supervisory relationship, this presents an ideal platform for both parties to practice authenticity and vulnerability.

Relationship to **Counseling** Theories

Commented [JCT13]: Avoid slang in research paper

Commented [JCT14]: Good line of thinking.

Commented [JCT15]: Good.

Commented [JCT16]: Nice.

Commented [JCT17]: This heading should start a new page. Insert a page break here.

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) is a common therapeutic approach within the school system that emphasizes strengths and successes rather than deficits and weaknesses. This approach has also been applied to supervision where the focus is similarly placed on highlighting a supervisee's strengths in their clinical work (McGhee & Stark, 2018). The model implies that supervisees are their own experts, and with guidance can identify what needs to be worked out. For the purposes of this model, the specific technique of emphasizing the positive skills that the supervisee demonstrates is being utilized in the development of this personal model.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) provides a great sense of structure and encourages emphasis on definable and measurable goals. Rating scales such as The Cognitive Therapy Scale (CTS) can be used. The supervision relationship is designed to foster developmental growth; this concise goal is achieved through applying CBT supervisory techniques which include the PURE flower model: Preparation, Undertake, Refine and Enhance (Corey & Lane, 2016). Supervisors are encouraged to focus on specific areas depending on the stage of the supervisor. For example, a novice supervisor is encouraged to focus on preparation and undertaking, whereas a more experienced supervisor can focus on refining and enhancement (Corey, & Lane, 2016).

To accurately encompass the integral aspects of this philosophy, the most fitting name would be: Solution, Strengths-Focused – Cognitive Supervisory Model. This presents the idea that the entire process is designed to be positively oriented, with cognitive structure to allow objective and identifiable goals to be defined and measured.

Biblical Worldview

A biblical example that can be utilized in the development of this philosophy is the relationship between Paul and Timothy. Scripture tells us that Paul taught, and shared many

Commented [JCT18]: Give authors

Commented [JCT19]: Nice.

Commented [JCT20]: Nice.

things with Timothy and left him to govern places such as Macedonia, Troas, and Ephesus. In **Phillipians** chapter 2: 19-23, Paul uses the phrase “I have no one like him” and that Timothy has proven himself to Paul. This provides a great framework for modern day counseling supervision. Supervisees can experience significant growth, and supervisors aiming for a similar outcome description for each supervisee “there is no one like him/her”. With this approach, supervisors are not relegating their responsibilities and are prepared to encourage each journey with their supervisee to fulfill its **highest** potential.

Commented [JCT21]: This word is misspelled.

A second example that models supervision is identified in Titus chapter 2: 3-5. The scripture describes how older women should teach the younger women how to care for the home, and care for their husbands. It clearly shows that individuals with experience should share that information as it contributes to the developmental growth of the younger generations. Further instructions are given in 1 Peter 5:1-4, that the supervisor should not be domineering or serving in this role for shameful gain but rather, a supervisor is modeling the acceptable behavior.

Commented [JCT22]: Great example!! As is the following one

Steps in The Solution, Strengths-Focused – Cognitive Supervisory Model

1. Establish rapport: exchanging information (learning the context of the supervisee, and supervisor)
2. Discussion of expectations and concerns
3. Structured Agenda
4. Assessments – Summative, Formative, Self-reflection Journaling, Videotape
5. Problem-Solving, generating alternatives (Solution-Focused Supervision)
6. Formal termination of Supervisory **Relationship**

Commented [JCT23]: Good thinking.

Conclusion

This personal philosophy of supervision provided a definition of supervision, the role of the supervisor, the theoretical orientations that contributed to the model and the over-arching concept that the model should reflect: curiosity, positivity, mutual respect, empathy, vulnerability, and authenticity. The goal is to enhance the supervisee's clinical skills, promote developmental growth, foster personal change and thus improve the client's outcome. The model is designed to reflect what is considered most important throughout the supervisory process. As a Christian the calling on our lives is even higher as Ephesians 4:32 states: "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." These are the attributes that should influence our behaviors and our conversations regardless of the context. The supervision process is a delicate balance with limitless potential.

Commented [JCT24]: Nice.

References

Aponte, H. J., & Ingram, M. (2018). Person of the therapist supervision: Reflections of a therapist and supervisor on empathic-identification and differentiation. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 29(1), 43-57.

Commented [JCT25]: Italics. Apply throughout

Aponte, H. J., & Carol Carlsen, J. (2009). An instrument for person-of-the-therapist supervision. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 35(4), 395-405.

Bernard, J. M., & Goodyear, R. G. (2013). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Commented [JCT26]: Italicize books

Corrie, S., & Lane, D. A. (2016). Supporting the supervisor: Organizing professional development to enhance practice. *Cognitive Behaviour Therapist*. [Missing info](#)

Li, C., Lertora, I., Dowda, R., & Lin, Y. (2020). The TRAINing technique: An experiential process fostering growth of counselors in training. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, , 1-13.

McGhee, M., & Stark, M. (2018). Promoting collegial teacher supervision: Applying solution-focused strategies in a clinical supervision cycle. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 21(6), 726-740.

Moss, J. M., Gibson, D. M., & Dollarhide, C. T. (2014). Professional identity development: A grounded theory of transformational tasks of counselors. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 92(1), 3-12.

Motley, V., Reese, M. K., & Campos, P. (2014). Evaluating corrective feedback self-efficacy changes among counselor educators and site supervisors. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 53(1), 34-46.

