

**To think about
what is meant by
the “supervisory
relationship?”**

**To consider issues of
power and difference.**

**To look at what
research tells us?**

**To reflect upon and
practise ways of being
in supervision.**

The Supervisory Relationship – 2017

ISW, York: Pete Fleming / Anjula Gupta

In pairs (or threes)

Supervisor

Think of the word "Supervisor" (out of the context of today!) –
Think of ten associated concepts / words / pseudonyms

Relationship

Do the same for the word "Relationship"

Reflect

What does this tell you / suggest to you about
the dyadic process we are talking about.



Deconstruction Exercise

A naïve construction of “supervision” ?

Looks over people

Boss

Examiner

Takes care of people

Checking on you

Cited by Nimisha Patel, 2004; 2012.

Role Power – inherent power differential between supervisor and supervisee

Cultural Power – power specific to a perceived dominant ethnic grouping

Individual Power – associated with the characteristics / “personality” of the supervisor

Ryde (2000) defines different “powers” that may be active in supervision

Raheim, White, Denborough, Waldegrave, Tamasese, Tuhaka, Franklin, Fox and Carey.

An invitation to address privilege and dominance.

"...the word 'privilege' is used...to describe unearned rights, benefits, immunity and favours that are bestowed on individuals and groups solely on the basis of their race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, or other key characteristic."

"some of us experience privilege in a wide range of domains (e.g. white, professional heterosexual men experience privilege in relation to race, class, gender and sexual orientation), while others may experience privilege in very few, if any, domains of life. Responsibilities for addressing privilege are therefore not equal."



Privilege and Prejudice

Think of a time when you worked with someone from a different cultural background/ gender/sexual orientation/socio-economic background/disability/ language:

- What did you notice?
- What was the impact?
- Were you able to talk about it together? And what was that like?
- What was the consequence of talking / not talking about it?

The concept of “privilege” and talking about it... Raheim et al (2012)

“unless we routinely examine the operations of power and our place within these operations, we fail to notice how we are liable to inadvertently impose our expectations, our cultural ways, our ways of thinking, on the people with whom we work.” Salome Raheim (2012)

Restraints upon talking about privilege...

1. Making things equivalent;
2. Confusing experience of individual hardship with considerations of privilege;
3. Dividing from others – somebody else is worse at this than us;
4. Fear of addressing it being divisive;
5. All talk and no action;
6. Changing the focus of the conversation;
7. Undermining the messenger – you are not talking about “it” in the right way;
8. Having to pretend you “know” about experiences/issues you do not know about.

Recap

Thinking about the earlier scenario you discussed, can you talk about the elements that were clear to you, versus those that you might have been 'blind' to?

Discuss in pairs for a few minutes.



THE SOCIAL GRRAACCESS

(Burnham, Palmer & Whitehouse, 2008)

Power and Privilege in relation to:

Gender
Race
Religion
Age
Ability
Class
Culture
Creed
Ethnicity
Sexuality
Sexual Orientation



Social Grrraacceess, John Burnham

In pairs, identify a situation where you have been supervised by OR have supervised somebody you consider *similar* to yourself.

Working through the Social GRRRAACCEESS, talk about the way in which power/privilege may have featured. Pay particular attention to:

- (1) The GRRRAACCEESS that may not seem immediately relevant in that relationship
- (2) Your understanding of why you had not thought them relevant



"The fish in the bowl cannot see the water"

Vikki Reynolds (2012)



John Witcombe, 2005.

"Supervision" is a concept inherent in many spheres of life. The following is borrowed from a textbook for Curates. Interestingly, the relationship defined is informed by health service supervision guidance.

"A curate will hope to receive inspiration, guidance, support and advice from their training incumbent, but they will also know that they should expect some degree of discipline....However, power is not all on one side in this partnership: the incumbent is also looking for support, for a colleague, for fresh vision and for some affirmation of their own skills and experience."



The supervisory relationship in context

So....what do we do with our “taken for granted” knowledge power or privilege in supervision?

Give an example of a time when you have realised such issues were at play in supervision.

What did you do?

What could you have done?

What would the other person have liked you to have done?

What would you have liked them to do?

Pause



What *is* a “good” supervisory relationship

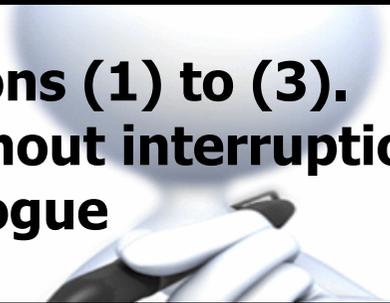
- (1) Discuss a supervisory relationship that you would define as “good”
- (2) Looking back, what are the features of the relationship that makes you define it in this way?
- (3) How did your experience of it at the time differ from that which you now describe?

- **In pairs, answer questions (1) to (3).**
- **Each person speaks without interruption for about 5 mins**



What is a “negative” supervisory relationship

- (1) Discuss a supervisory relationship (or experience) that you would define as “negative”
- (2) Looking back, what are the features of the relationship that makes you define it in this way?
- (3) How did your experience of it at the time differ from that which you now describe?
- (4) What do the previous two slides tell you about the nature of the supervisory relationship?

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- **In pairs, answer questions (1) to (3).**
 - **Each person speaks without interruption for about 5 mins**
 - **Then answer (4) in dialogue**

Hirons and Velleman (1993) 'Factors which might contribute to effective supervision' *Clinical Psychology Forum* 57:11-13

HELPFUL

- Direct guidance on clinical work
 - Soliciting ideas from trainee 1st
- Joint problem solving
- Reassurance
- Theory-practice linking
- Feedback

NOT HELPFUL

- Telling the trainee what to do
- Lack of direction in therapy
- Talking to trainee as though they are client

What do trainees report as helpful in supervision?



Cushway & Knibbs (2004)

HELPFUL

Rapport & Safety

- affirming & safe, emotional support, supervisor qualities, supervisor self-disclosure

Client Focus and Challenge

- e.g. challenge and direction, introducing new ideas, reflection, direct learning

NOT HELPFUL

- Unbalanced
- Developmentally inappropriate
- Intolerant of differences
- Poor model of personal/professional attributes
- Untrained
- Professionally apathetic

What do trainees report as helpful in supervision?



**A grounded theory of effective SR's
(Beinart, 2012)**

FRAMEWORK OF THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

BOUNDARIED



Respectful Open Supportive Committed



PROCESS OF SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

COLLABORATIVE



Sensitive to need Educative Evaluative

Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (Palomo, 2010)

- Dearth of reliable measures of the SR
- Building on the work of Beinarik
- 111 items; 284 trainee clinical psychologists
- 6 principal components (67 items):
 1. Safe base (15)
 2. Structure (8)
 3. Commitment (10)
 4. Reflective Education (11)
 5. Role Model (12)
 6. Formative Feedback (11)

1. Safe Base

- Accounted for most of the variance in the analysis of the SRQ with other measures of the supervisory relationship;
- Powerful precondition for the other aspects of the supervisory relationship:
 - Trainee feels able to raise difficult issues (valued/respected/safe);
 - Supervisor is supportive/trustworthy and responsive to supervisee needs;
 - Collaborative environment;
 - Shared goals and expectations of supervision;
- Similarities to qualities of therapeutic relationship;
- Links with Attachment theory, i.e. a safe base from which trainee can explore and develop.

(SRQ, Palomo 2010)

2. Structure

Practical boundaries set up and protected by the supervisor:

- Time
- Structure of session
- Regular
- Scheduled in advance
- Uninterrupted
- Not regularly cut short

(SRQ, Palomo 2010)

3. Commitment

- Supervisor is interested in and committed to task of supervision;
- Does not see trainee as a burden;
- Higher for elective placements.

(SRQ, Palomo 2010)

4. Reflective Education

- Able to use and facilitate learning about a range of models;
- Makes theory practice links;
- Reflects on the supervisory process (*including power differential*);
- Enables reflection;
- Sensitive to unspoken anxieties.

(SRQ, Palomo 2010)

5. Role Model

Supervisor perceived as:

- Skilled and knowledgeable;
- Respectful of clients;
- Respectful of colleagues;
- Respectful of trainee;
- Possessing credibility and integrity.

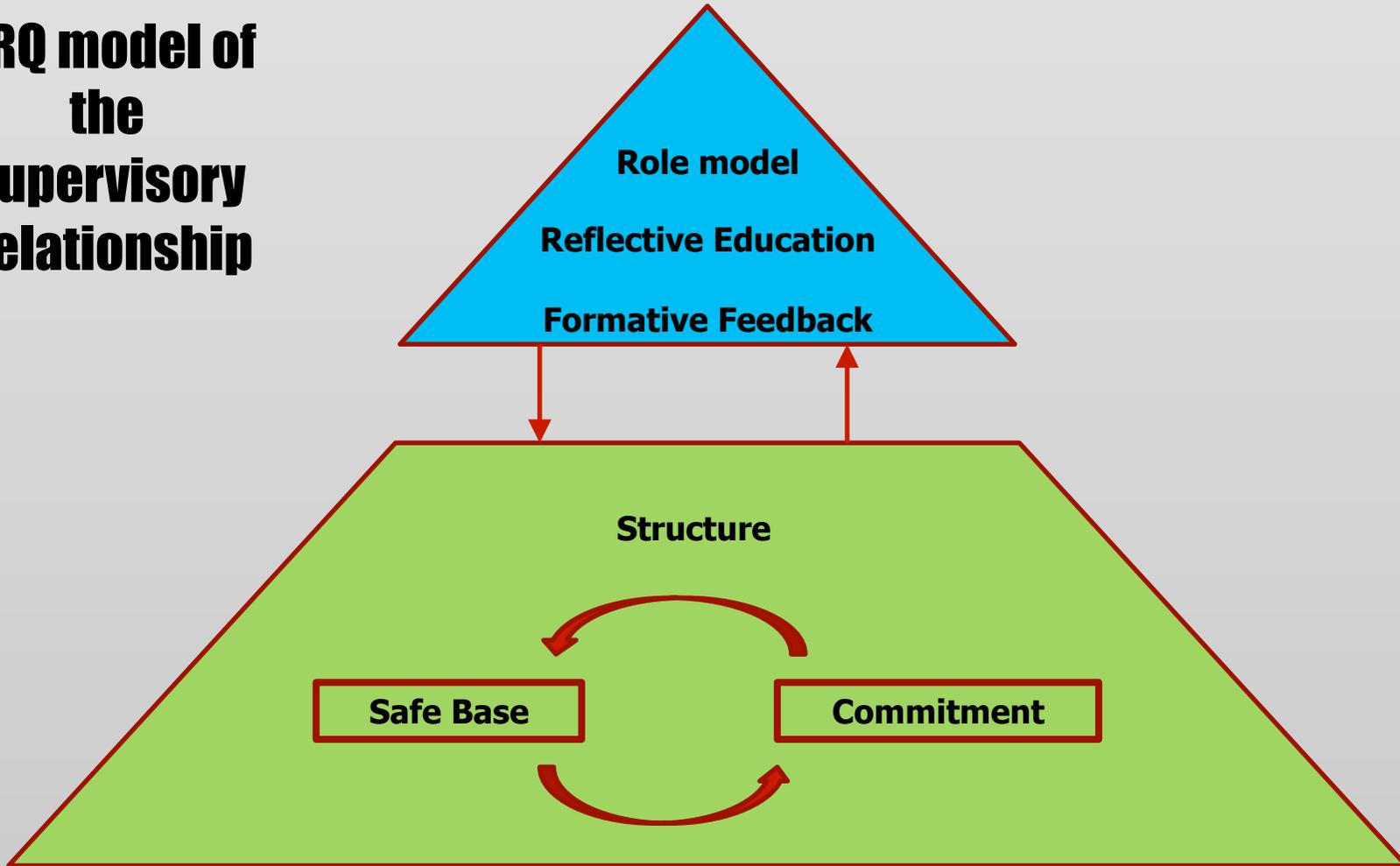
(SRQ, Palomo 2010)

6. Formative Feedback

- Constructive;
- Balanced;
- Regular;
- Positive and negative;
- Developmentally appropriate;
- Helps supervisee develop a sense of their own strengths and areas for development

(SRQ, Palomo 2010)

SRQ model of the Supervisory Relationship



Grounded theory study of *Supervisors'* perspectives on their SRs, (Clohessy, 2008)

Sought to:

- Understand how supervisors perceive SR with trainee Clinical Psychologists
- The ways in which they contribute positively to such relationships
- How they identify and resolve problems in this context

Clohessy (2008) RESULTS

Grouped into three domains:

1. Contextual influences on the SR

- (a) Integration with the team
- (b) Influence of the Course
- (c) What trainee and supervisor bring (identity/personal characteristics, prior experience, values, models of therapy, personal stressors)

2. The flow of supervision

The reciprocity of perceived “investment” (supervisor) and “openness to learning” (trainee) demonstrated through:

Supervisor

- a. Good beginnings
- b. Establishing boundaries and expectations
- c. Spending time together
- d. Encouraging learning and responding to needs

Supervisee

- a. Being enthusiastic
- b. Being proactive
- c. Being productive

3. Core Relational Factors

- (a) Interpersonal connection and emotional tone
- (b) Creating and maintaining safety and trust
- (c) Being open and honest

Problems in Supervision

Can be in any domain:

- Context
- Flow
- Relationship

Attempts at Resolving Problems

Supervisors talked about the importance of:

- (a) Noticing
- (b) Gathering Information
- (c) Formulating/making sense
- (d) Intervening



**PROBLEMS IN THE SUPERVISORY
RELATIONSHIP**

Managing problems in the SR

- Acknowledge & reflect on problem
- Reflect on interpersonal reaction
- Explore problem collaboratively
- Clarify misunderstandings
- Re-establish boundaries
- Spending more informal time together
- Provide more supervision
- Building on positive experiences
- Maintaining positive non-blaming stance
- Importance of commitment to change
- External intervention
- Resolution vs remaining concerned

Feedback – noticing / reflecting

Supervisor: Your trainee is in his/her second year and has been on placement with you for two months of a six month placement. You have noticed that staff in your team appear, “cool” towards him/her and that your trainee has a slightly “patronising” tone towards them in contrast to quite a deferential tone with you. However, you have no concerns about the way in which your trainee communicates with with clients.

Trainee: Your supervisor is always incredibly positive and supportive with you. Previous experience of another placement has made you anxious about receiving negative feedback. You felt criticised in the past for using “colloquial language” with your supervisor. You are really enjoying your placement so far.

Observer – make observations / note points of curiosity about the process – i.e., “I noticed that...” “I wonder if...”

Supervisor and Trainee – reflect together upon the process – supervisor noting how observer’s advice contributed to their own style of feedback.

In Groups of 3:

(1) Identify: Observer (advisor), Supervisor, Trainee

(2) Observer reflect for 5 mins upon how the supervisor might approach discussion about this with the trainee (provide framework for doing so)

(3) Trainee and Supervisor play out scenario (passive observer) using advice given

Feedback – noticing / reflecting

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Learning points

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THE END