Counseling supervision: A deliberate educational process

By: L. DiAnne Borders

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Abstract:

The counseling profession has long recognized the pivotal role of counseling supervision, in terms of both counselor training and client welfare, and has been a leading force in the professionalization of the practice of counseling supervision. Accreditation standards (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP], 1994) and licensure regulations (Sutton, Nielsen, & Essex, 1998) include requirements for substantial amounts of supervised counseling experience. Increasingly, these requirements also are addressing the conduct of supervision and the qualifications of the supervisor. During the past 20 years or so, a substantial body of literature, both conceptual and empirical, has been published. This chapter summarizes this literature in the form of principles that underlie current beliefs about what counseling supervision is and how it should be conducted. The chapter primarily focuses on the conclusions and implications of current literature for practice as opposed to providing a methodological critique of it (for thorough critiques, see Ellis & Ladany, 1997; Ellis, Ladany, Krengel, & Scholt, 1996). Even so, no handbook chapter can give adequate attention to all aspects of a topic that could, and perhaps should, be included. That limitation certainly applies here in a summary that also necessarily reflects the author's own biases and experiences as a supervisee, supervisor, supervisor trainer, supervision researcher, and participant in the profession's efforts to recognize the power and potential of the supervision enterprise.

Keywords: clients | counseling | counseling theories | counselors | racial identity | supervision | supervisors

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Principles concerning the Nature of Counseling Supervision

Counseling Supervision is, at its Core, an Educational Process

Although this statement might seem simplistic and obvious, the teaching-learning nature of supervision has been debated and contradicted, sometimes directly but most often indirectly. Historically, for example, supervision sometimes took on more of a clinical flavor, focused on developing the person of the counselor rather than developing the counselor's skills. Although today supervision clearly is more skill focused, it still sometimes falls short in terms of its potential as an educational process.

To be a true educational enterprise, supervision must be proactive, deliberate, intentional, and goal directed, involving active learning strategies designed to engage a particular supervisee (or group of supervisees). By most anecdotal and documented accounts (e.g., Borders & Usher, 1992), however, this crafting of the supervision session is not commonplace. Rather, it seems that some supervisors often devote little time to active preparation (e.g., reviewing tapes and designing interventions related to specified goals) for sessions. They might even spend much of the sessions detailing what to do with clients (or what *they* would do), with little attention given to helping supervisees understand the clinical interventions or making sure that supervisees know how to deliver the interventions (Borders, 1992).

As an educational process, supervision also is necessarily evaluative, a function that has been discounted or avoided as well (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998). As evaluators, supervisors are more than just responsible for assigning course grades or determining whether supervisees qualify for licenses. Evaluation itself is a key part of the educational process. Supervisors provide ongoing feedback, again crafted for particular supervisees, balancing challenge and support that invite counselor growth and development. To be effective evaluators, supervisors also must have criteria and specified goals, both of which are communicated to (or constructed with) supervisees. Too often, however, learning outcomes are vague or never actually are addressed.

Supervisors who seek to engage supervisees in an educational process use *counseling skills* not only to establish rapport but also to assess supervisees' motivations and beliefs, fears about learning and concerns about being counselors, and potential avenues for creating change. Supervisors use *teaching skills* to assess supervisees' learning needs and learning styles, as well as learning contexts (e.g., counselor education program, internship site), to design "best fit" learning strategies, that is, to determine prioritized learning outcomes and ways in which to evaluate progress toward them. Skilled supervisors integrate all of these components into a

seemingly seamless educational mosaic that guides not only long-term planning but also moment-to-moment framing of responses and interventions. When all of these components come together, supervisors experience the joy of watching others unfold, awaken, and grow.

Models of Supervision Provide Highly Useful, if Somewhat Simplified, Heuristics for Understanding and Guiding the Supervision Process

Discrimination Model

Bernard's (1979,1997) discrimination model is a particularly useful tool for helping supervisors understand that they have choices in terms of their planning and behaviors in supervision sessions. The supervisor roles of teacher, counselor, and consultant now are classic, although supervisors should be clear that they are employing skills based in these roles rather than moving into the pure role (i.e., the supervisoras-counselor does not provide counseling for the supervisee). Supervisors also should avoid thinking in stereotypical terms about the roles, especially the teacher role. Lecturing and telling certainly are not the only methods used by teachers. In fact, these methods are the least creative and often the least effective means of teachers. The three focus areas in the discrimination model clearly illustrate the variety and breadth of supervision content necessary for full development of the counselor. Two of the focus areas emphasize skills: intervention or performance skills (i.e., what the counselor *does* in a session) and conceptual or cognitive skills (i.e., how the counselor *thinks* about the client and the counseling process). The third, personalization, emphasizes the counselor's more emotional reactions to the client and self-awareness.

Supervisors can use the model as a self-assessment tool (Am I relying on only one role or overemphasizing one focus area? If so, is this a deliberate and appropriate choice?) as well as a planning framework (What are my options in terms of role for addressing this issue? Can I really effectively address three different focus areas today? Which one needs to take priority?). Like others (Bernard, 1997), the present author also has found the model instructional for supervisees in clarifying the purposes and functions of supervision and even for writing their supervision goals (e.g., asking supervisees to write at least one goal within each focus area). The model's usefulness is reflected by several variations in which roles and/or focus areas have been further differentiated (Neufeldt, Iversen, & Juntunen, 1995). In addition, there is empirical support for the model both as a valid framework (Ellis & Dell, 1986) and as a useful teaching tool (Stenack & Dye, 1982).

Developmental Models

The various developmental models of supervision (Loganbill, Hardy, & Del worth, 1982; Stoltenberg, 1981) provide a complementary perspective to the discrimination model, giving primary emphasis to the supervisee rather than the supervisor. In fact, when the two are juxtaposed, the developmental models provide a needed rationale for determining which role(s) and focus area(s) to use with a particular supervisee.

The influence of the developmental models has been pervasive. Their publication during the early 1980s brought back to life interest in the field and spurred the development of training

programs as well as academic debate (Holloway, 1987) and a relatively large body of research. In fact, for 10 years, nearly all of the supervision research was based in developmental models. Despite a number of methodological shortcomings that qualify the results, studies fairly consistently have supported the general tenets of the models (e.g., Worthington, 1987), and practitioners consistently have spoken to their commonsense value. The developmental models themselves offer key principles about the nature of supervision including the following basic ones:

- Counselors move through a progressive sequence of stages or levels as they learn the theory and skills of counseling and apply their knowledge with clients. The stages are marked by developmental changes such as a move from black-or-white thinking to more differentiated and integrated conceptualizations about clients and counseling; greater empathy and greater respect for clients' perspectives, styles, and paces of change; and increased awareness of counselors' own personal reactions to clients and the value of these reactions to the counseling process.

- Theoretically, counselors continue to develop across their professional life spans, assuming that they remain open to and seek out learning experiences, particularly supervision. This is an important point given that most master's-level counselors likely are at the middle stages of development when they graduate from their master's programs and obtain their first professional positions. This also means that counselors never "outgrow" their need for supervision.

- Counselors' rates of development through the stages, as well as the ceilings or maximum stages that can be achieved, are governed by counselors' personal attributes, particularly their general levels of development (e.g., conceptual [Harvey, Hunt, & Schroder, 1961], ego [Loevinger & Wessler, 1970]).

- Counselors' developmental levels or stages are *not* equivalent to their experience levels. The use of experience level as a proxy for developmental level has been a consistent error in supervision practice and research, despite extensive discussions of general developmental theories in presentations of the models and empirical evidence that the two are not equivalent (e.g., Borders, 1989).

- Different supervisory interventions are the most appropriate match for the various developmental levels, with a general move from more directive, instructive, and highly supportive interventions to more confrontive and consultative approaches (for more detailed descriptions of supervisory interventions by level, see Stoltenberg, 1981; Wiley & Ray, 1986).

- The task of supervisors is to provide supervision that will encourage the growth and development of supervisees. This sometimes is described as a one-half step match that challenges but does not overwhelm supervisees. Necessarily, then, supervisors must assess not only the skill levels of counselors but also counselors' general developmental capabilities and then apply that information in their supervisory approaches with supervisees.

Counseling Theory-Based Models

A third group of supervision models is counseling theory based. Historically, these were not actually models of supervision but rather descriptions of the theoretical principles and skills to be taught in supervision, often through application of the counseling theory to supervisees (e.g., attack the supervisee's irrational thoughts about the role of the counselor in rational emotive therapy supervision). More recently, authors of theory-based writings have spoken more distinctly to the supervision process per se rather than treating supervision as primarily an adjunct to counseling (Watkins, 1997). Even when supervisors do not inappropriately equate their counseling theories with their supervision approaches, the counseling theories clearly influence supervisors' beliefs about what should be addressed during supervision and, often, how this is done.

The Supervisory Relationship is Pivotal to the Educational Process of Supervision

As in other helping and educational processes, the supervisor-supervisee relationship strongly influences how much learning and change can occur. Building rapport is the necessary but insufficient elementary building block for a productive relationship. Supervisors must carefully manage the balance of challenge and support they provide (Blocher, 1983) so that supervisees not only feel safe in being open and vulnerable about their work but also gain confidence in their ability to learn, develop, and perform. This balance differs by supervisee, client issue, supervision session, and stage of the supervisory relationship. The general underlying dynamics of the supervisory relationship have been studied most thoroughly by Holloway (1995), who identified "power" and "involvement" as core underlying constructs.

Several unique dynamics in the supervisory relationship also must be considered by supervisors. Beyond counseling interventions and case conceptualization strategies, supervisees are asked to explore their own beliefs, motivations, emotions, and experiences as these relate to their interactions with clients as well as their interactions with supervisors. In this way, the supervisory relationship itself becomes a critical vehicle for learning. In using this vehicle, supervisors must walk a narrow and often vague line between counseling supervisees and encouraging self-exploration as it directly relates to supervisees' counseling work, being careful not to overemphasize self-awareness or to assume that counseling behaviors necessarily have personal (vs. skill-based) sources.

Supervisors' balancing act is further complicated by the evaluative nature of supervision. How do they successfully invite supervisees to be vulnerable with the individuals who will evaluate their adequacies as counselors and govern their entry into the field?

Using the supervisory relationship as a vehicle for learning is most clear in working through parallel processes, perhaps the most unique dynamic of supervision. Parallel process originally was conceived in psychodynamic terms and viewed as a reflective process in which the supervisee unknowingly portrays in supervision the client's anxiety during counseling, thereby seeking help for the supervisee's own anxiety about working with the client as well as ways in which to intervene with the client (Searles, 1955). From this perspective, the origin of the

parallel process dynamic is the client. More recently, parallel process has been used to describe a counselor's manifestation of similar patterns or themes (e.g., reluctance to confront) in both counseling and supervision sessions (McNeill & Worthen, 1989). There also are indications that parallel process may emanate from the supervisor (Doehrman, 1976; Martin, Goodyear, & Newton, 1987), with the supervisee portraying during counseling the supervisor's attitudes or behaviors observed in supervision or the supervisor's insession behavior with one supervisee reflecting issues or dynamics with another supervisee. Clearly one of the most fascinating and potentially powerful and unique interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics of supervision, parallel process seldom has been studied by researchers. Given its highly situational nature, parallel process requires complex qualitative designs, with no guarantee that it will occur (or be detected) in a specific session. And, even when parallel process is present, an objective observer might not have the necessary background knowledge about the participants (intrapersonal aspects) or know enough about the context to be able to identify what is unique behavior and what is part of a pattern or theme in a session.

In Line with Our General Social Culture, the Supervisory Relationship is Influenced by Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Sexual Orientation

In addition, and also similar to our general culture, the influences of these issues might not be consciously recognized or addressed in supervision despite their pervasive and predictable effects.

In terms of gender, for example, there is consistent evidence that supervisors, whether male or female, grant more power to their male supervisees in several ways (e.g., reinforcing statements that express power, asking their opinions) (Nelson & Holloway, in press). As a result, supervisors need to learn—and consciously use—supervisory techniques that empower women (Nelson, 1997) to be confrontive and acknowledge their expertise. Similarly, male supervisees need help in being comfortable with intimacy and addressing affect (Nelson, 1997).

During the past few years, there has been a surge of literature focused on cross-cultural and multicultural supervision. Although empirical works still are quite limited, conceptual models and explorations have greatly expanded our understanding of the implications of the multicultural movement for supervision. Several conceptual models are based in developmental processes and describe progressive increases in multicultural knowledge, skills, and awareness along with guidelines for developmentally appropriate supervisory interventions such as from more to less structure (Leong & Wagner, 1994). Other writers (Cook, 1994; Fong & Lease, 1997; Leong & Wagner, 1994) have focused on racial identity models (Helms, 1995) and implications for supervision. These writers have suggested that supervisors' and supervisees' racial identity ego statuses may be more relevant to supervision dynamics than is race or ethnicity alone. In particular, the interactions of the dyad's ego statuses (whether both are parallel or one is higher than the other) could predict supervision outcomes (Cook, 1994).

Early investigations of race as a main effect in supervision were mixed (Leong & Wagner, 1994). In a more recent study (Ladany, Brittan-Powell, & Pannu, 1997), racial identity interaction (supervisees' self-reports of their own and their supervisors' racial identity) was related to supervisees' ratings of the supervisory alliance as well as their perceptions of

supervisors' influence on their multicultural competence; when supervisors' racial identity was high, these outcomes were significantly greater. Even so, supervisors's race also was related to multicultural competence; supervisors of color were more influential, regardless of supervisees' race.

The Ladany and colleagues (1997) study, despite some methodological shortcomings, supported the proposed importance of racial identity in counseling supervision. The results also provided some empirical validity for the belief that supervisors should be high in racial identity and supported the need for more supervisors of color, who may encourage multicultural competence through their modeling or greater willingness to address multicultural issues. Similar conclusions seem plausible in terms of gender (Nelson & Holloway, in press) and sexual orientation, although these lack empirical support. Recently, for example, a gay male doctoral student in the author's supervision practicum helped his supervisees and his peer supervisors to become more comfortable in discussing sexual issues with gay clients. His own integrated level of identity as a gay man enabled him to do this in an informative and challenging way that was easily heard.

The Practice of Counseling Supervision

Relatively little research has been devoted to the practice of counseling supervision, so that we have few empirically based guidelines for conducting supervision. Too often, it seems, supervisors either use interventions they learned from their own experiences as supervisees or work hard to avoid those interventions because of their own negative supervision experiences. Others have relied primarily on their counseling theories for methods to teach theory-based principles and techniques. Indeed, until recently, few supervisors have had opportunities to consider and practice the wide range of supervisory interventions available to them. It should come as no surprise, then, that researchers have found few differences between experienced and novice supervisors (Worthington, 1987) and have found that supervisors overwhelmingly rely on one supervisory method—self-report (Borders & Usher, 1992). Self-report relies on supervisees' recall of what happened in counseling sessions as well as their perceptions of what issues need to be addressed during supervision. This approach may be time-efficient, but it also provides very limited—if not biased—information.

The existing literature does provide guidelines for supervision practice, although some are more implied than stated directly and all need further empirical study.

A Wide Range of Teaching, Counseling, and Consulting Methods are Available to Counseling Supervisors

Supervisors may draw on their skills from these other roles in designing supervisory interventions (Borders & Leddick, 1987). Role-based interventions have been specified by Stenack and Dye (1982) and been expanded and illustrated by Neufeldt and colleagues (1995). In practice, role-based methods seldom are as clearly delineated as they might appear; they often have overlapping or multiple goals or are combined. Depending on the implementation, the same method can be used for more than one goal. A role-play, for example, may involve the supervisor modeling a skill and the supervisee experiencing the client's emotional frame of reference. Reversed, the supervisee role-playing the counselor may be practicing a new skill (and

getting immediate feedback) or replaying a session as a first step at understanding an emotional reaction to the client. A key implication, then, is that the supervisor must be clear about the intention or goal in choosing a particular intervention and must be deliberate in its implementation (Borders & Leddick, 1987).

As suggested by role-based interventions, few supervisory methods per se are unique to supervision; it is their adaptation and application to supervision that differentiates them from other contexts. Each method has its advantages and limitations, and each is better suited for some learning goals than for others. The craft or art of supervision is in the process of choosing the appropriate method; shaping it to a particular supervisee's needs, personality, learning style, and goals; and implementing it in a well-timed intervention. Thus, supervisors need to have a repertoire of varied skills and methods from which they can choose rather than relying exclusively on their preferred approaches.

It is Imperative That Supervisors Regularly and Consistently Employ Supervisory Interventions That Give Them Direct Knowledge of Counselors' Work

Self-reports, by definition, are limited in objectivity; regardless of supervisees' willingness or intent to provide complete and unbiased reports, they necessarily can share only what they observed or concluded from their own frames of reference about clients, themselves, and the counseling process. As a result, self-reports can be highly informative of supervisees' processing but must be supplemented by direct knowledge of clinical work. A variety of direct interventions are available including review of audiotapes and videotapes of counseling sessions, variations of live observation and live supervision methods (e.g., bug-in-the-ear, phone consultations, team supervision), and co-counseling (Bernard & Goodyear, 1992,1998; Borders & Leddick, 1987). By combining self-reports and direct interventions, supervisors can gain valuable insights into supervisees' observation skills and/or willingness to disclose. In addition, direct methods allow supervisors to work on goals such as observing client non-verbals or reactions to counselors' interventions, timing and pacing, and rhythms of sessions. Some methods (e.g., bug-in-the-ear, consultations) also allow for immediate feedback and in-session guidance, so that supervisees are able to work with more challenging clients sooner.

One direct intervention, interpersonal process recall (IPR; Kagan, 1980; Kagan & Kagan, 1997), is perhaps the most unique supervisory method. The goal of IPR, a phenomenological and humanistic approach, is to increase supervisees' awareness of thoughts and feelings as well as clients' experiences during sessions. Supervisors take on a nonjudgmental and non-evaluative role as "inquirers" who guide supervisees' reexperiencing of sessions. The task of supervisors is to expand supervisees' awareness and to avoid providing feedback, focusing on skills, or asking leading questions (e.g., "Did you think about …?" "What else could you have tried?"). Staying in the inquirer role often is difficult for supervisors. IPR may be used to review a whole session or a session segment, preselected by either the supervisee or the supervisor, depending on the supervision goal. The method can be quite instructive regarding supervisees' internal experiencing and insession thought processes (e.g., the supervisee recognized the need to confront but feared the client's response, the supervisee recognized the theme in the client's report but did not know how to use this information, the supervisee heard a husband's lack of commitment to the marriage but downplayed it in hopes that the marriage could be saved). In

fact, supervisees' recall can challenge supervisors' assumptions about supervisees' insights and skills.

Direct interventions also are useful in group supervision, profiting not only supervisees and supervisors but also other group members. Supervisees often can "see" behaviors and themes in peers' work much more easily than they can in their own work, but this experience provides good practice for transferring these skills to self-observation. Review of audiotaped or videotaped segments in group can be the basis for a number of experiential teaching methods (Borders, 1991).

Much of the Work in Supervision is Cognitive Based

To date, a comprehensive and systematic discussion of the cognitive skills and processes that need to be addressed, as well as the ways in which to address them, is lacking. In contrast to observable skills and techniques, cognitions are difficult to specify and teach, although there have been some promising efforts (e.g., Morran, Kurpius, Brack, & Brack, 1995).

Indeed, it is striking how much of the supervision literature points to supervisees' cognitions as the underlying, if not primary, focus of supervisory work. The ultimate goal of developmental models of supervision, for example, is to encourage movement toward thinking at higher conceptual levels. Blocher (1983) spoke to this goal—"a very high level of cognitive functioning" —quite cogently:

> [It includes] the ability to take multiple perspectives in order to achieve empathic understanding with people who hold a variety of worldviews, value systems, and personal constructs. It includes the ability to differentiate among and manipulate a wide range and large number of relevant facts and causal factors. Finally, it involves the ability to integrate and synthesize in creative or unusual ways large amounts of such information to arrive at an understanding of the psychological identity and life situation of a wide range of other human beings. Still further, the counselor engages in this quest in active collaboration with the client and in the hope of imparting some skill and understanding of the process to the client, (p. 28)

Supervisors, then, are to be concerned with the actual thought *content* of supervisees, the ways in which supervisees *process* information, and the cognitive *schemata* underlying all cognitive activity.

Cognitive-oriented supervision strategies are scarce. Most existing cognitive-based methods are focused on clinical hypothesis formation and case conceptualization skills. Clearly, these skills are critical to counselors' ability to understand clients or families and to create appropriate treatment plans. This broad thinking, however, must be translated into moment-by-moment, deliberate, insession thinking including what is observed, how these observations are understood, how these observations compare/contrast with observations made in previous sessions or with information from other sources (e.g., parent, spouse, teacher), and how the client's frame of reference may be influencing (e.g., limiting, coloring) his or her self-reports before moving to identifying one's options for responding and evaluating them in terms of counseling goals, level

of client functioning, stage of counseling relationship and counseling process, client's pace and motivation (in this session as well as overall), client's usual reactions to various types of responses and interventions, time left in session, *and* counselor's ability to provide a particular response or intervention and other factors relevant to that particular moment. This moment-by-moment processing is, of course, ongoing throughout a session, requiring much focus and energy as it guides critical decision making for working with the client. This moment-by-moment thinking also needs to be agile and almost instantaneous, so that the counselor's insession cognitive skills need much practice, study, and evaluation. Few have offered insights into the insession thinking process or have suggested methods for assessing, teaching, and evaluating them in supervision. To date, the best (if not the only) intervention proposed is the "thinking aloud" approach (Borders & Leddick, 1987; Kurpius, Benjamin, & Morran, 1985) in which either the supervisee reports insession thoughts (for assessment, intervention, and/or evaluation purposes) or the supervisor reports his or her own cognitive processing about the client or the counseling (for modeling or teaching purposes). The thinking aloud approach has some similarities to IPR, although the two interventions have very different goals.

Counselors' insession cognitions really are the sculpting force for making counseling an art. As such, they demand much more attention from supervisors and researchers.

Never Underestimate the Power of a Carefully Worded, Well-Timed Question

The right question at the right time often is the catalyst for change. It may create cognitive dissonance that requires the supervisee to reconsider assumptions and struggle with finding ways in which to make sense of the contradictions, or it may invite the supervisee to walk through a cognitive process slowly so that it may be examined. The question may spur the supervisee to take a new perspective on a client's behavior, shift the focus from the client's behavior to the supervisee's behavior, suggest another possible explanation for an event, highlight an overlooked fact or behavior, or in-troduce the supervisee's reactions to the client as an important consideration.

Based on experience as well as review of published transcripts (Bernard & Goodyear, 1992, Appendix D; Holloway, 1995; Neufeldt et al., 1995), it seems that a supervisor's key skill is the well-crafted question. Questions, sometimes paired with interpretations, seem to provide the critical challenges in supervision, especially when balanced by supportive reflective statements.

Supervisors Always are Modeling, Whether Intentionally or Not

Although supervisors often deliberately model skills or techniques, or perhaps think aloud their processing about clients or issues, it should be noted that *all* of their supervisory actions become professional examples to supervisees. This modeling includes larger actions (e.g., supervisors' attitudes [whether expressed verbally or not] about clients and clients' situations) as well as "smaller" demonstrations of respect for supervisees (e.g., being on time and prepared for sessions). It is not necessary for supervisees to observe the modeling consciously for learning to take place. Supervisees learn a language and a perspective on clients and counseling from their supervisors. Supervisees may carry these forward and act them out in counseling sessions.

Group Supervision is an Important Adjunct to Individual Supervision, Providing Complementary but Different Learning Opportunities

The advantages and unique learning opportunities of group supervision have been well described (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998; Hiller-brand, 1989; Holloway & Johnston, 1985), and a complete discussion of them is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Perhaps a key point to be made here is that, for group supervision to be complementary, supervisors need to be deliberate about their goals for their supervision groups. What can happen in group that cannot happen in individual supervision? Given the particular group (e.g., practicum vs. internship vs. post-degree practitioners, interns in a school vs. interns in a community setting), what are the appropriate goals for this supervision group? What interventions will help the group members to achieve these goals? Too often, supervisors fall into a case presentation approach, with little deliberate thought as to structure and goals beyond the outlines for the case presentations themselves. Of course, it is the responses to and processing of case presentations that is critical to learning for all of the group members, not just the supervisees who presented the cases. The selected structures also determine whether supervisees will work together as a group (assuming that this is a goal) rather than as individuals providing advice to the presenters. Clearly, supervisors' skills in leading and facilitating groups are prerequisites for structuring group supervision experiences.

It seems that group supervision also is heavily influenced by setting and context. Suggested models and interventions, for example, often grow out of supervisors' assignments within training programs and reflect the needs and parameters of those programs and their students (Borders, 1991; Neufeldt et al., 1995). This does not mean that models are not useful beyond the original groups. However, supervisors do have to give deliberate thought as to how models need to be adapted to their own groups and settings.

Although the literature on supervision groups is small, there is consistent evidence that these are more task-oriented groups than process- or counseling-oriented groups (Kruger, Cherniss, Maher, & Leichtman, 1988; Werstlein & Borders, 1997). Given the learning focus of supervision groups, this characterization seems quite appropriate. It also reinforces the demands of supervisors to be deliberate, focused, and educational in planning as well as strong group leaders.

Professional Issues: Credentialing, Ethics, and Standards

Ethical Issues

Similar to other areas in supervision, multi-layered thinking is required in addressing ethical questions in counseling supervision. Supervisors have ethical obligations both to clients and to supervisees.

Supervisors, first and foremost, must consider the welfare of clients and take whatever actions are necessary (e.g., dealing directly with clients, increasing supervision regarding clients) to protect them. Clearly, supervisors also must be cognizant of all ethical issues related to the counseling process and make sure that counselors adhere to ethical standards. In addition, clients

must agree to terms regarding supervision (e.g., supervisors, taping, how client confidentiality will be maintained) prior to beginning counseling as part of the informed consent procedure.

There are clear legal implications for supervisors' responsibilities to clients here. Most frequently, the principle of vicarious liability is discussed in the literature (e.g., Harrar, Vande-Creek, & Knapp, 1990). Simply stated, this principle means that supervisors are responsible for the actions of supervisees and, therefore, can be held legally liable for those actions. It is incumbent on supervisors, then, to be sure that they are informed about supervisees' clients (e.g., take steps to get the information they need) and to be sure that supervisees are informed of ethical guidelines in general and those pertinent to particular clients. There also is possible cause for direct liability (Guest & Dooley, 1999; Harrar et al., 1990). If supervisors give inappropriate or inaccurate advice about client treatment, for example, then any resulting harm to clients may be viewed as the direct result of that advice.

Supervisors have parallel obligations to supervisees. Perhaps first and foremost, supervisors should be qualified as counselors *and* as supervisors in terms of their training, supervised experience, and continuing professional development as well as the counseling areas they supervise (e.g., substance abuse, career counseling). Informed consent includes information such as the criteria for successful completion of the supervision experience, mechanics of the supervision process (e.g., supervision approaches and expectations), and professional disclosure (e.g., supervisors' qualifications as counselors *and* as supervisors) (McCarthy et al., 1995). Limits of confidentiality also need to be addressed, particularly given the evaluative nature of supervision (e.g., internship grades, recommendations for licensure or employment) and supervisors' responsibilities to the field and to supervisees' future clients. Relatedly, supervisees must be afforded due process, from timely feedback, to opportunities for remediation, to avenues to report dissatisfaction with supervision. Dual relationships may be a particularly challenging area because there is a high probability that many supervisors and supervisees will have dual relationships (e.g., also teacher-student, dissertation chair-doctoral student, or even administrator/employer-employee). Such relationships should be anticipated and, when they occur, be handled with care (Herlihy & Corey, 1997). Two dual relationships that must be avoided are that (a) supervisors do not counsel their supervisees and (b) supervisors do not have romantic or sexual relationships with their supervisees. Although the latter is fairly straightforward, there is a considerable gray area surrounding what constitutes counseling supervisees. Detailed guidelines regarding these issues are presented in ethical guidelines from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES; Hart, Borders, Nance, & Paradise, 1995).

Professional Standards

The counseling profession has played a pivotal role in establishing counseling supervision as a professional specialty. Not only do accreditation standards for practica and internships attend to the number of hours that interns spend on-site, there also are clear expectations for face-to-face supervision of interns' counseling work (CACREP, 1994). Historically, model legislation for counselor licensure bills have included similar requirements for post-degree supervision as well as suggested qualifications for the "approved supervisor" (Glosoff, Benshoff, Hosie, & Maki,

1995). Clearly, the profession has highly valued the counseling supervision process for some time.

In an attempt to operationalize the profession's valuing of counseling supervision, the Supervision Interest Network of the ACES planned and completed a sequential set of projects designed to define the specialty and create standards for it. These projects included standards for the practice of supervision (Dye & Borders, 1990), guidelines for training supervisors (Borders et al., 1991), and the ethical practice of supervision (Hart et al., 1995). These documents encouraged state counseling licensure boards to write regulations governing supervision *and supervisors* of counselor-licensure applicants (Sutton et al., 1998) and provided the basis for a national credential for counseling supervisors awarded through the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC; Bernard, 1998). Perhaps the most important effect of these standards and other developments has been the elevation of counseling supervision as a professional specialty in its own right, with the accompanying emphasis on the need for thoughtful, structured, and extended training for supervisors of counselors. The counseling profession has provided a basis for enhancing our own work as well as a useful guide for other professions ready to consider supervision within their respective areas (Watkins, 1997).

Perspectives on the Future

Where do we go from here? Despite the major advancements in the field of counseling supervision over the past 20 years or so, there is, of course, still much to be done.

One increasingly important area concerns supervisor training. The advent of state regulations and a national counseling supervisor credential requiring training highlights the need for supervisor training in a pragmatic way. Therefore, we should not be surprised at the appearance of training programs designed to help practitioners fulfill these requirements including university courses and continuing education venues. Indeed, this variety of training offerings is needed and welcomed; although most training to date has been offered through doctoral-level courses, most supervisors in the field are master's-level practitioners. Although neither type of training experience is necessarily better than the other, notices of training programs indicate that they clearly vary in scope and type of experience provided. Counselors, then, are left to scrutinize the content and qualifications of trainers, perhaps using the ACES documents as their guidelines. A critical training component should be supervised experience of supervision over some time.

The field still is a fruitful area for researchers, whether experienced or new to the field. In fact, the field is in need of fresh perspectives to generate research questions that probe old and new areas of supervision practice. Developmental models provided the impetus for an incredibly productive period of supervision research that lasted 12 to 15 years. Nevertheless, we have made little progress in developing supervision-specific instruments. Instead, we often have relied on adaptations of counseling-based measures. One precursor to the development of supervision measures might be identifying what the key constructs of supervision are, particularly as they are differentiated from counseling. Current researchers are exploring more relationship and process issues in supervision as opposed to more outcome-based questions. Clearly, both types of questions are important. It is hoped that research from both perspectives—and new ones yet to be

determined—will inform each other in ways that enhance not only empirical work but also the training and practice aspects of counseling supervision.

How do supervisors reflect on their work and continue their development? Similar to counselors, supervisor development is ongoing across the professional life span. Much more attention to supervisor development is needed from researchers and trainers, so that we can apply the same deliberate educational energy to supervisors' needs as we now apply to counselors. It is hoped that the counseling profession will continue to be a leading force in furthering our understanding of this and other aspects of the supervision enterprise.

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