



Academic Discipline of Social Justice and Inclusion
MArts/BA Humanistic Counselling Practice

Module: ECHC5005

Assessment Component: 2

Assignment Title: Supervision Reflection

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This piece of writing will look into the importance of supervision in order to provide insight into its relevancy. It will also look into what model of supervision is used within a practice placement and a breakdown of the model. The piece will then provide a reflection of a client case brought to supervision which will give insight into the process of supervision. This will all then be drawn together with a conclusion.

Supervision is a crucial part of the counselling profession, it provides the opportunity for the counselling practitioner to keep a check on their practice and to reflect on any aspects they may have found difficult. Supervision ensures that the practitioner is competent in their practice and that if there are any issues such as the client may not be opening up in session, that the supervisor can help the counsellor to work out the best route of action or approach in alleviating the issue (BACP, 2019). Within supervision it is also crucial that the supervisor has a wealth of knowledge in the counselling field in order to help the supervisee to combat any issues they may experience in practice e.g. the supervisee may be dealing with a client that has issues surrounding substance misuse, if the supervisor does not have knowledge in this field then it may lead to the client not receiving the best service possible which in turn could result in harm to the client as well as the counselling profession (BACP, 2019).

Within supervision the model used is the Seven Eyed Supervision Model. This model focuses on the relationships within the process of counselling, that is the client/therapist relationship as well as the therapist/supervisor relationship. This approach encompasses all the different areas of the process of therapy, it is split into seven different focus points which are: Focus on the client meaning that the therapist takes into consideration how the client is within therapy by using phenomenology which is to notice body language,

composure, tone of voice or how the client may feel about the therapist. The next focus point is on the therapeutic intervention which turns the spotlight to how the therapist conducts therapy; this would be things like what therapeutic approach is used predominantly within practice and why that might be? This point also looks into if the therapist is being congruent with themselves for e.g. are there any questions that the therapist may be holding back and why that might be? This part is focused on motive checking. The next focus would be on the relationship between client and therapist, at this point the therapist would be invited to be creative in exploring the therapeutic relationship and take an outsider view on it, and this would work by getting the therapist to ask themselves questions such as if the client and therapist were stuck in a lift together how would they each react/behave or are there any points in therapy where there might be transference occurring. The next focus is on the therapist's process which is about awareness and what is happening for the therapist within practice. This could be things such as what are the feelings of the therapist towards the client, are there any negative aspects? Other questions may be more phenomenological such as does the therapist's body language match what is being said. The next point focuses on the relationship between therapist and supervisor, this would focus on aspects such as if the therapist feels they can share what they truly feel with the supervisor. At this point the therapist may realise they feel a lot of empathy for the client and may regard the client better once receiving supervision. The next point would focus on how the supervisor is processing everything this could be things such as placing the supervisor in the therapist's shoes in order to determine how the supervisor might react if the client in question was their own, this would help the supervisor help the therapist in the therapeutic relationship. The final point would look at other influences within the therapeutic process such as governing bodies that the therapist may be aligned

with e.g. BACP, Or more personal impacts such as people within the therapists personal life that may influence them (Living Therapy, 2019).

The supervision session began by introducing the client case to the supervisor. The client is a 29 year old female who is having issues with alcohol as well as depression and anxiety. The client has a family who are supportive; however the client feels that they are affecting their family negatively due to increased alcohol intake and issues with their depression and anxiety. The counsellor explains the approach used within the session which was the person centred approach, the supervisor asked why this approach was used to which the counsellor explained that the approach was used so as to help build the therapeutic relationship and to show the client the core conditions in order to convey empathy and understanding. The supervisor drew focus on the client and asked about how the client was within therapy. The counsellor explained that the client came into the room smiling however the counsellor felt that the client may have been nervous due to body language which was fidgety. The counsellor then went into how when in session the client held their hands against their elbows at the beginning of the session and when talking the client seemed muddled in their speech as if they couldn't collect their thoughts. The counsellor then went on to explore the themes of the session which were mostly to do with the clients issues with depression and anxiety. The counsellor then went on to explained that an open question was asked which was "in terms of depression and anxiety which do you feel you would like to focus on first. The counsellor then said that the client wanted to focus on the anxiety as it was leading them to over think about things. The supervisor asked why the particular question was asked to which the counsellor said to gain insight so as to have a starting point for the client to work through. The supervisor then went on to ask if

the counsellor felt this benefitted the client. The counsellor felt that the question benefitted the client and the therapist which in turn helped the therapeutic process. The supervisor then drew attention to how the therapeutic relationship was going; the supervisor suggested looking at the relationship as if the counsellor was a fly on the wall. The supervisor then asked the question as a fly how do you perceive the relationship in the room. The counsellor had to think for a minute then began to describe that it looked like there were two nervous people in the room both looking for a positive outcome, the counsellor then explained that as the session went on the people in the room became less tense in body language and began to be more comfortable. The supervisor then asked how the fly perceives the dialogue within the relationship. The counsellor explained that they felt that at the beginning of the session there were long pauses between what the counsellor was saying and the client responding, however as the session went along the responses seemed more relaxed in tone of voice. The supervisor then asked if there were any issues with transference within the session to which the therapist felt there were no issues in this area. The supervisor then drew focus on the therapists experience in therapy asking the question how you felt the session went as a whole. The counsellor responded by saying that they felt that in the beginning they felt very nervous and were afraid they would focus too much on using the skills within the session rather than going with the process, however as the session went deeper the counsellor felt less inclined to check themselves and became more engrossed in the therapeutic relationship and being there for the client ensuring that they were being listened to. The supervisor then asked if the therapist felt that they had empathy for their client. The counsellor said that when the client went into how the anxiety was impacting their life the counsellor felt a lot of empathy due to the counsellors own struggles with anxiety. The supervisor enquired as to whether the therapist feels that they

would have less empathy if they didn't have issues with anxiety. The counsellor paused for thought and then went into how they feel they would probably be more inquisitive in terms of how the anxiety impacts the client in order to gain more of understanding. The supervisor then explored the physical feelings the therapist felt during the session. The counsellor explained that throughout the session the client described their anxiety as knotting pain in the stomach, when the client described this counsellor started to feel a pain in the shoulder blades which was where the counsellor would feel their anxiety, this made the counsellor feel more connected to the client. The supervisor then asked if the therapist felt that the approach they were using was the right approach for the client in relation to whether or not the client wanted a more directive approach. The counsellor explained that in the session there were moments where the counsellor felt that the client was stuck in terms of knowing what they wanted to do, however due to it being an early session the counsellor felt it was important to maintain a person centred approach in order to build on the therapeutic relationship before implementing any further therapeutic tools. The supervisor enquired as to if there were any issues the therapist had before seeing the client. The counsellor explained that due to the age gap between client and therapist the counsellor was afraid that the client may request a different therapist due to the counsellor being young which the client may perceive as inexperienced. The counsellor then explained that once the session went into more depth these fears went away. The supervisor felt that the approach used within the session was appropriate in building the therapeutic relationship; however the main concern is ensuring that the therapist tries to be more in the moment in relation to not focusing as much on ensuring the skills are there but rather the authenticity. The supervisor also thought it would be helpful to have relaxation and mindfulness techniques available to use especially when dealing with anxiety as mindfulness helps the body focus on

where there may be any tension in the body. The supervisor also felt it would be useful to have a notepad in case the client has quite a lot of issues so as to write the issues down briefly to provide focus. The supervisor also invited the therapist to reflect on how they feel the relationship between supervisor and therapist is going. In terms of supervision the relationship between therapist and supervisor is positive as the counsellor feels that they are being listened to. The supervisor has a depth of knowledge and experience and is also a practicing counsellor so is keeping up to date with legislation. Due to the supervisor having a wealth of knowledge and skills they are able to provide tools to use within therapy to help the client e.g. mindfulness. The supervisor also has professional background in substance misuse which is crucial within the organisation the counsellor works in. the counsellor feels that they are challenged by the supervisor in terms of motive checking that is reason behind why the counsellor may do certain things. The supervisor also challenges potential ethical dilemmas which helps the counsellor prepare if such dilemmas ever came to pass.

In conclusion Supervision can be seen to be a crucial part of the therapeutic process of which without supervision the counsellor would not be able to reflect upon sessions which does not leave room for challenge when there are potential ethical dilemmas. Supervision does not only focus on the sessions but also how the counsellor is within the sessions as well as if there are any personal issues the counsellor may be having which may impede their ability to conduct competent practice.

References

- BACP (2019) *Supervision Resources*. Available at: <https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/ethics-and-standards/ethical-framework-for-the-counselling-professions/supervision/> (Accessed: 30th May 2019).
- Living Therapy (2019) *The Seven Eyed Supervision Model*. Available at: <http://www.livingtherapy.co.uk/seven-eyed-model> (Accessed: 30th May 2019).