

Supervision

How supervision is used to develop understanding about clinical work and to enhance and protect the therapist's wellbeing

Angie Lewis, 25 November 2020

BACP Ethical Framework (2018), clause 73

- ‘Supervision is recommended to anyone working in roles that require regularly giving or receiving emotionally challenging communications, or engaging in relationally complex and challenging roles.’
- Key components in supervision (Creaner (2014) and Hawkins and Shohet (2012):
 - welfare of the client
 - professional development of the supervisee
 - advancing best practice to the client

This presentation will look at:

- A model of supervision called the 7-eyed model
- The strengths and limitations of supervision
- The skills and knowledge required to work in Bereavement Support for Children and Young People (CYP)

7-eyed Model of Supervision



7-eyed Model of Supervision

Mode 1: Focus on the client and their presentation

- Client's posture; appearance - whether smartly dressed or unkempt
- Notice client's tone of voice
- How do you think the client perceives you as therapist?

7-eyed Model of Supervision

Mode 2: Exploring interventions and strategies used by the supervisee

- If supervisee feels stuck, explore what else you would like to have done
- Focusing on the interventions you use, eg, if you ask your client a lot of questions, is that for your benefit or theirs?
- What do you hold back and why, who are you protecting?

7-eyed Model of Supervision

Mode 3: Focus on the client/therapist relationship

- Use metaphor and imagery - if you imagine you and the client are animals, eg, you are a cat and your client is a mouse, how do you interact with each other? The cat could be chasing the mouse or you might think your client wants to run away from you because he or she is scared
- Explore any transference and counter-transference that comes up in the relationship

7-eyed Model of Supervision

Mode 4: Focus on the supervisee

- Is there anything that the client is trying to tell you implicitly? (eg, 'please fix me')
- What are you trying to convey to the client implicitly? (eg, I need to you to like me')
- How is working with this client affecting you, what is the impact on you?

7-eyed Model of Supervision

Mode 5: Focus on the supervisory relationship

These are the sort of questions that help you recognise parallel process:

- How am I similar to my client?
- What am I holding back from my supervisor?
- How do I regard my client in the sessions immediately after supervision?

7-eyed Model of Supervision

Mode 6: Focus on the supervisor and their own process

Feelings in the supervisor that may or may not resonate with the supervisee when working with their client, for example:

- the supervisor may have a feeling of sadness, however this may not have anything to do with the client, it might be their own sadness, something that belongs in their own past and has nothing to do with the therapeutic relationship.

7-eyed Model of Supervision

Mode 7: Focus on wider context

Elements of the wider context influencing the client/therapist/supervisor relationship:

- The organisation we work for, eg, CRUSE
- Regulating bodies we belong to (BACP, ICS)
- Our ethnicity, gender, culture, style of attachment

Strengths and Limitations of Supervision

Good supervision is a collaborative process characterised by:

- psychological safety, mutual respect, challenge, transparency

Creaner (2014) cites Barnett et al (2007)'s profile of an ethical supervisor and what a therapist can reasonably expect them to provide:

- Provide supervision only within their areas of expertise and competence
- Work from a specific model of supervision
- Maintain ethical boundaries and avoid dual relationships
- Provide clear and regular feedback and evaluation of the therapist's competence
- Supervise honestly and with integrity

Strengths and Limitations of Supervision

Compassion fatigue & Blind spots

The British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies defines:

- **Compassion** as the feeling of empathy for another's suffering and the desire to do something to alleviate that suffering.
- **Compassion Fatigue** as the gradual diminishing ability to feel empathy towards a client over time due to repeated demands.
- **Blind spots:** The supervisor needs to be able to challenge the supervisee in relation to any blind spots, eg, the need to rescue the client, make it better for them.

Strengths & Limitations of Supervision

Authenticity and Working Beyond your Competence

Authenticity

Cooper et al (2013) and Chouliara (2020) emphasise the need for authenticity within the supervisory relationship:

- The more authentic and present the supervisor can be in the supervisory dyad, the more congruent and present the supervisee can become
- Supervisor's authenticity provides a model for the therapist's practice

Working beyond your competence

Part of the supervisor's role is to check how the supervisee is managing difficult or challenging clients and to decide whether they are working beyond their competence. This may include:

- Clients with deep trauma
- Clients who are/have been registered sex offenders
- Clients with PTSD
- Clients who may be misusing alcohol or substances

Strengths & Limitations of Supervision

Non-disclosure; Power dynamic in the supervisory dyad

Harmful, negative supervision

Non-disclosure:

- if I disclose this, the supervisor will think badly of me/may think I'm incompetent/may report me
- certain issues may be avoided such as touch and spirituality as therapists may find them difficult to discuss in supervision

Power dynamic in the supervisory dyad

Proctor (2014) states that equality within the supervisory relationship is limited by:

- Supervisor's perception of their own power
- Supervisee's personal history of power and powerlessness
- Supervisee's 'power-within', their sense of self or locus of evaluation

**Skills and knowledge required to work in
Bereavement Support for Children and Young People (CYP)**
Gillick competence test

Children under 16 years:

- Can consent if they have sufficient understanding and intelligence to fully understand what is involved in any proposed therapeutic or support work.
- If a child passes the Gillick test, he or she is considered 'Gillick competent' to consent to therapy or support.

Skills and knowledge required to work in Bereavement Support for Children and Young People (CYP) Age-Group Requirements

The BACP (2018) and Hitchcock (2020) outline some of the considerations that need to be taken into account working with this age group:

- using age-appropriate language and interventions
- ability to use creative resources and methods to help CYP to express, reflect upon and make sense of their experiences.
- awareness of safeguarding issues
- communicating with parents, school staff
- parental consent - could be difficult issue if one parent consents to bereavement support and the other parent doesn't
- ability to offer cultural-specific bereavement support, eg, signposting to religious organisations

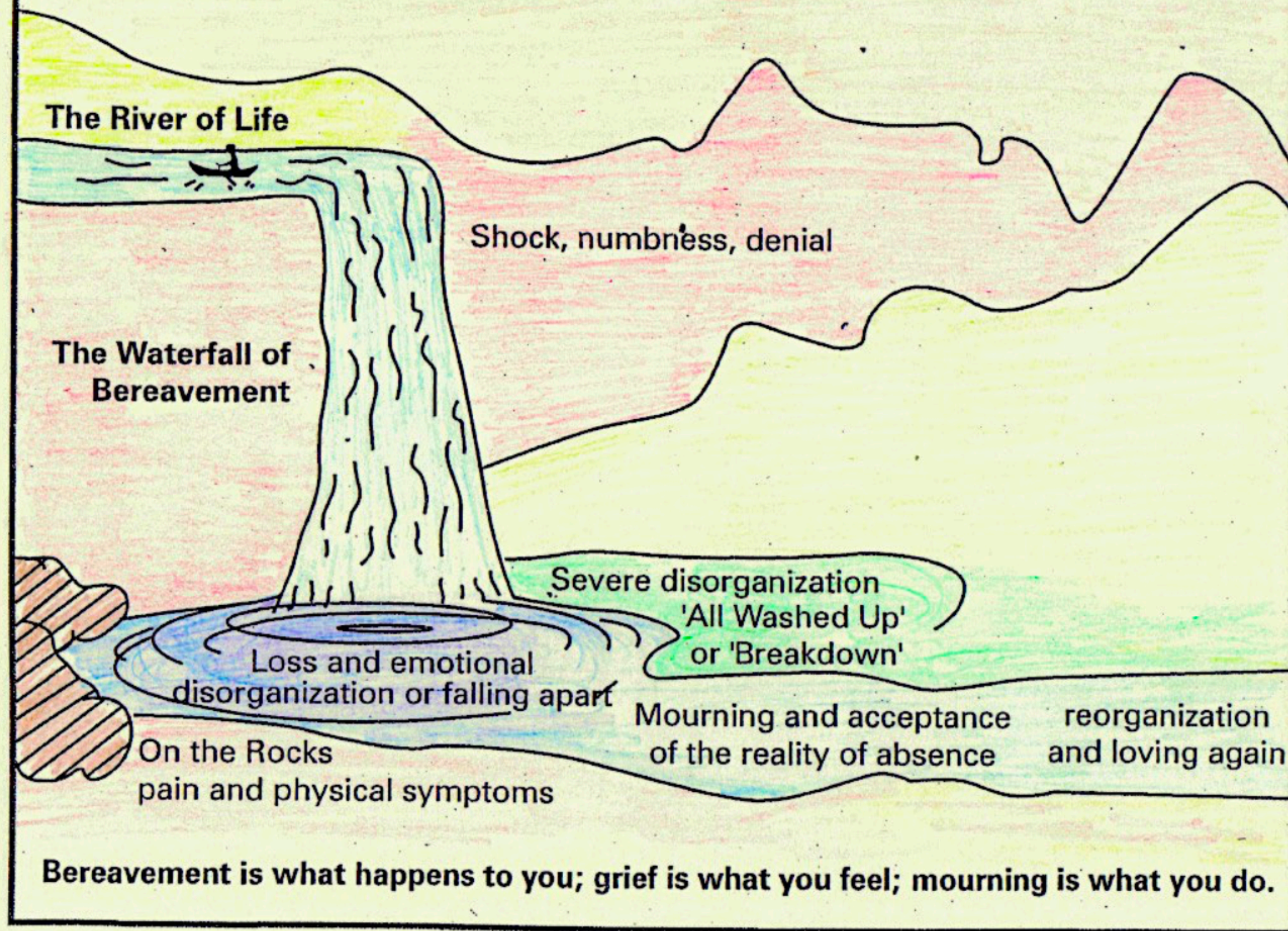
Skills and knowledge required to work in Bereavement Support for Children and Young People (CYP) Safeguarding

CRUSE Bereavement Care's Child Protection Procedures (Sept 2019):

Awareness of possible indicators of abuse:

- Physical abuse - physiological (unexplained marks or injury, bruising) or behavioural (fear of family, aggression, depression, anxiety, withdrawal)
- Emotional or coercive abuse - change in appetite, withdrawal, anxiety, neurotic behaviour (rocking)
- Physical neglect - hunger, prescribed meds not being administered, unkempt appearance
- Sexual abuse - physiological and behavioural aspects
- Discriminatory abuse - fearfulness and anxiety, loss of self esteem, expressions of anger or frustration

THE WHIRLPOOL OF GRIEF



Skills and knowledge required to work in Bereavement Support for Children and Young People (CYP) Age-appropriate Intervention

River of Life represents our life after bereavement:

Working with CYP ask them to imagine:

- Who is in that boat with you? How does it feel to be in that boat?
- What does it feel like tumbling over the edge, what happens when the boat breaks up?
- When you reach a sand bank, ask them to imagine being on a desert island
- What sort of island it it? What kind of flowers or trees does it have?
- Who would be with you on the island?

In summary

The most fundamental elements of any effective supervision:

- Trust to promote openness and disclosure.
- Being fully present and congruent to help balance the power dynamic in the relationship.
- Promoting all the core conditions to enhance the supervisee's ability to accept and integrate their own vulnerability, so that the client, in turn, can learn to accept theirs.

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