

University Of Wales

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Practicum

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**Counselling practice Portfolio (Three
Elements)**

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This essay will be reflecting on a client that was taken to supervision and exploring all the factors around supervision and what it is like for a trainee counsellor. Throughout this essay it will be exploring different aspects of supervision and looking at it from different aspects, to start with it will be addressing different supervision theories that can be used and comparing them, it will then be looking at the awareness of diversity issues and ethical consideration. The essay will then move onto to supervision and looking into it and what support that is on offer in the placement which is The Exchange this will be explored, the essay will then move onto reflecting upon the client that was taken to supervision, what was the issue, how was it dealt with it and what type of supervision was this, As it was group supervision it will be looking into how this could have been different by taking it to personal supervision and what were the benefits of taking it to group supervision. From reflecting on this client it will be addressing how useful it was for the counsellor taking this client to supervision and what the outcome was for the counsellor personally.

When it comes to supervision many different supervision models can be used by supervisors but two of the main models that are a good place to start are the seven-eyed model of supervision by Peter Hawkins and Robin Shohet 2012, this model is about looking into the different views and interactions of the client, supervise and supervisor, this model looks at the different aspects of the counselling sessions with the client and therapist and brings that into perspective for the therapist in supervisor making them acknowledge blind spots. In their book 'Supervision in the helping profession', they describe supervision as

“ Supervision is a joint endeavour in which a practitioner with the help of a supervisor, attends to their clients, themselves as part of their client practitioner relationship and the wider systemic context, and by so doing improves the quality

of their work transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves, their practice and the wider profession.' (Hawkins et al, 2012, p60)

As stated in by Hawkin (2012) The seven steps of this model to why it is called the seven eyed model includes the first mode which is Focus on the client and what and how they present, the second mode which is exploring the interventions that the therapist may have used, the third mode review the relationship between therapist and client, forth mode this is where the full spotlight is on the supervise exploring their feelings unconscious and conscious, fifth mode concentrates on the relationship between the supervisor and supervise, the sixth mode looks into the internal process of the supervisor and the last mode, the seventh mode this explores all context of all that is involved. By having these different steps exploring the client, supervisor and supervise it is stated by Hawkin 'It is our view that good supervision of in-depth work with clients must insole all seven process, although not necessarily in every session.' (Hawkin, 2012).

The other main model is the Cyclical model of supervision by Val Wosket and Steve Page 2015, this model only has five stages compared to the seven that the seven eyed model. In this model the five different stages include the first stage being the contract, this includes exploring the boundaries, for both supervisor and supervise and the relationship, the second stage is the focus, the third stage is space, the fourth stage is the bridge and the last stage is the review, however, stated by Wosket (2014) even though the stages state 1 to 5 they do not have to be followed in this order they can be used in any order in which the supervisor feels best for the session and the supervise. By a supervisor using either one of these models there will be some issues that may arise and can be different for each supervise, not all supervisors fit and are right for the supervise, some of these issues raised by Wosket (2014) include the environment where the supervisor works in,

the requirements of organisations that they are both aligned with, could be the personal therapy that either the supervisor or supervisee is undertaking and it could be personal issues that either one may be experiencing at that moment in time, if one or more of these issues are brought up and are affecting supervision then this will not work and both involved will not be getting everything they need and deserve out of this working relationship. If this was to arise then attention in the sessions to these issues will need to be addressed to work through together.

Whilst training to become a counsellor there will be a lot of first's for each client, the first client with anxiety first client with depression, first with body dysmorphia, first with an abusive relationship and a first for different cultures. These will all be experienced during training but the most important part is how it's all dealt with by the counsellor, every person in this world is different and for a while, this wasn't acknowledged until the Equality Act 2010 came into place, this act is to protect discrimination against age, race, pregnancy and maternity, sex, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnership. Put into place by the Equality Act 2010 their acts includes "The basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services and public functions, premises, work, education, associations and transport" (Equality Act, 2010). Any counsellor out there will have to be aligned within a professional body, if this is with the BACP they have an ethical framework 2016 that whoever is aligned with them will have to follow and respect these, within these guidelines here are a couple that it states that they

"Expects members to Respect our clients as people by providing services that:
avoid unfairly discriminating against clients or colleagues and work with issues of

identity in open-minded ways that respect the client's autonomy and be sensitive to whether this is viewed as inducible or relational autonomy." BACP, 2016)

As stated by the BACP this denser matter with what type of counselling or type of theory you use this will always be paramount in the counselling and therapeutic relationship, The type of counselling theory that is used in my placement when training is person-centred as this is what I am currently training in, there have been times where different theories have been used such as Gestalt and EFT this all depends on what works best for the client and what they feel will work best for them.

The placement that I am undertaking my training at is called The Exchange and is a counselling organisation for young people, as a trainee counsellor there they offer group supervision every month for free and every week after your counselling day which for me is a Friday, we have a peer support group to talk about our day and if we had any concerns this is to be voiced here. As well as having these two supports from the placement I also have to have my supervision to ensure I am getting my hours to be aligned with the BACP, as well as supervision ongoing support for myself personally is also very important so I have therapy every other week to support myself and own personal issues, this is so important as without this the therapeutic relationship could be injured if I were to bring personal issues into the sessions.

Reflecting onto a client that I took to supervision this was taken to my group supervision with my placement, this client that I took I was a few sessions in with them and from the start, they had been honest about their past with abuse in the family from a young age and how they are still in that environment but the abuse is no longer there it stopped a few years back, this person was finding it very hard to forgive the family member for what went

on which has to lead to the feeling of bitterness and how it still affects them now, including their anger. This person stated they hated the way they looked, couldn't look in the mirror, would affect their education as they would skip class if they saw themselves in a mirror or had to step out of their comfort zone, this person also had issues with relationships and couldn't trust people with how they were feeling. When taking this client to group supervision I wasn't sure what way to go next as this person had also stated in the past that they tried to harm themselves, I didn't want to let this person down and felt just wanted to help them.

Which reflecting I got quite attached to this situation and was going into rescue mode, which from the help of my supervisor and peers in supervision they helped me realise this. These issues that I felt held me back from giving my best in the counselling session I realised I needed to take these feelings to personal therapy to work on why I was feeling that way. The seven eyes model was used by my supervisor, for me, I found this model very beneficial as it broke down the process and by looking at every aspect of the situation made me realise I was trying to be a rescuer for this client and found I was taking it home with me thinking about them. When I was in supervision it made me realise that I need to work on the fact of being a rescuer in some situations and that I can't fix everyone issues especially in the small amount of time of 5 sessions per client, My supervisor also gave me a tool that I can add to my bag and that was to draw a temperature gauge for anger and for the client to show where she was in different situations to help work out for them when they were angry and how to deal with it. If it wasn't from this group supervision I would not have had the different views off my peers and support off my supervisor compared to if I took this issue to personal supervision, that level of support would have been completely different, as stated by Hawkins their many advantages to group supervision and one of them was "Group supervision gains from the supervises receiving reflections, feedback,

sharing and inputs from their colleagues as well as the group supervisor.” (Hawkins, 2012). When looking back at this client to see what else I could have done in the situation I could have tried to use different techniques such as applying more boundaries for my self during the sessions and could have tried EFT. A counsellor having a toolbox full of techniques, interventions and theories are so important in becoming a good counsellor, as stated by Miller “Therapists having open minds and consistently improving their approach, with an increased variety of techniques, will help more clients due to their individuality and personalized needs.” (Miller, 2020). If this situation with a client was to arise again I feel that from the support I received from the supervisor and peers I will be well equipped to deal with this situation as I now have the tools and techniques in my tool bag.

To conclude from this essay it has become apparent that supervision is an important factor in becoming a good counsellor as without the support of supervision the standards of counselling and support for both client and counsellor would be lost and the outcomes would not be as positive as what it is with supervision, As seen from this reflective essay it gives an explanation about the two main types of supervision that are the most effective, its given detail about how important it is to have an awareness of ethical considerations and diversity within counselling and from personal experience of having group and individual supervision that there is a difference with the support you get from both and every counsellor should experience this during their work as a counsellor as it shows the different levels of support, Also from personal experience with the client I took to supervision it helped me gain more experience and knowledge about my self and my counselling work.

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