PSYCHOLOGICAL INSIGHT INTO THE FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION IN CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK

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ABSTRACT
The article consists of an introduction, middle and conclusions. The introduction presents the main theme of the functions of supervision not only clinical social work, but also in other professions. The statement is presented Kadushin`s model for supervision in clinical social work and its three functions. The emphasis is on psychological support for supervision in clinical social work. Discusses models for supervision in clinical social work in Europe and North America with good practical application. The conclusions are presented aspects and the importance of the practical application of supervision in clinical social work. Importance not only for the comfort of the clients treated in clinical social work but also to better themselves professionally implement clinical social workers and their emotional comfort. The article presents models and practices of supervision widely applicable in clinical social work.

Key words: support, counseling, quality, educational, administrative, client, model, relationship

INTRODUCTION
The functions of supervision. Examining the different functions of supervision throws up various questions and issues. These questions include asking 'in whose interest does supervision work?' Confusion also arises concerning notions such as 'mentoring', 'practice teaching' and 'clinical supervision' (5). Here we explore Alfred Kadushin's model of supervision and the insights it brings to these questions.

The immediate roots of what we have come to know as supervision in the human services lie in the development of social work and casework. We see this, for example, in the concern for the needs of clients; and the taking up of ideas and practices that owe much to the emergence of psychoanalysis. However, to make sense of

supervision it is necessary to look to the various forms of apprenticeship that have existed in different societies. In ancient China, Africa and Europe (feudal and otherwise), for example, there are numerous examples of people new to a craft or activity having to reveal their work to, and explore it with, masters or mistresses i.e. those recognized as skilled and wise. This process of being attached to an expert, of 'learning through doing' allows the novice to gain knowledge, skill and commitment. It also enables them to enter into a particular 'community of practice' such as tailoring or midwifery. By spending time with practitioners, by 'looking over their shoulders', taking part in the routines and practices associated with the trade or activity, and having them explore our work, we become full members of the community of practice.

Supervision can be found in the growth of charitable social agencies in Europe and North America during the nineteenth century. It involved the recruitment, organization and oversight of a large number of volunteers and,

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later, paid workers. The volunteers were commonly known as 'visitors'. Their task was to call on a small number of families to offer advice and support. The main concern was to foster self help, and the adoption of 'healthy' habits and behaviours. In addition, visitors were also often in a position to access limited funds via their agencies, although such monies were only given after a careful investigation of the family's circumstances. In other words, a decision had to be made as to whether they were 'deserving'.

The person assigning cases, organizing work and taking decisions on behalf of the agency was basically an 'overseer' – and hence the growing use of the term 'supervisor'. (In Latin super means 'over', and vidêre, 'to watch, or see' (7). As Petes has pointed out, traditionally, part of the overseer's job was to ensure that work was done well and to standard (7).

Also, the hierarchical position of the supervisor (or paid agent) was revealed:
While the 'paid agent' acted as supervisor to the volunteer visitor, the paid agent 'supervisor' was himself supervised by the district committee, which had ultimate authority for case decisions. The paid agent supervisor was then in a middle-management position, as is true of supervisors today – supervising the direct service worker but themselves under the authority of the agency administrators (5).

It is this hierarchical and managerial idea of supervision that tends to permeate much of the literature in social work.

Kadushin's model of supervision.

It is at this point that Alfred Kadushin's discussion of supervision in social work becomes helpful. He goes back to earlier commentators such as John Dawson (1926) who stated the functions of supervision in the following terms:
Administrative - the promotion and maintenance of good standards of work, co-ordination of practice with policies of administration, the assurance of an efficient and smooth-running office;
Educational - the educational development of each individual worker on the staff in a manner calculated to evoke her fully to realize her possibilities of usefulness;
Supportive – the maintenance of harmonious working relationships, the cultivation of esprit de corps.

Administration
Kadushin tightens up on Dawson's formulation and presents his understanding of the three elements in terms of the primary problem and the primary goal. In administrative supervision the primary problem is concerned with the correct, effective and appropriate implementation of agency policies and procedures. The primary goal is to ensure adherence to policy and procedure (5). The supervisor has been given authority by the agency to oversee the work of the supervisee. This carries the responsibility:
… both to ensure that agency policy is implemented – which implies a controlling function – and a parallel responsibility to enable supervisees to work to the best of their ability (1).

Education
In educational supervision the primary problem for Kadushin (5) is worker ignorance and/or ineptitude regarding the knowledge, attitude and skills required to do the job. The primary goal is to dispel ignorance and upgrade skill. The classic process involved with this task is to encourage reflection on, and exploration of the work. Supervisees may be helped to:
Understand the client better;
Become more aware of their own reactions and responses to the client;
Understand the dynamics of how they and their client are interacting;
Look at how they intervened and the consequences of their interventions;
Explore other ways of working with this an other similar client situations (4)

Support
In supportive supervision the primary problem is worker morale and job satisfaction. The primary goal is to improve morale and job satisfaction(5). Workers are seen as facing a variety of job-related stresses which, unless they have help to deal with them, could seriously affect their work and lead to a less than satisfactory service to clients. For the worker there is ultimately the problem of 'burnout'.

Kadushin argues that the other two forms of supervision focus on instrumental needs, whereas supportive supervision is concerned with expressive needs.

The supervisor seeks to prevent the development of potentially stressful situations, removes the worker from stress, reduces stress impinging on

the worker, and helps her adjust to stress. The supervisor is available and approachable, communicates confidence in the worker, provides perspective, excuses failure when appropriate, sanctions and shares responsibility for different decisions, provides opportunities for independent functioning and for probable success in task achievement (5).

Supervision and the emergence of psychoanalysis and counselling

Some of the confusion around supposed differences arises from the roots of consultant, non-managerial or professional supervision. Its development has, arguably, owed much to the emergence of psychoanalysis and counselling. In the case of the former, practice, supervision, teaching and personal analysis have formed the central elements of training since the 1920s. If we consider current approaches to training social workers, teachers or informal and community educators, then we can see similar elements. For example, with regard to this programme there are various 'teaching' moments (perhaps most obviously seen in the form of lectures, study materials, seminars and study groups); self-assessment (as against self-analysis), practice (whether in the form of our day-to-day work, any placements we undertake, and our engagement with other students) and supervision (1).

Student or trainee supervision can be contrasted with practitioner supervision. The latter is addressed to established workers. Some writers, claim that there are many differences between the focus in supervision of students or trainees, and that of established practitioners. The former are more likely to be concerned with issues of technique, boundary, understanding the material clients' bring, and dealing with personal feelings of anxiety. The experienced practitioner is more likely to be concerned with teasing out relationship dynamics, choosing intervention options and perhaps dealing with feelings of frustration and boredom towards clients (2). This is something that you may like to think about. My own experience of supervision is that the degree of difference in these respects can easily be overstated. Experienced practitioners may have a greater repertoire of experiences and models to draw upon, and may have grown jaded. But the supervisor who fails to attend to the extent to which experienced practitioners face new situations and different clients, can overlook the chance of practitioners feeling like novices again (3). Similarly, those labelled as

student workers may well be experiencing frustration and boredom toward their clients!

However, the demand for 'practitioner supervision' in counselling can be seen as a key factor in the spread of non-managerial or consultant supervision. By the early 1950s, with the 'coming of age' of the profession, there was a substantial growth in the proportion of practitioners with significant experience, many of whom valued, having a fellow practitioner to act in a consultative capacity (7). This linking of consultant supervision with the development of counselling is significant. The form that supervision takes may well mirror or adopt ways of working from the host profession. Thus, a counsellor supervisor may draw heavily on the theory and practice of a counselling model and apply this to supervision.

A psycho-dynamic supervisor would interpret the material being presented and use an awareness of the relationship dynamics between himself and the counsellor in supervision as a means of supervising. A client-centred supervisor would be concerned to communicate the core conditions of acceptance, respect and genuiness to her supervisee. (7)

We now can begin to appreciate why many of the arguments and questions around supervision can become confusing. Contrasts between managerial and consultant supervision, for example, inevitably focus on the managerial element. Yet those involved may well be drawing on very different models and sets of understandings. The debate may be between a psycho-dynamic and a task orientation.

This drawing upon from psycho-dynamic and counselling can also add to the common slippage from supervision into therapy or 'working with'. We have already noted problems around this area with regard to the management of staff – and it applies with great force in consultant supervision.

The first thing to say here is that it may well be appropriate for us as supervisors to change the focus of the session from 'supervision' to 'counselling'. The situation may demand it – and we have what may be described as a 'counselling interlude'. However, there are two particular dangers: we may slip into a different framework without being aware of it; and, further, even where the shift is conscious, it may not be

appropriate. That is to say we should have held our boundaries as supervisors.

There can also be confusion between shifting our frame of reference and drawing upon insights from a particular field. It may be that to properly approach a question that has arisen in workers' practice we need to attend to their emotional and psychological lives. Here we may draw upon, for example, psycho-dynamic insights, to work with supervisees to enhance the quality of their interactions with clients. This does not entail moving beyond a supervisor's frame of reference. Our focus remains on the enhancement of practice. However, where our primary concern is no longer the work, but the well-being of the supervisee, this is a different situation. When the worker becomes the primary focus (rather than the work), I think there is a significant shift – we move into the realm of counselling or 'working with' proper. We should not make the mistake of describing this as supervision.

Responsibilities to clients, other professionals and the community

In other words, supervision focuses on the work of the practitioner.

Clients at the centre. It is easy to fall into the trap of viewing changes in the individual supervisee as the central goal of the process. It is not difficult to understand how this happens. As we have seen, in supervision we draw on understandings and ways of working that we have developed in other settings. The most obvious of these are 'counselling' and other one-to-one relationships. Yet, as Kadushin puts it in relation to managerial supervision, the supervisor's ultimate objective is to deliver to agency clients the best possible service, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in accordance with agency policies and procedures. The same applies to consultant or non-managerial supervision:
The responsibility of the supervisor to protect the interests of the client emerges as a central component of trainee supervision. Attention to client welfare is equally important… in practitioner supervision (7)

The British Association of Counselling makes the point unambiguously: 'The primary purpose of supervision is to protect the best interests of the client' (4). Change in supervisees is fostered for a purpose – the enhancement of the service they provide for their clients. However, in considering this we also have to take into account what may be in the interests of the community as a whole.

Accountability to the wider community. In the well known phrase of C. Wright Mills – there are considerable dangers in seeing private troubles merely as troubles – and not as public issues (and vice versa). There is always the danger that we slip past structure to focus on isolated situations, a tendency for problems to be considered as the problems of individuals (6). As practitioners and supervisors we have to balance the needs and wishes of the individual with considerations of those of others in the community. There will be times when what may be identified as being in the interest of the client seriously affects the rights and lives of others. The tensions can be quickly seen if we examine the four basic or first order principles identified by Sarah Banks as central to social work:
1. Respect for and promotion of individuals' rights to self determination.
2. Promotion of welfare or well-being
3. Equality
4. Distributive justice.

As supervisors we may have to remind supervisees of the requirement to consider the extent to which a course of action they are pursuing leads to human flourishing, promotes equality or whether they are 'distributing public resources (whether they be counselling, care or money) according to certain criteria based variously on rights, dessert and need' (1)? In a similar fashion we have to reflect on our actions as supervisors.

Being part of a community of practice. There are likely to be endless arguments about considerations such as these – especially when they are thought about in relation to specific cases and situations. We may have our individual ideas, but as members of a community of practice we need also to consider the views of others. That is to say we need to appeal to collective wisdom. Within professional groupings a key port of call here is a code of ethics (1).

I want to suggest here that while managerial supervisors, as members of the profession or community of practice, have a duty to consider the appropriate standards and codes, the main way that they do this is via the policies and practices of the agency. On the other hand, while non-managerial or consultant supervisors may be

contracted by the supervisee (or the College in the case of student workers), their authority comes from their membership of the community of practice (2). Their concern for the service offered to clients is fed through a set of shared understandings concerning what constitutes 'good practice'. In other words, at certain points in the supervision process they may be required to represent that constitutes acceptable behaviour or good practice (4).

CONCLUSIONS

In this discussion particular questions have been highlighted. Some of the main points developed are as follows:

1. The central focus of supervision is the quality of practice offered by the supervisee to clients.

2. Supervision can be seen as having three aspects: administration (normative); education (formative) and support (restorative).

3. Supervisors' authority is derived from their positions in agencies and/or the appropriate community of practice (profession).

4. There are particular issues arising from the hierarchical position of supervisors.

5. In some forms of supervision direct observation of practice is a major obstacle to the exploration of practice; in others an aid.

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