

Supervision for Supervisors in CAFCASS

Background Materials

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Independent Social Work Matters Ltd.

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About this Course

This programme is designed for staff supervising front line practitioners. It aims to provide participants with the skills required to deliver effective supervision with a focus on tools and methods for supervising complex practice.

There will be an expectation that participants complete tasks between Parts 1 & 2 of the training and actively reflect on their supervisory practice.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this training, participants will have been given the opportunity to:

- Understand the importance and key elements of effective supervision in children's social care and recognize the impact of supervision on outcomes for children.
- Identify the four key functions of supervision and be clear about the stakeholders in supervision.
- Understand the influence of supervision histories both on the supervisor and the supervisee.
- Consider the role of supervision throughout the stages of professional development from newly qualified to experienced practitioner.
- Understand how to promote reflection and the effective analysis of information throughout the assessment and planning process and how to record the decision-making process.
- Use supervision to enable supervisees to critically appraise their practice.
- Be aware of how to positively manage the impact of child care work, enabling emotions to be used to enrich thinking and support safe practice.
- Use tools to help staff evaluate and analyse information to inform decision making and risk management.

About the trainer

Rebecca Carr-Hopkins is an experienced social work practitioner, manager and trainer with over thirty years' experience of working with children and families. She currently works independently and offers a full range of assessment services to Children's Services and the Courts. Rebecca delivers training courses on a wide range of subjects. She is authorized to train others in a set of tools to assess attachment relationships including the Adult Attachment Interview (DMM-AAI), School-aged Assessment of Attachment (SAA) and the Infant CARE-Index (ICI). Rebecca is also an AVIGUK accredited Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) guider, supervisor and trainer.

Part 1

Day One

- 10.00 Introduction to the course
- 10.30 *Group Exercise:* What is supervision? Why is it important?
- 11.30 **Break**
Individual Exercise: 4 Functions Exercise
- 12.00 *Group Exercise:* Reflection on 4 Functions
Introduction to the 4x4x4 model of supervision
- 12.30 Stakeholders exercise: the consequences of good/poor supervision
Supervision & Outcomes. What style helps?
- 13.00 **Lunch**
- 13.45 The Supervisory Relationship
Group Exercise: What Factors Affect the Supervisory Relationship?
- 15.00 **Break**
Individual Exercise: Supervision History exercise
- 15.30 Paired exercise. Supervision History.
- 16.00 *Group Exercise:* the Authoritative Supervisor activity
- 16.30 **Close**

Day Two

- 10.00 Overnight Reflections & Questions
- 10.30 *Paired exercise:* Transitions
Stages of Development, Competence & Role, Identity & Self
- 11.15 **Break**
Individual Exercise: Reflection on self & supervisees
- 11.45 *Group Exercise:* Reflection on Transitions exercise
Paired Exercise: The Supervision Agreement
- 12.15 Reflection
Group Exercise: Why Reflect?
- 13.00 **Lunch**
- 13.45 The 4 stages of the Supervision Cycle
Group Exercise: What questions would promote critical reflection?
Practising the Supervision Cycle & Recording the conversation
- 15.00 **Break**
- 15.30 Working with Emotions
The Impact of Anxiety
Group Exercise: The Red & Green Cycles
Break task set up
- 16.30 **Close**

Part 2

Follow up day

Introduction to the Day

Group Exercise: Reflections and analysis of break task

Break

Group Exercise: Reflections and analysis of break task continued

Next Steps & Course Evaluation

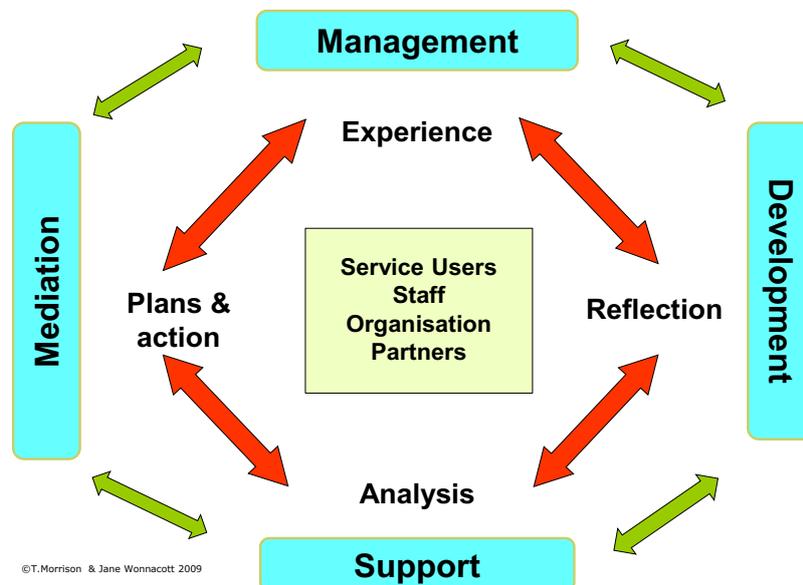
Close

About this training

The materials are based on the model of supervision developed by Tony Morrison (Morrison, 2005) as well as more recent developments of the model (Wonnacott, 2012 and Wonnacott, 2013).

This model of supervision has become colloquially known as the 4x4x4 model since it recognises the interrelationship between the four key functions of supervision, the impact of the quality of supervision on the four key stakeholders, and the use of the four stages of the supervision cycle to deliver reflective supervision. The importance of this is that the model moves beyond a static focus on functions, to a dynamic integrated approach that recognises the central importance of effective supervision across the whole system.

The 4x4x4 Model



Definition of supervision

This course uses the following definition of supervision.

Supervision is a process by which one worker is given responsibility by the organisation to work with another worker(s) in order to meet certain organisational professional and personal objectives which together promote the best outcomes for service users. These objectives and functions are:

1. competent accountable performance (*managerial function*)
2. continuing professional development (*developmental/formative function*)
3. personal support (*supportive/restorative function*)
4. engaging the individual with the organisation (*mediation function*)

Harries, M. (1987) in Morrison, T. (2005) *Staff Supervision in Social Care*. Brighton: Pavilion

Supervision Functions

The following lists are not exhaustive, but they may help supervisors to consider how far their supervisory practice delivers across all four functions of supervision.

The Management Function Checklist

The aims of the management function are to ensure:

- the overall quality of the worker's performance is measured
- agency policies and procedures are understood and followed
- the worker understands his/her role and responsibilities
- the worker is clear as to the limits and use of his/her personal agency and statutory authority
- the purpose of the supervision is clear
- work is reviewed regularly in accordance with agency and legal requirements
- action plans are formulated and carried out within the context of agency functions and statutory responsibilities
- the basis of decisions and professional judgements are clear to the supervisor and the worker and made explicitly in agency records
- records are maintained according to agency policies
- the worker knows when the supervisor expects to be consulted
- the worker is given an appropriate workload
- time-management expectations of the worker are clear and checked
- the worker acts as a positive member of the team
- the worker understands the functions of other agencies and relates appropriately to them
- the worker receives regular formal appraisal.

The Development Function Checklist

The aims of this function are to assist the development of:

- the worker's professional competence
- an appreciation and assessment of the worker's theoretical base, skills, knowledge and individual contribution to the agency
- an understanding of the worker's value base in relation to race, gender etc., and its impact on his/her work
- an understanding of the worker's preferred learning style, and blocks to learning
- an assessment of the worker's training and development needs and how they can be met
- the worker's capacity to set professional goals
- access to professional consultation in areas outside the supervisor's knowledge/experience
- the worker's ability to reflect on his/her work and interaction with users, colleagues and other agencies
- regular and constructive feedback to the worker on all aspects of their performance
- the worker's ability to generalise learning and to increase his/her commitment and capacity to ongoing professional development
- the worker's capacity for self-appraisal, and the ability to learn constructively from significant experiences or difficulties
- a relationship in which both supervisor and supervisee provides constructive feedback from which both can learn from mistakes.

The Support Function Checklist

The aims of the support function are:

- to validate the worker both as a professional and as a person
- to clarify the boundaries between support, counselling and consultation, and to clarify the limits of confidentiality in supervision
- to create a safe climate for the worker to look at his/her practice and its impact on him/her as a person
- debrief the worker and give the worker permission to talk about feelings, especially fear, anger, sadness, repulsion or helplessness
- help the worker to explore emotional blocks to the work
- to explore issues about discrimination, in a safe setting
- to support workers who are subject to any form of abuse, either from users or from colleagues, whether this be physical, psychological or discriminatory
- to monitor the overall health and emotional functioning of the worker, especially with regard to the effects of stress
- to help the worker reflect on difficulties in colleague relationships to assist the worker in resolving conflict

- to clarify when the worker should be advised to seek external counselling, and its relationship with the monitoring of performance.

The Mediation Function Checklist

The aims of the mediation function are to:

- negotiate & clarify the team's remit
- brief management about resource deficits or implications
- allocate resources in the most efficient way
- represent staff needs to higher management
- initiate, clarify or contribute to policy formulation
- consult and brief staff about organisational developments or information
- mediate or advocate between workers, within the team, or other parts of the agency, or with outside agencies
- represent or accompany staff in work with other agencies
- involve staff in decision-making
- deal sensitively, but clearly, with complaints about staff
- assist and coach staff, where appropriate, through the complaints procedures.

Thinking about the stakeholders

The model identifies four key stakeholders:

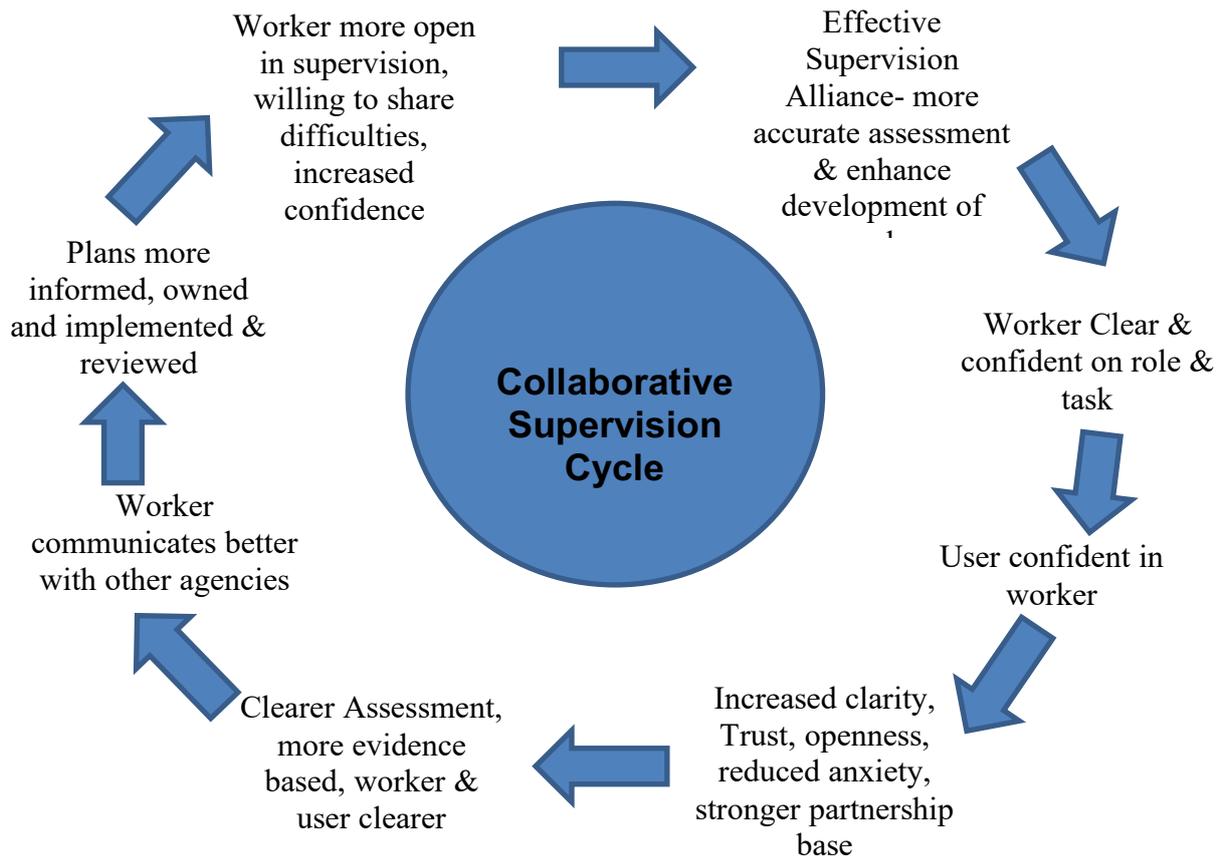
- service users
- staff
- the organisation
- multi-agency partners

If you consider the impact of good or poor supervision on the stakeholders relevant within your own environment, you are likely to find that the impact of supervision goes way beyond the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee.

What difference can supervision make?

Thinking about the impact on stakeholders begins to make us think about the potential for supervision making a difference to the organisation, supervisee, partners and service users. However, although our practice experience and common sense will help us to understand this, there is a limited empirical research base underpinning our understanding of the link between supervision and outcomes (particularly for service users). The inter-relationship between supervision and practice and the difference that the style of supervision can make can be seen in the collaborative supervision cycle.

Collaborative Supervision Cycle



What does this mean for supervisory style?

This points to the need for a supervisory style which achieves an appropriate balance between responsiveness to the impact of the work on the worker, and supporting them in often challenging working environments with a focus on the needs of the service user. This has been referred to as an authoritative style of supervision and has been developed from work that identified the style of parenting which was most likely to lead to good outcomes for children:

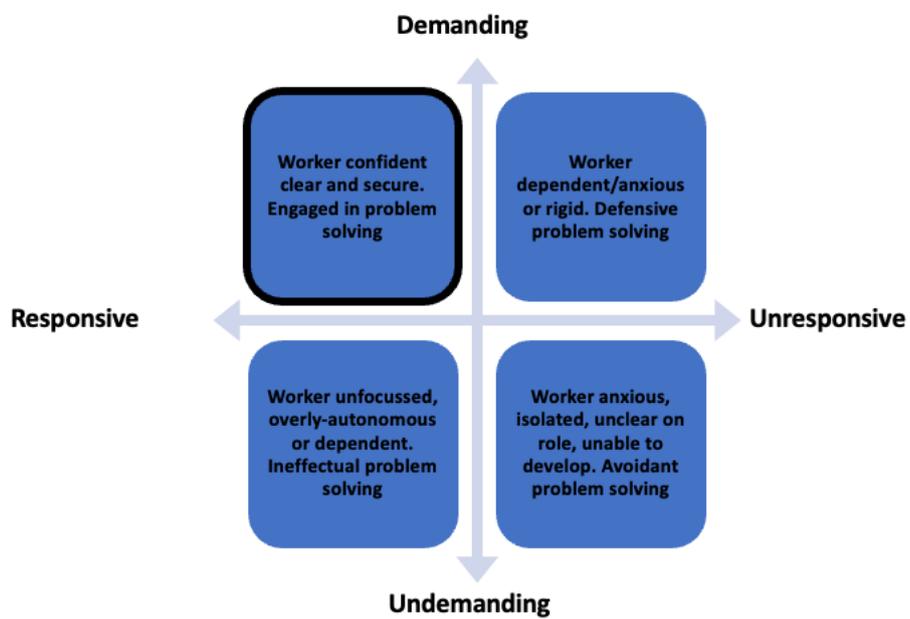
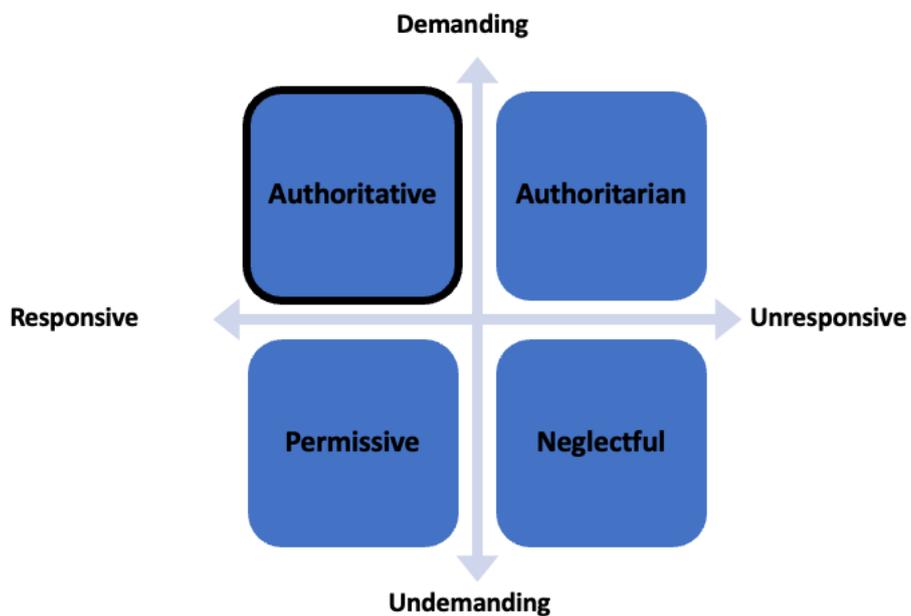
Authoritative Parenting: is warm but firm. Discipline is rational, with discussion and appropriate explanation. Associated with children who are warm, affectionate, altruistic, responsible, self assured, creative, curious and successful in school

Authoritarian Parenting: establishes obedience and conformity. Discipline is punitive and absolute without discussion. Independence is not encouraged and development as an individual is not supported. Children are more dependent, passive, less socially adept, less self assured and less intellectually curious

Indulgent (Permissive) Parenting: is accepting of most behaviour. Discipline is passive and there are few demands on the child. Control is seen as an infringement of the child's right to freedom. Children are less mature, more irresponsible, conforming to peers and lacking in leadership

Indifferent (Neglectful) Parenting: in its extreme is neglectful. Life and discipline are centred on adult needs. The child's activities are not routinely supervised. Children are impulsive and show delinquent behavior.

Supervisory styles



Developing the Relationship

The role of the supervision history and supervision agreement

Developing the supervisory relationship will involve understanding the many factors that might affect the way in which it progresses. It is therefore important to find ways to begin to understand these from the start before any misunderstandings or problems arise.

It might help to first begin to try and identify all the factors that might affect supervision.

Amongst others these may include:

- the past experience of the supervisor and supervisee in respect of supervision
- the 'social location' of both parties i.e. gender, race, culture, sexuality, etc.
- the current experience of the supervisee i.e. are they new to the team/newly qualified, etc.?
- departmental expectations and supervisory culture
- workload pressures
- the learning style of the supervisor and supervisee.

Learning styles

Knowing your supervisee's learning style will help you tailor supervision to meet their needs.

General Descriptions

Activists: Activists involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy the here and now and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded, not sceptical, as this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. Their philosophy is: "I'll try anything once". They dash in where angels fear to tread. They tend to throw caution to the wind. Their days are filled with activity. They revel in short-term crisis fire fighting. They tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement from one activity has died down they are busy looking for the next. They tend to thrive on the challenge of new experiences are bored with implementation and longer term consolidation. They are gregarious people constantly involving themselves with others, but in doing so they hog the limelight. They are the life and soul of the party and seek to centre all activities around themselves.

Reflectors: Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observed them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others and prefer to chew it over thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts so they tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious, to leave no stone unturned. "Look before you leap", "Sleep on it". They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They enjoy observing other people in action. They listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant,

unruffled air about them. Then they act it is as part of a wide picture which includes the past as well as the present and others' observations as well as their own.

Theorists: Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think problems through in a vertical, step-by-step logical way. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who won't rest easy until things are tidy and fit into their rational scheme. They like to analyse and synthesise. They are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories, models and systems thinking. Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic. "If it's logical it's good". Questions they frequently asked are: "Does it make sense?" "How does this fit with that?" "What are the basic assumptions?" They tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. Their approach to problems is consistently logical. This is their mental set and they rigidly reject anything that doesn't fit with it. They prefer to maximise certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgements, lateral thinking and anything flippant.

Pragmatists: Pragmatists are keen on trying our ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. They are the sort of people who return from management courses brimming with new ideas they want to try out in practice. They like to get on with things and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them, they don't like "beating around the bush" and tend to be impatient with ruminating and open ended discussions. They are essentially practical, down-to-earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems. They respond to problems and opportunities "as a challenge". Their philosophy is: "There is always a better way" and "If it works it's good".

The Supervision History

The supervision history is a very useful tool in developing the supervisory relationship. It acknowledges that the supervisee's experience of supervision will be affected by previous experiences and demonstrates that the supervisor is interested in them as a person as well as in what they are bringing to the current relationship. The supervisor's responses and style will be similarly affected by their own history and taking time to consider this is an important component of preparing to be a supervisor.

This is a useful tool and supervisees should be encouraged to engage with it during the development of the supervision agreement.

Reflecting on the supervisor's supervision history

Given that the way supervisors themselves have been supervised is a major factor in how they undertake supervision, it is essential that supervisors take time to reflect on their own supervision history. This exercise will help supervisors to review their supervisory role models. For example, where supervisors have had negative experiences, which they are seeking not to replicate, this can result in over-compensation, which may not always be appropriate and a supervisor trying not to replicate bullying behaviour might be reluctant to use authority at all.

The following task is designed help supervisors to reflect on the influence of previous experiences of supervision and on their current approach as a supervisor.

1. Using the form overleaf, write out a list of previous supervisors and/or managers.
2. Beside each one, make a brief note about their impact on you in terms of whether, and how they helped or hindered your development. Use the two columns to distinguish between helpful and hindering responses. The same supervisor may have responded in both helpful and unhelpful ways. Focus on those who had greater impact, and consider what it was about their style, focus, understanding, knowledge, skills, values, and use of authority, empathy or any other factors that affected you. Consider whether factors of gender, race etc. were significant.
3. Now reflect on how you responded to them: what responses did their approach generate in you? Our responses to positive and negative experiences of supervision are different. For example, where supervision is poor or undermining we may arrive late, be guarded about certain types of information, and reluctant to expose ourselves or take risks.
4. Finally, analyse the degree to which your approach as a supervisor now is influenced by any or some of these experiences. What good models are you seeking to apply? What bad models are you seeking to avoid?

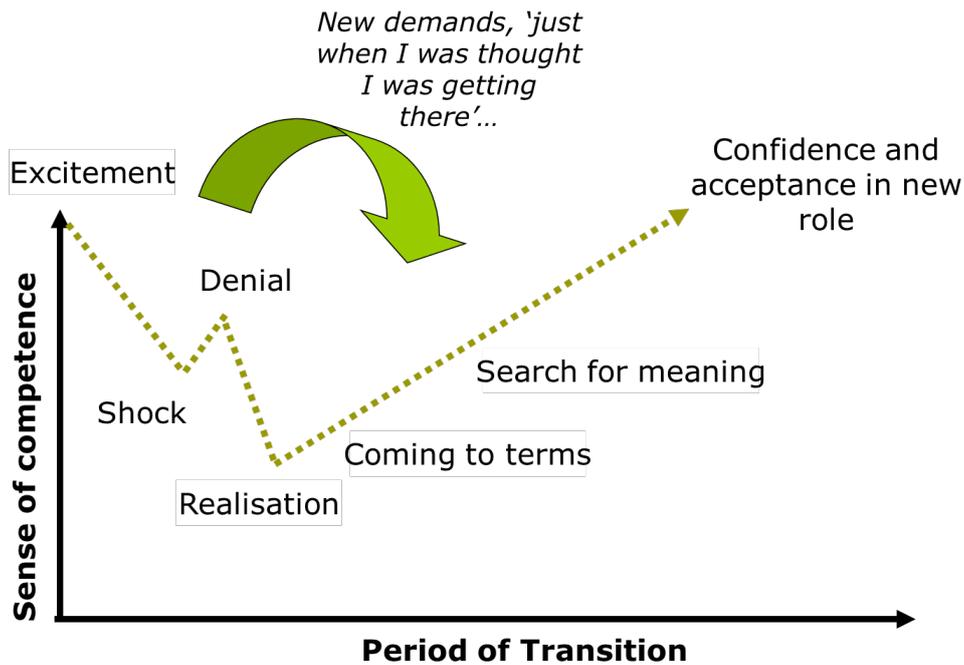
My Supervision History

Previous supervisor	What helped?	What hindered	Response at the time	Influence on me now

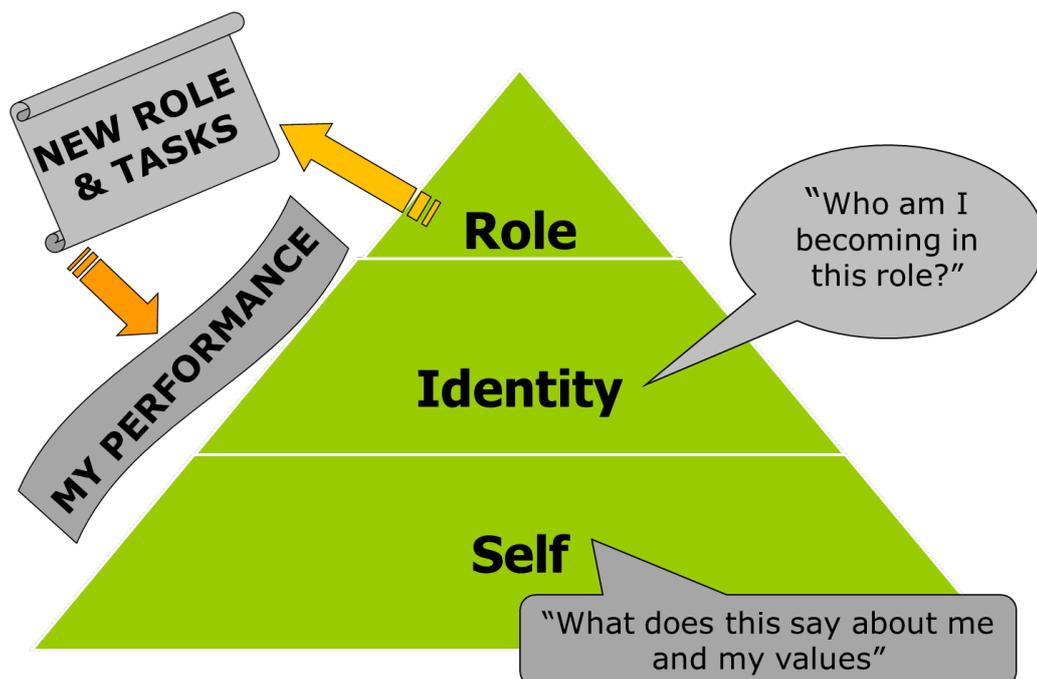
Exercise devised by Tony Morrison.

Working with Transition

One factor that might be affecting the supervisee and the supervisor is change or transition. The team may be undergoing a period of change, supervisor may be new to the role and equally the supervisee might either be newly qualified or new to the team. In these circumstances, understanding and working with the transition process will be an important aspect of supervision and the following models can help supervisors and supervisees work positively with change.



©T.Morrison/J.Wonnacott, 2009



Stages of Professional Development

Self-centred 'CHILDHOOD'	User-centred 'ADOLESCENT'	Process-centred 'ADULT'	Process in context-centred 'MATURE'
Dependent on supervision	Fluctuates between autonomy and dependence	Increased professional confidence	Professional maturity
Anxious about being evaluated	Over-confident vs Overwhelmed	Sees wider context in which 'needs' exist	Can articulate professional knowledge and insight to others
Diffidence about making professional judgements	Less simplistic-engages with complexity	Can generalise and reflect on learning and skills	Able to supervise and/or teach others
Over focus on content	Tailors interventions to users	Supervision more collaborative and challenging	Increased self-awareness of strengths and gaps
SUPERVISORY NEEDS			
Directing Structure Information Teaching Constructive and regular feedback Encouragement	Mentoring Freedom to test out Space to learn from mistakes Reflection on realities and constraints	Coaching Freedom to initiate Further professional development To be stretched and challenged Danger-boredom	Delegating To be given wider responsibility To have experience utilised Less frequent supervision ?? External supervision??

The competence matrix

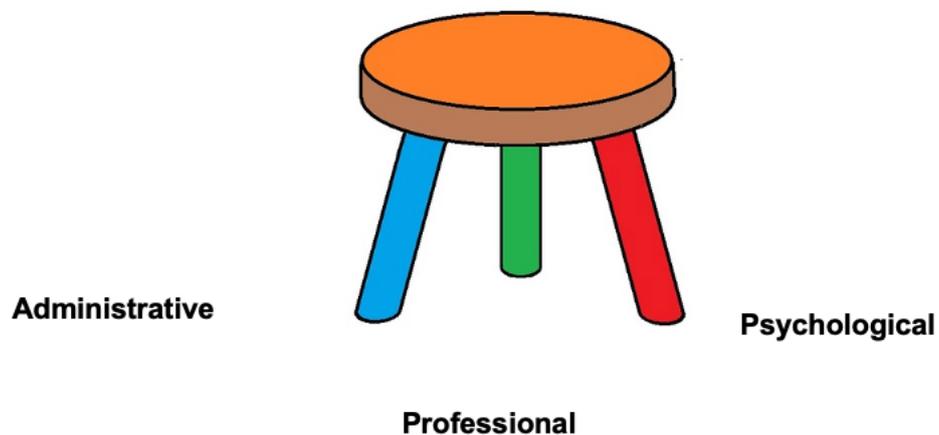
<p>Conscious competence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What I <i>know</i> I know and can do • Clear transferable skills • Can be transferred to others <p>Firm Ground Zone</p>	<p>Conscious incompetence</p> <p>Areas of openly acknowledged gaps or weaknesses</p> <p>Challenge Zone</p>
<p>Unconscious competence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What I know or can do without being conscious of how I know it • Hard to explain to others • May be lost in conditions of turbulence or disruption <p>Development Zone</p>	<p>Unconscious incompetence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things I am unaware I don't know • Others may see gaps or weaknesses but I don't • Roots of performance concerns <p>Danger Zone</p>

Why is a supervisory agreement important?

Because it:

- reflects the seriousness of the activity
- positively models partnership behaviour
- clarifies roles and responsibilities
- clarifies accountability and authority
- is a basis for reviewing the relationship
- is a benchmark for auditing the quality of supervision.

Three elements of the supervisory agreement



Developing the agreement – a 5 stage approach

1. Establishing the mandate
2. Engaging with the supervisee
3. Acknowledging ambivalence
4. Creating the agreement
5. Reviewing the agreement



SUPERVISORY WORKING ALLIANCE

The value of a written agreement lies less in the paperwork than in the process by which it has been established

Sample Supervision Agreement

Agreement between and

.....

This agreement is designed to be a working tool to underpin the development and maintenance of an effective supervisory relationship. The agreement should be:

- Completed within the first two months of a new supervisory relationship being established.
- Reviewed at least once a year.

The expectations of the organisation regarding supervision are set out within the Supervision Policy, are non-negotiable and provide the framework for this agreement.

The effectiveness of the supervision agreement depends upon the quality of conversation between the supervisor and supervisee; it is very important that this document provides a foundation for discussion. It should be completed at the conclusion of an exploration of the issues and not become a form filling exercise.

Practical Arrangements

Frequency of one to one supervision:

Duration:

Venue:

Arrangements if either party needs to cancel:

Availability of the supervisor for ad hoc discussions between sessions will be:

Content

The process for agreeing the agenda will be:

Preparation for supervision will include:

Priority areas to be discussed regularly:

Making Supervision Work

What does the supervisee bring to this relationship (e.g. previous work experience, experience of being supervised, preferred learning style)?

What are the supervisee's expectations of the supervisor?

What are the supervisor's expectations of the supervisee?

Are there any factors to acknowledge as relevant to the development of the supervisory relationship (e.g. race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, disability)?

Agreed "permissions" e.g. It is OK for the supervisor not to know all the answers/for the supervisee to say they are stuck, etc.

How will we recognise when the supervisory relationship is not working effectively?

What methods will be used to resolve any difficulties in working together?

Recording

Case discussions and decisions made in formal supervision or during ad hoc discussions will be recorded on the service user's record. Responsibility for this lies with:

The content of one-to-one supervision sessions regarding the development and support needs of the supervisee will be recorded, agreed by both parties and placed in the supervisee's file. Responsibility for this lies with:

Any other relevant issues for this agreement?

Date Agreement due to be reviewed:

Signatures:

Supervisor:

Supervisee:

Date:

The Supervision Cycle and Reflective Supervision

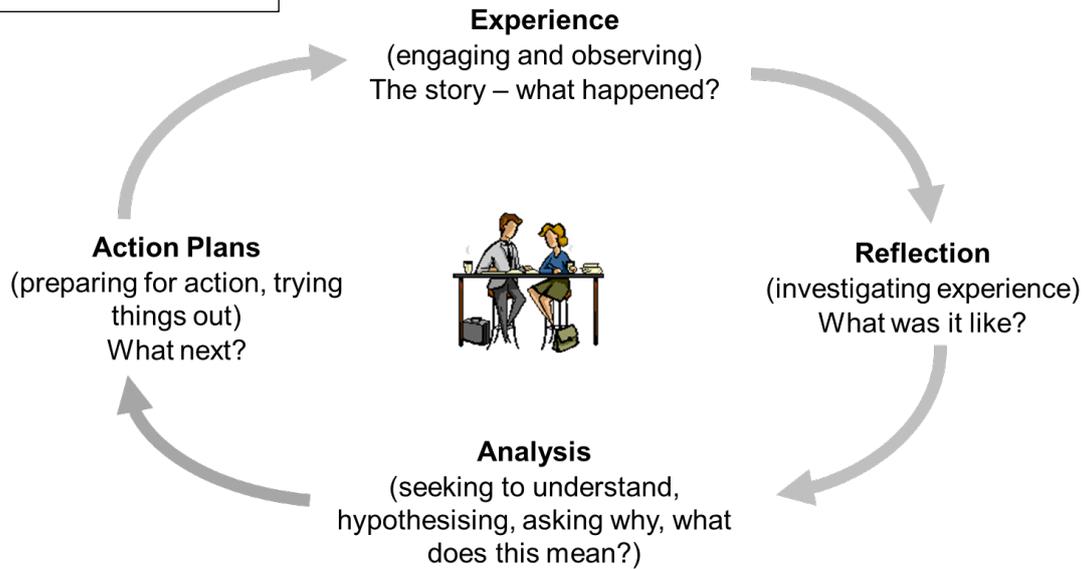
This is a central aspect of the 4x4x4 model and the means by which supervisors can promote reflective supervision and the critical thinking required for effective practice.

Gillian Ruch's work on Relationship Based Practice (2000) is useful to help unpack what is meant by reflection and the benefits of different levels.

The levels don't happen in sequence; at any one time we will be moving back and forth between the levels depending on the issue being discussed or the situation we are in. The key is for practitioners to use all four levels so critical reflection becomes part and parcel of the repertoire of social workers and supervisors alike.

<p>Technical/surface Pragmatic. Compares performance with knowledge of what should be done.</p>	Compliance	Normative. What should be done?	Organisation
<p>Practical The practitioner's self-evaluation, insight and learning. Moving from 'reflection on action' to 'reflection in action'.</p>	Problem solving	Descriptive, pragmatic. What is happening? How can it be solved?	Intervention
<p>Process Awareness of the impact of unconscious processes and intuitive responses on professional judgement.</p>	Self awareness	Interpretive. Why do things happen? What is my part in it?	Individual
<p>Critical Questioning the influence of power relationships and assumptions underpinning our view of the world.</p>	Transforming	Critical. Why are we doing this? What larger purpose do we serve?	Society

The supervision cycle

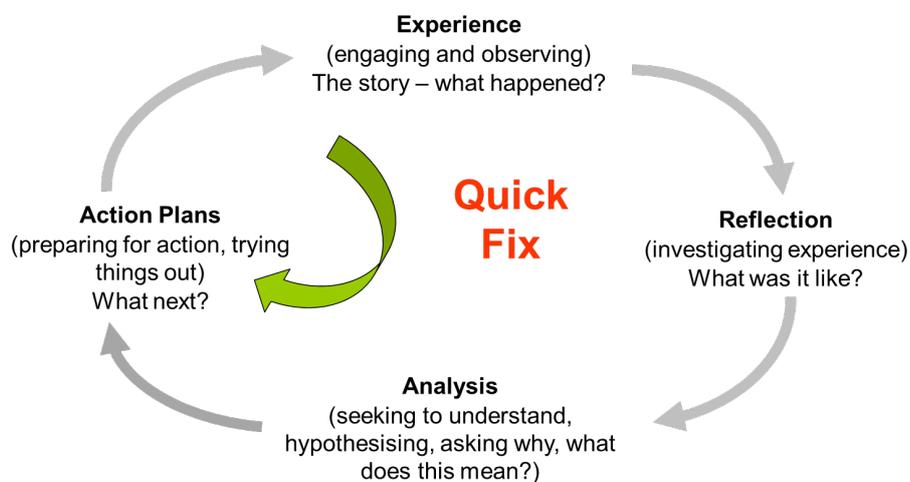


Morrison, 2005

Reflective supervision is therefore the process by which the supervisor engages with the supervisee to:

- explore their practice and the factors that are influencing their responses (including emotional impact, power relations and social context)
- develop a shared understanding of the knowledge base informing their analysis of any given situation and the limitations of their thinking
- use this understanding to inform next steps.

Reflective supervision therefore engages with feelings, thoughts and actions and will automatically be promoted by effective use of the whole supervision cycle rather than the alternative short cut or 'quick fix'.



Morrison, 2005

Using the Supervision Cycle (Adapted from Morrison, (2005) *Staff Supervision in Social Care*)

Below are some *examples* of questions that could be used to facilitate discussion about a family situation at each stage of the cycle. The list is not exhaustive, as each case is unique.

Focusing on Experience

Here the emphasis is on facilitating an accurate and detailed recall of events since a partial description of the situation will undermine the rest of the cycle. We can be assisted to recall more than we think we know if the right questions are asked.

- How do you see your role in this case?
- How do you think others (professionals and family) see your role?
- What did you expect to happen when you visited?
- What happened?
- What reactions did you notice to what you said/did?
- What surprised or puzzled you?
- What struck you? What were the key moments?
- What words, non-verbal communication, smells, sounds, images struck you?
- What did you notice about yourself/the service user/your co-worker?
- What was hard to observe?
- What went according to plan? What didn't happen?
- What changes or choices did you make?
- What did you say, notice or do immediately after the event?

These questions can be enhanced by using other methods, such as video or audio recording, observation, live supervision, learning diaries, incident logs or process recordings. Genograms might also be helpful at this point.

Focusing on Reflection

Here the emphasis is on eliciting feelings, partly because they bring out further information, or may reveal our underlying attitudes and assumptions. They may also give clues to other personal factors complicating the worker's experience. Reflection helps the worker make links between the current situation and his/her prior experiences, skills and knowledge.

- What feelings did you bring into the session?
- What is your gut feeling about this family?
- Describe the range of feelings you had in the session.
- What did the session/your feelings/this family remind you of?
- What previous work, processes, skills, knowledge are relevant here?
- Where have you encountered similar processes?
- What assumptions might you be making? For example assumptions related to race, age, gender, sexuality.
- Does this situation challenge your feelings about acceptable/unacceptable behaviour?
- Where and when did you feel most or least comfortable?

- What feelings were you left with – does this always happen after seeing these kinds of cases?
- What metaphor or analogy would you describe your experiences of working with this situation?
- What was left unfinished?

Other methods to assist reflection include role play, sculpting, art work to draw out feelings and perceptions, further reflection on genograms and eco-maps to draw out context, roles and patterns.

Focusing on Analysis

Here the emphasis is on analysis, probing the meanings that the supervisee and the service user attribute to the situation, consideration of other explanations, the identification of what is known or understood, and the areas for further assessment.

- Taking account of your feelings – what does this tell us about what the service user may be feeling in this situation?
- How do you explain or understand what happened in the session?
- How would the session have been different if: the family had been female/black/disabled, etc.?
- Did power relations shift during the session – if so how and why?
- What went well, or not well, and why?
- How far did this session confirm or challenge your previous understanding or hypothesis?
- What new information emerged?
- What theory, training, research, policy, values might help you make sense of what happened in this session?
- How else might you have managed the session?
- What are the current needs, risks, strengths in this situation?
- What is unknown?
- What conclusions are you drawing from this work so far?
- How do you now define your role in this situation?
- How would the service user define your role?
- What expectations does your agency have of your role?

Other methods to assist analysis include sharing articles, references, case presentations, external speakers, attending training as a team, group supervision and action learning sets.

Focusing on Action Plans

The focus here is on translating the analysis into planning, preparation and action. This includes the identification of outcomes and success criteria as well as consideration of potential complications and contingency plans.

- In light of the reflection and analysis we have done, what is your overall summary of where things are at, and what needs to be done next?

- Can you identify what you are, and what you are not responsible for in managing this case?
- What training, supervisory, co-work and support needs have been raised for you?
- What information needs to be obtained from others before proceeding?
- What are your aims in the next phase of work?
- What is urgent and essential?
- What would be desirable?
- What is negotiable and what is non-negotiable in this situation?
- What would be a successful outcome from your perspective/family/other key agencies?
- What might be your strategy for the next contact with the family and other professionals?
- What are the possible best or worst responses from the family?
- What contingency plans do you need – what is the bottom line?
- Where do you feel more or less confident?
- How can you prepare for the next steps – mental rehearsal, flip chart map, reading, co-worker discussion?
- What can I do that would be helpful at this stage?
- When does feedback and debriefing need to take place?
- Are there any safety issues for you/others?
- What can be done to minimise any dangers?

Other methods may include role play, co-work planning, case planning, contacting other agencies involved.

Sample Recording template

Case Synopsis/Update

1. Why are we involved with this situation?

2. Update on the situation? Have we made any progress?

Reflection on Experience

What's the situation that has prompted the need for learning/discussion?

What's it like working with this situation?

Reflection on Feelings *Investigating the experience.*

How does the worker feel about the situation? How do the service users feel about the worker and the situation they need help with? What assumptions have they made? Where do those assumptions come from?

Reflection on Thoughts *Understanding the experience.*

Has an exploration of the experience and feelings helped us understand what's happening for the service user or lies at the root of the problem? What new meaning can we make of the situation? What are the alternative explanations? Why is this the best explanation? Can theory help us understand better? Does this learning help us understand any other service users' situations?

What Next? What are we trying to achieve? What are the next steps to achieving change? How will the actions progress the plan and improve outcomes?

Working with emotions in supervision

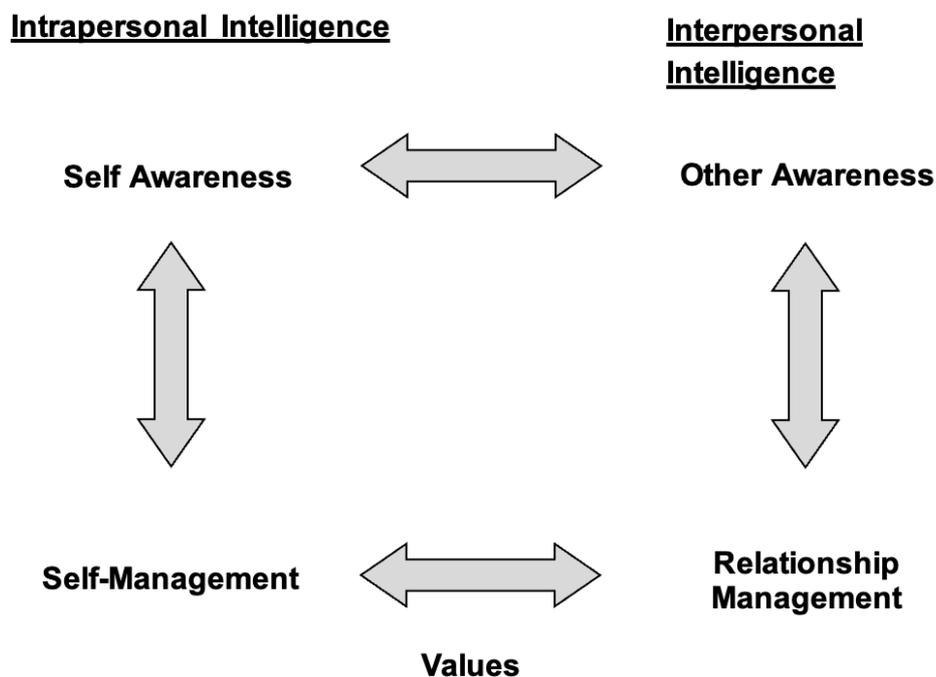
Why are emotions important ?

Emotions promote safe practice because:

- emotion is critical to judgement
- leaders in high performing companies have twice as much emotional intelligence in those as low performing companies (Goleman, 1998)
- 'A system that seeks to ignore emotions is in danger of leaving them to have an unknown and possibly harmful impact on the work, and is also neglecting a rich source of data to help us understand what is going on' (Munro, 2008).

What does emotionally intelligent practice and supervision look like?

The Emotional Intelligence Paradigm (Morrison 2006)



Anxiety and supervision

Anxiety and uncertainty are common emotions in health and social care settings. How to work positively with these emotions in situations of high stress is a crucial task for the supervisor.

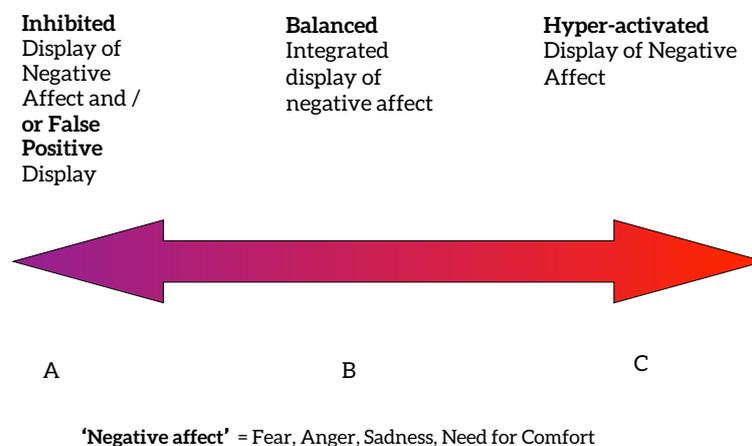
Knowing your supervisee's emotional coping style will help you tailor supervision to meet their needs:

Attachment is a lifelong inter-personal strategy to respond to threat/danger that reflects an intra-personal strategy for processing information (Crittenden 2000)

Attachment is triggered by anxiety, threat and overload. Attachment driven responses seek:

- To find safety in the face of danger
- Comfort in the face of distress
- Closeness in the face of isolation
- Predictability in the face of chaos
- Role/job containment in the face of overload

Different Emotional Coping Styles



Type B characteristics:

- Mature help seeking behaviour
- Sensitive attuned
- Can integrate cognitive and affective information
- Mind-minded
- Flexible
- Expect protection and support
- Can take the perspective of others without losing their own
- Feel confident to approach

Type A characteristics:

- Undemanding
- Workaholic
- Understand relationships intellectually but lack emotional engagement
- May suffer physical symptoms from suppression of emotions e.g. tension headache
- Inhibit things that will displease others
- Take the perspective of others and inhibit own perspective

Type C characteristics:

- Displays of negative emotion-anger, distress...
- Get over-involved with situations or service users
- Anxious, moody
- Demanding of supervisors time and attention
- Pre-occupation with the self. It's all about me!!
- Exaggerate negative affect to change behaviour of others and get caught up in own feelings
- Don't see the perspective of others

Key messages for supervisors

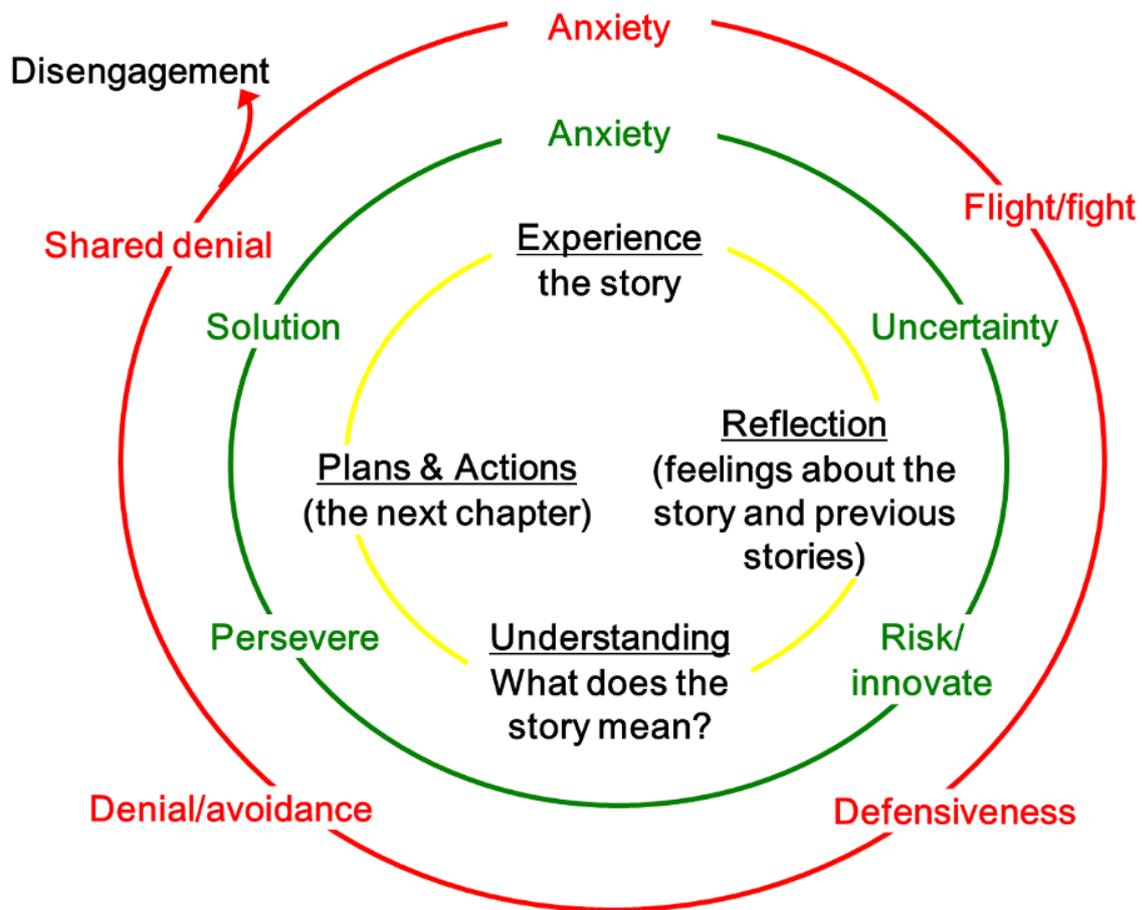
- The supervisory relationship can evoke attachment strategies, particularly under conditions of stress
- Using an attachment-informed approach will enhance the worker's insight and help them take responsibility for themselves...
- Self-awareness is a key to effective practice. Remember the importance of trying to be a 'B' supervisor and practitioner.
- Attachment-informed supervision is a way of working that pays as much attention to process as to content
- What happens in supervision is usually reflected in the dynamics that occur between workers and service users.
- Attachment-informed supervision does not need to take any more time than 'poor' or un-attuned supervision. Baim & Morrison (2011)

A model for working with anxiety in supervision

Often referred to as the 'red' and 'green' cycles, this model has been extensively used to train supervisors in both social care and health settings across England and Wales (Morrison and Wonnacott, 2009). The 'red cycle' refers to a compromised environment where anxieties are not managed and uncertainties are not tolerated. The result of this situation is that the organisation or individual is in permanent 'fight-flight' mode; practice becomes defensive and risk-averse, and there may be conflict with partner organisations. In the contrasting 'green' cycle there is a collaborative environment where anxieties and uncertainties are acknowledged, any mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning, new ideas are encouraged, diversity is valued and there is cooperation and persistence in searching for shared solutions.

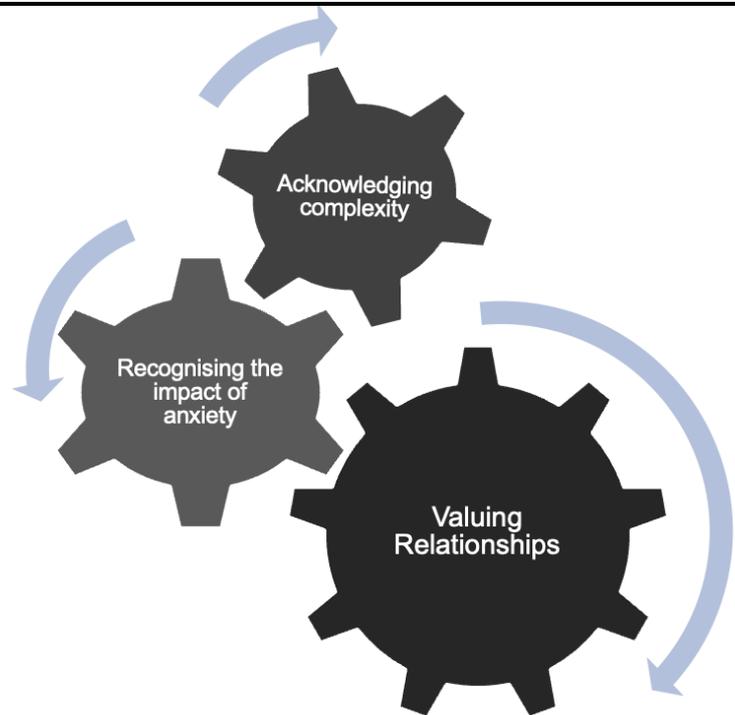
Organisations, teams and individuals may all be operating in either of these two cycles, and may move back and forth between them at various times. What is important here in relation to supervision is that where 'red cycle' behaviour is predominant, the effectiveness of the process will be compromised. The highly anxious, defensive practitioner is unlikely to be able to articulate a comprehensive account of her work in supervision or to be honest about her feelings, or open to new thoughts, ideas and ways of working.

The pressures on supervisors are immense. Highly turbulent organisational environments, in which change and restructure seem to be (and certainly feel) continuous, should provoke questions about the role of supervisors (beyond the 'mediation' function) where red organisational behaviours predominate. Red and green cycles are a way of helping supervisors think about and reflect upon their own behaviours and roles within such environments.



Adapted by Tony Morrison from Vince & Martin (1993)

Supervising complex practice



Supervising within the field of health and social care is almost certainly going to involve working with many layers of complexity and solving apparently intractable problems. One model which can help in thinking about the style of supervision that can help is that developed by Grint, (2005). Grint identified three types of problems:

- **Critical** - requires immediate intervention, needs an answer. Requires use of hierarchical power
- **Tame** - encountered regularly, so have organisational procedures. Requires use of legitimate power
- **Wicked** - wider than team's responsibility. Solutions would be transformational so require a collaborative and inclusive approach

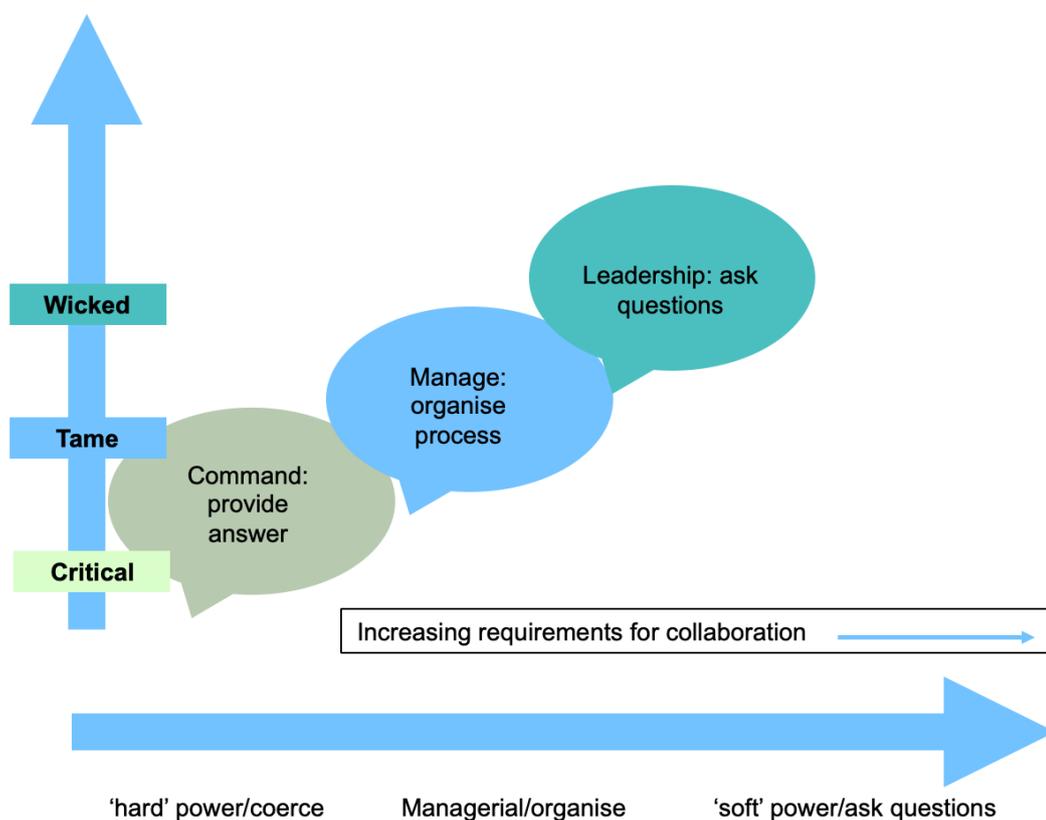
What does a wicked problem look like?

- *You don't understand the problem until you have developed a solution.* The problem is ill-structured, an evolving set of interlocking issues and constraints.
- *Wicked problems have no stopping rule.* Since there is no definitive 'The Problem', there is also no definitive 'The Solution'.
- *Solutions to wicked problems are not right or wrong, simply 'better', 'worse', 'good enough', or 'not good enough'.*
- *Every wicked problem is essentially unique and novel.* There are so many factors and conditions, all embedded in a dynamic social context, that no two wicked problems are alike, and the solutions to them will always be custom designed and fitted.
- *Every solution to a wicked problem is a 'one-shot operation', every attempt has consequences.*
- *Wicked problems have no given alternative solutions.* There may be no solutions, or there may be a host of potential solutions that are devised, and another host that are never even thought of.
- Wicked problems emerging from socially complex situations require groups of people who care about the problem enough to work together to solve it. Problem wickedness

demands tools and methods which create *shared understanding* and *shared commitment*.

Most organisations will have administrative, procedural and management processes to respond to problems of the TAME variety. These structure and channel safeguarding and other issues as they are referred and/or recognised, and worked on. Occasionally, a safeguarding issue may require a critical response – an immediate hierarchical direction. Supervision however, provides overview and a space to reflect on the work the practitioner is engaged with, and the context (organisational, personal, emotional, social, economic, political) in which that work takes place. Supervisory style therefore is much more in the nature of questioning, collaboration, learning – an approach as we can see from the diagram below more suited to wicked problems.

A typology of problems, power and authority (Grint. K, 2005)



It is not hard to see that the majority of problems faced day in, day out by practitioners in health and social care are of the wicked variety. As we can see from the diagram above, wicked problems need collaboration and leadership rather than process and procedure.

Factors affecting practice

There is increasing recognition that a number of factors are likely to impact on practice. An overview of research into social work decision making noted:

Research into social work decision-making has identified a number of factors that introduce bias into assessments and skew the process. These include human behavioural

factors that are known to reduce objectivity; tendencies to favour some types of evidence over others; excessive and stressful workloads that leave little time for reflection; limited and diminishing resources that restrict the options for action; and organisational contexts. In addition the quality of relationships with colleagues in other organisations will be a major factor in how well the whole system can collaborate in order to meet the needs of the service user.

Human behavioural factors

Evidence shows that workers are liable to focus on a restricted range of evidence and use one of several techniques for discounting evidence that challenges their ideas.

- Avoidance.
- Forgetting.
- Rejecting.
- Reinterpreting. (Munro, 2008)

Certain types of information come to mind much more readily than others and so are more 'available' to the professional when reasoning about a family. The kind of details people think of most easily are:

- vivid not dull
- concrete not abstract
- emotion laden, not neutral
- recent not in the past. (Munro, 2008)

In addition, an extensive body of research that suggest there are two types of reasoning:

- a measured analytic approach
- faster intuitive thinking. (Kahneman, 2011)

There is a tendency for work in health and social care to rely heavily on intuitive reasoning. In relation to social work Ward et al (2014) note this partly because: *This aligns more closely with practice that focuses on relationships and empathy, and partly because pressures on time and resources leave little room for measured, analytical deliberations. (Munro, 1999; Holland, 1999) ... However this 'everyday' approach is prone to a number of errors. When people rely too much on intuitive thinking they become attached to their initial impression and are slow to revise their judgement even when new and challenging information comes to light (Sutherland, 1992).*

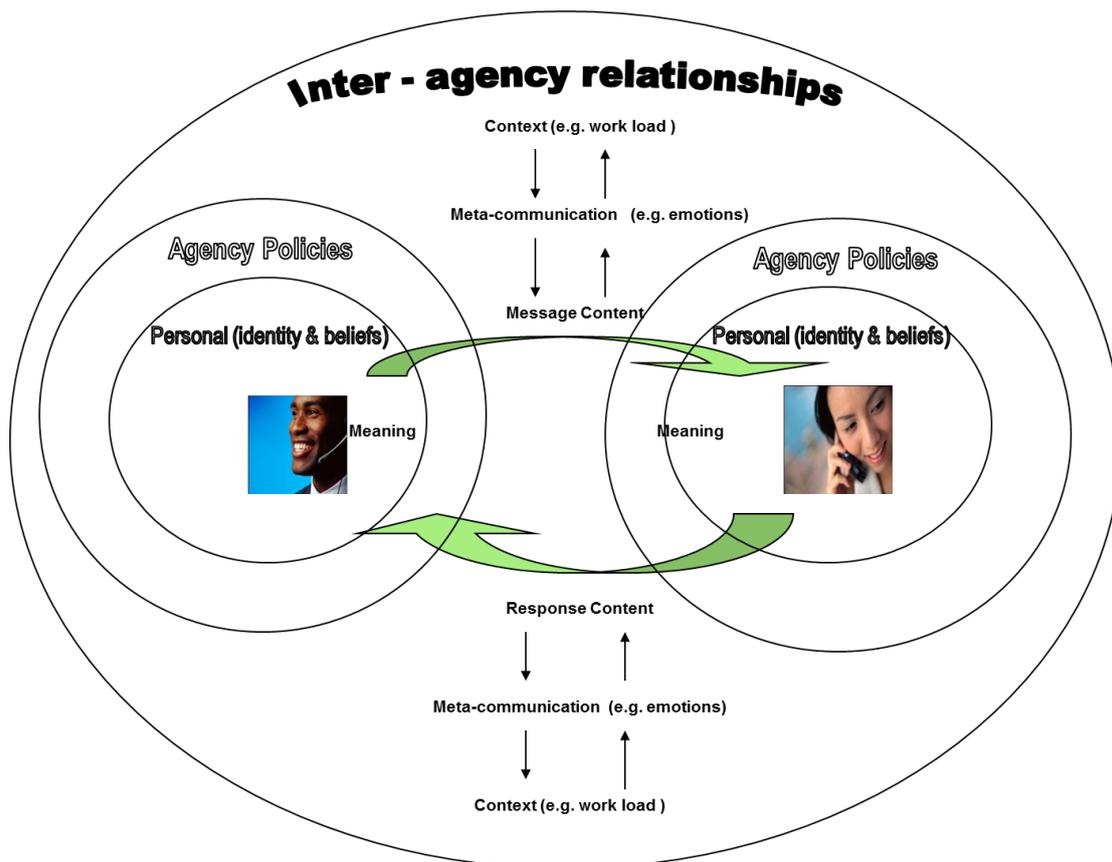
The role of the supervisor must be to understand the various factors that might be affecting practice, including human factors and use the supervisory process to mitigate any negative effects as well as promoting an integration of intuitive and analytical reasoning.

Communication

One key factor influencing practice that will need to be paid attention to within supervision is the quality of communication within and between individuals and organisations.

Communication is the process by which information is transferred from one person to another and is understood by them. (Reder & Duncan, 2003)

One model which was developed as a result of an analysis of the Victoria Climbié inquiry explores the complexity of the communication process with the meaning attributed to a piece of information varying according to context.



This can be a useful framework to use within supervision in order to think about the way that information may be interpreted in individual cases.

Using practice tools in supervision

Fostering critical reflection and critical thinking within supervision is most likely when supervisor and supervisee collaborate together. Using commonly used practice tools within supervision can enhance the collaboration necessary when working with 'wicked problems'. The range of tools contained within this booklet are not exhaustive and there may be others in use within your particular setting that can be brought in to enhance supervision.

Chronologies

Chronologies are a key tool to support reflective practice within individual and group supervision.

The central principle that provides a foundation for all social workers completing chronologies is that they are a process that should run alongside all involvement with children and their families.

Working with chronologies is a process in three main stages:

- opening and maintaining
- reviewing and analysing
- utilising and presenting information.

Analysing a chronology

It is crucial that social workers, their managers and the professional network take time to explore and analyse the information and consider what it means for the child and their family. Marion Brandon in her Biennial Review of Child Deaths and Serious Injuries wrote 'It is what is done with the information rather than its simple accumulation that leads to more analytic assessments and safer practice' (Brandon et al., p3, 2008).

Taking the time to explore the meaning of the information requires practitioners to step out of reactive, crisis-driven work where the only questions asked might be in relation to immediate, current involvement and risks, to a broader understanding based on the history and likely trajectory for the child and family.

Social workers and their managers may benefit from utilising reflective questions to explore hypotheses, effectively analyse and make meaning from the information gathered. The response to some of these questions can be utilised and integrated into comprehensive assessments.

For all families, analysis of the chronology should focus on:

- What known risk factors are evident?
- What external factors may impact on the parent's capacity to meet their children's needs?

- What impact have these risks had on the child or young person? What are the likely felt experiences?
- Is there evidence of times when things have been different? How is this accounted for i.e. strengths, resilience and protective factors?
- What has been tried in the past, with what success and for whom? Has it resulted in change for the child?
- Are there any gaps in information or further questions that need to be asked?
- Is there anyone in the chronology who is identified as important adults to the child and could play a role in increasing safety in the future?
- What is your current hypothesis regarding level of risk?
- What do these events indicate about prognosis and capacity to change?
- What support could be offered to the child and the family that might increase safety, protection and ensure children's needs are met?
- What will need to be seen to show that this is working?

Additional questions for children who are subject of pre-proceedings or court proceedings:

- If we do nothing and the situation remains the same, what will be the immediate (today); short-term (six months); medium-term (a year) and long-term (five years) impact?
- Is an application to the court necessary to safeguard the child and to ensure their permanence in the future?
- Do you think the events listed indicate 'clear blue water' in making an application to the court. i.e. is there more likelihood that an order will be secured than not? (Trowler, 2018)
- What does this mean for what should happen next?
- Are there any other actions that could be taken to divert the family from the court? What is the evidence for this?
- If considering the child may need to be looked after by alternative carers, how is the child likely to respond to this? How might they experience being separated from their parents?
- Based on the history, what further assessment and intervention should be undertaken during the Public Law Outline or proceedings to ensure the risks are reduced and decisions can be made regarding the long term care plan for the child?

The Discrepancy Matrix

Morrison (quoted in Wonnacott, 2012) uses the idea of interrogating discrepancy in order to evaluate information and identifies five types of discrepancy that practitioners and their supervisors should be alert to during any assessment process:

Five types of discrepancy

- *Informational*: there is contradictory information from various sources.
- *Interpretative*: different conclusions are drawn from the same information by different professionals.
- *Interactive*: the service user's declared intentions are contradicted by actions.
- *Incongruent*: the service user talks about her situation in an inconsistent, contradictory or incoherent manner.
- *Instinctual*: the worker's gut feelings suggest that something is wrong, but he cannot specify what.

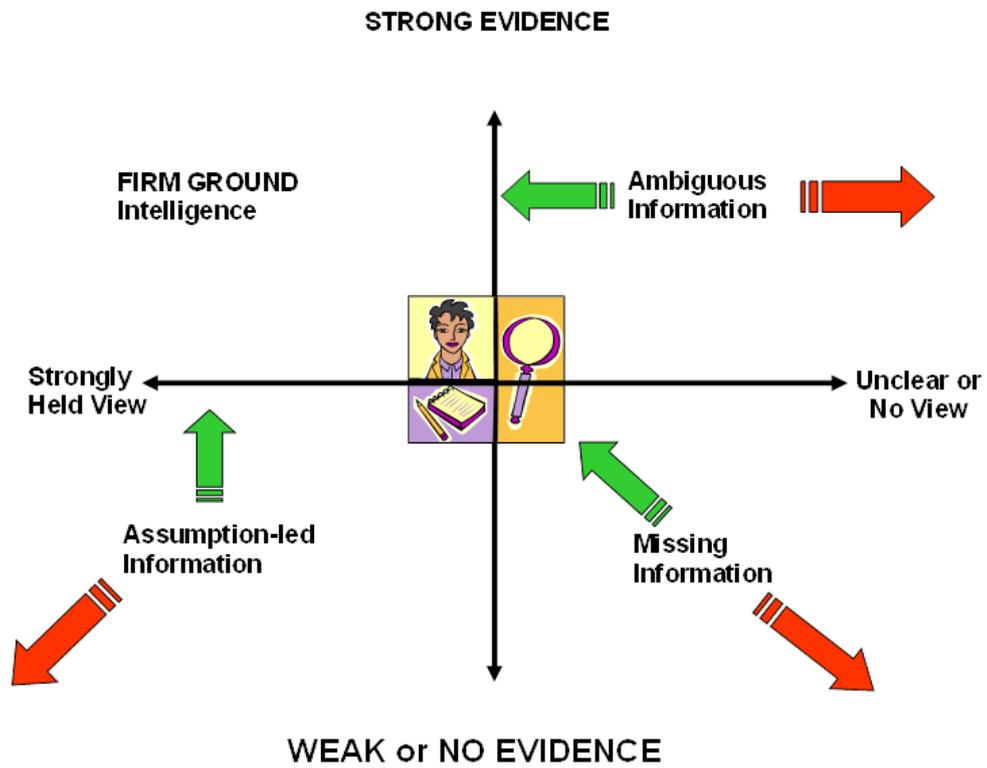
The presence of discrepancies should trigger further exploration as to their origin, relevance, and impact on the judgements and decisions made. The following tool, commonly referred to as the discrepancy matrix was initially developed to support social work supervisors (Morrison and Wonnacott, 2009) but has more recently been used by a wide variety of professionals to assist them in naming discrepancies, and from there deciding what needs to happen next in order to improve the quality of information.

Supervision, represented by scrutiny (magnifying glass), the face-to-face discussion and the recording of information, is fundamental in helping the worker sift and test the information. This can lead to highlighting and exploring discrepancies in information, and deciding whether further inquiries are needed to clarify whether the information is valuable.

This approach starts from the viewpoint that raw information is almost always complex and problematic. However, good supervision can help to test and explore assumptions, ambiguities or gaps in information, ensuring that analysis and planning are on solid foundations.

The Discrepancy Matrix

From Information to Intelligence



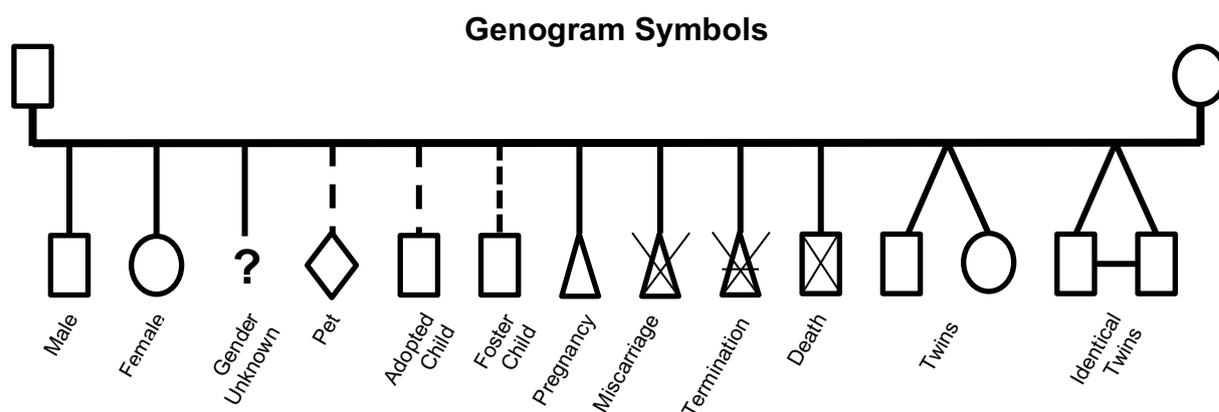
Using Genograms in Supervision

Purpose: The exploration of family history and dynamics

Many serious case reviews in both children's and adult services have noted that exploration of family history is often partial and lacking in detail. Often, information about key family members is missing from assessment reports and there is a lost opportunity to explore the impact of the past on the present. An understanding of the dynamics of family relationships can assist not only the assessment but also the intervention and an understanding of the way in which various family members are responding within the context of the social work relationship.

Brandon *et al*, in their work on serious case reviews in children's services, formulated an approach to practice based on an ecological/transactional perspective, which understands the current situation of the child within the context of 'reciprocal dynamic interactions' of the environment, caregiver and the child [Brandon *et al* 2008 & 2009]. Fundamental to this is the need to understand the dynamics between family history and any current vulnerabilities and risks. Supervisors will want to find tools to assist them in understanding family history and dynamics, identifying missing information and working with the social worker to develop plans based on this knowledge.

Genograms as a tool to assist risk assessment are embedded within social work practice. Common symbols used in Genogram construction are:



A genogram (or family tree) is therefore a visual tool which allows workers to explore with family members their history and relationships, both now and in the past. Visual tools such as genograms have the benefit of:

1. facilitating the disclosure of unanticipated information
2. gathering more comprehensive information
3. an inclusive and non-judgemental approach which encourages families to engage in discussion about their circumstances
 - a. an indirect approach to assessment which is non-threatening and enables positive rapport
 - b. families participating in the identification and analysis of relevant information resulting in them feeling more in control of their own lives
 - c. minimising power differentials thanks to the collaborative nature of the exercise.

These benefits are mirrored within the supervision process because genograms:

1. enable supervisors to assimilate complex information about the family quickly
2. quickly enable the identification of missing information
3. provide the opportunity for the supervisor to ask the practitioner what patterns of protective and risk factors are present in the current family situation and in particular how these have been forged or change across generations
4. create the opportunity for supervisors to ask practitioners how they engaged family members in reflecting on the impact of family history on their confidence and capacity to parent
5. enable supervisors and practitioners to work together exploring challenges or blocks in the social worker's relationship with family members. in particular it is an opportunity to identify whether this relationship is mirroring any concerning or dangerous dynamics within the family system.

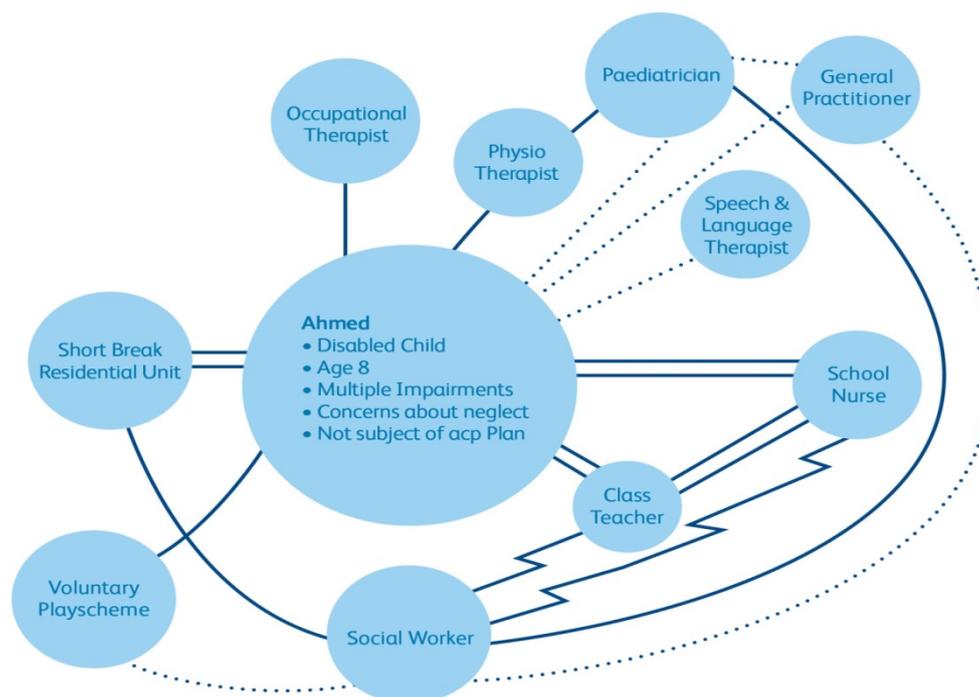
Remember when using genograms in supervision:

- compile them together rather than simply reviewing one already on file. The process of working together will emphasise the collaborative nature of supervision and help you to understand how the practitioner is feeling and thinking about the family
- a genogram is far more than 'who is who' and 'who was who'. It is about the meaning of family members and their behaviours to each other, and in particular how this positions the expectations of, and care available to, the child
- pay attention to their emotional impact on the supervisee. Unanticipated reactions may arise where family patterns and relationships 'push buttons' for the worker.

Ecomaps: exploring inter-agency relationships

Ecomaps are a useful tool in working with families to explore relationships between family members and others within their immediate network. They can equally be a useful tool for supervisors in working with supervisees to explore and understand the nature of relationships across professional networks. Supervisors often need to find ways of both understanding complex networks quickly and to work with supervisees in exploring the implications of professional relationships for the effectiveness of work with children and their families.

The illustration below is of an ecomap in relation to the professional network surrounding Ahmed.



What might this tell us?

- The short break unit and holiday play scheme have considerable face-to-face contact with Ahmed but are not linked in with the rest of the network. Is their knowledge and expertise being recognised and valued?
- Relationships between the social worker and school are problematic – how might this affect the way information is interpreted and communicated?
- The GP has limited input into the network yet is likely to have important information about the family history.
- The social worker is having to co-ordinate and negotiate a complex network which is in danger of being fragmented and information may be lost.

The Decision Tree

Decision trees are an effective way of organising reasoning and analysing the problem. A clear identification of a sequence of events and the links between them in itself it makes problematic decisions much easier to understand and manage. By making estimates of the probability [likelihood] and desirability of consequences explicit in terms of numbers it is possible to work out which option has the highest value and show the grounds for the final choice.

The strength of the decision tree is that it makes you think widely. This can also be a disadvantage in that it can generate too much information. Judgment is needed to decide how much effort to put into the decision and therefore how much information to generate.

The decision framework need not be followed in detail in every situation. Professionals can use it to sketch an overview of the decision they are facing and then concentrate on the problematical elements. It encourages people to make their intuitive reasoning explicit and then think it through more thoroughly .It does not remove subjectivity from the process and two rational people will not necessarily reach the same conclusions. It does however help to identify where and why they would disagree and also provides a clear and defensible account of how a decision was reached.

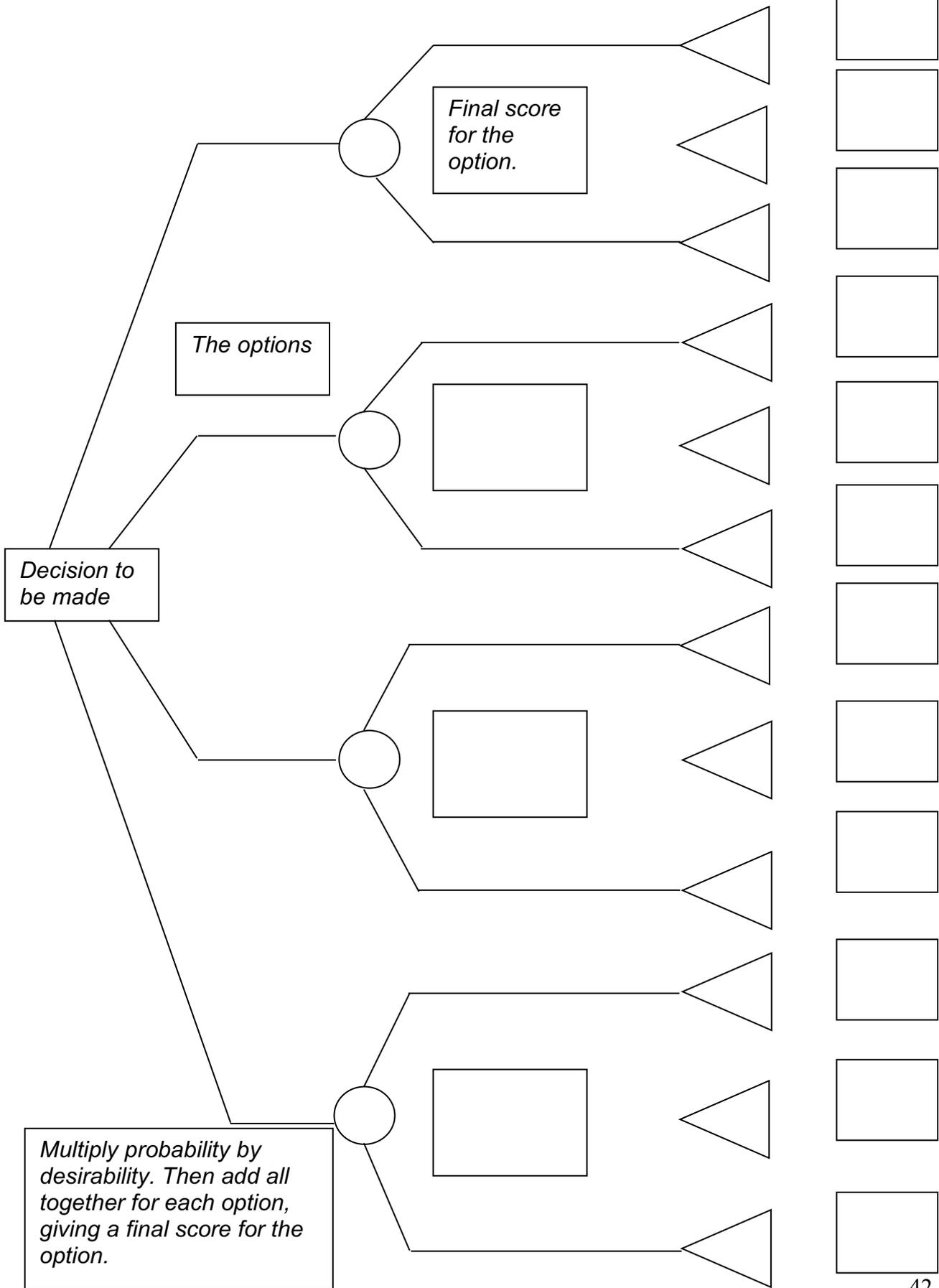
Instructions for completing a decision tree

- Step 1. What is the decision to be made? Enter data into square on left of tree;
- Step 2 What are the possible choices [options]? Enter up to four different options. Write these along the radiating lines coming out of the square;
- Step 3 What are the possible consequences of the different options? Create the same number of consequences for each option [3 or 4] and write along the lines radiating from the circles.
- Step 4 Try and give a score to the probability [likelihood] of each consequence occurring. Score somewhere between 0% and 100% [0=certainly not and 100=certainly will]. The total score across the consequences for one option should equal 100%. You will be likely to use research evidence, practice experience and discussion and debate to help you decide on this. Place the score in the triangle.
- Step 5 Try and decide on the desirability of each consequence occurring. Ascribe a score between 0-10. [0=least desirable, 10=totally desirable] These do not need to total up to 10.You have to use your judgement to decide on the desirability by weighing up the impact on the child, their family –wider society, cost to agency etc. etc. Place this score in the last box on the right.
- Step 6 Multiply each probability score by each desirability score, then add these together for each option. This gives you a total score for each option. Place this score in the square inside the tree. The option with the highest overall score is the best option for you to choose as it combines realistic likelihood of success with best desirability.

Decision Tree

The possible consequences. Each probability score is a percentage of 100%

Utility= desirability 0-10 score



Putting Learning into Practice

Sustaining effective supervision will need to be a partnership between the organisation, the supervisor and the supervisee.

Things to think about are:

- what do your supervisees expect from supervision?
- how do you check out how supervision is being received?
- what opportunities are there for your supervision sessions to be observed by others and feedback given?
- what is the quality of your own supervision?
- what learning do you need to share from this course with your own supervisor in order to improve your own experience? Sharing the learning log in your own supervision session can be a helpful start.

The supervisee feedback questionnaire overleaf is a useful tool for starting a dialogue with supervisees about their perceptions of supervision and how you can both work towards making it as effective as possible.

Supervision Feedback Questionnaire

Supervision:	Usually	Sometimes	Never
1. Is regular and uninterrupted.			
2. Is based on a negotiated agreement.			
3. Helps me to be clear about my role.			
4. Challenges my thinking.			
5. Helps me to reflect on my relationship with service users.			
6. Explores the use of power and authority within my work.			
7. Encourages consideration of working with diversity in my practice.			
8. Allows for the expression of anxiety.			
9. Explores the emotional impact of social work practice.			
10. Encourages the use of research to assist analysis.			
11. Helps me to explain the reasons for my judgements and decisions.			
12. Reflects my preferred learning style.			
13. Encourages learning from good practice.			
14. Identifies skill and knowledge gaps.			
15. Encourages me to identify mistakes.			
16. Explores the reasons for poor performance.			
17. Identifies development opportunities.			
18. Is a medium through which my voice can be heard higher up the organisation.			
19. Makes a positive difference to my practice.			
20. Makes me enthusiastic about my work.			

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