

Module 3

Preparing for Individual Supervision



Acknowledgement & Disclaimer

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Center for Innovative Training in Vocational Rehabilitation (CIT-VR)

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Today's Presenter

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Presenter Background in Clinical Supervision

- 35 years as Rehabilitation Counselor Educator
- Clinical supervision research for past 30 years
 - Nationwide survey of graduate training practices
 - Instrument validation on CS
 - Description of CS models
 - Analysis of graduate training practices
 - Effectiveness of CS training in SVR
- CS significant part of teaching assignments
- Conducted CS training across United States for 10 different State VR agencies
- Awarded Mary Switzer Distinguished Research Fellow
 - 1996 Use of Adventure-based counseling for people with disabilities
 - 2003 Mixed methods study to investigate CS practices within State VR
 - 2011 Evaluate a training program to enhance CS within State VR



Brief Review of Module 2

- Developmental process from both counselor and supervisor perspectives.
- Importance of having a theoretical model to guide practice
- Focus on the Integrated Developmental Model
 - Three counselor aspects that influence counselor development
 - Self/other awareness
 - Motivation
 - Autonomy
 - Supervisor domains that require exploration
 - Intervention Skills
 - Assessment Techniques
 - Interpersonal Assessment
 - Client Conceptualization
 - Individual Differences
 - Theoretical Orientation
 - Treatment Plans and Goals
 - Professional Ethics

Learning Objectives for Module 3

- ✓ Examine how individual supervision is practiced in State VR
- ✓ Review pre-preparation considerations before the first individual supervision session occurs
- ✓ Review what aspects should be included in an individual supervision contract
- ✓ Affirm the legal obligation that supervisors must understand as applied to CS
- ✓ Provide a framework on what to address as part of individual supervision
- ✓ Provide an outline in determining whether the individual supervision session was “good”

Individual Supervision: Getting Started



Individual Supervision Practice: Sobering Context

- Average time between 20 to 30 minutes per event, about one or two times per month (Herbert, 2004; Landon, 2016)
- SVR counselors with 2 or more years experience from one state experienced **greater** supervision satisfaction when **fewer** supervisory sessions were provided (Herbert & Trusty, 2006)
- When supervision is provided, it occurs along administrative rather than a clinical (counseling) focus (McCarthy, 2013)
- As a professional group, VR counselors are largely unchecked by people responsible for supervising them (Herbert, 2016)

Preliminary Considerations

Physical Environment

- Office conducive to having private conversation
- Eliminate distractions
 - Disconnect cell phone, refrain from answering office phone
 - Computer is turned off or at least not in your periphery
 - Curtain closed, office door shut

What do you know about this counselor?

- Educational and professional background
- Experiences from prior supervision
- Expectations and reactions to participating in supervision
- Counseling approach or thoughts about facilitating change
- Insights about counseling strengths and areas needing improvement

Preliminary Considerations

(continued)

Scheduling

- Time, place and consistency

Setting the Stage

- Written agreement on what and how will occur
- Experiences from prior supervision
- Expectations and reactions to participating in supervision
- Counseling approach or thoughts about facilitating change
- Insights about counseling strengths and areas needing improvement

**Remember: Focus is on counselor --
NOT the client**

Supervisory Contracts: Good but Underused

- Purpose – Counselor development, monitor client welfare
- Responsibilities of both counselor and supervisor
- Logistical concerns
 - Frequency and meeting days/times/session length
 - Methods of supervision
 - Individual, group, triadic
 - Case review, re-enactment, live or tape review
 - Professional development activities
 - Assigned readings or videos
- Counselor responsible for gaining consent to record sessions used in supervision
- Evaluation methods
 - Informal or formal behavioral checklists
 - Client self-report inventory
 - VR outcome data (statuses)



SOURCE: Schultz et al. (2002)

Something to think about...



- “Respondeat superior” – Latin for “Let the master answer.”
- Within an employment context it means, the employer is ultimately responsible for the actions of its employees
- Vicarious liability – Supervisor held liable for negligent actions of supervisee (even if these were not known by supervisor)

Consider Supervision Tools Beforehand

Self-report narratives

- Quality is only as good as the reporter – not suggested for new counselor use

Process recording

- Narrative of client session in terms of client content and process – good use to assess counselor awareness of counseling dynamics

Audio/videotape

- Rarely used (Herbert & Trusty, 2006) but powerful tool
- Requires client permission; often raises anxiety by counselor projected onto client

Audio/videotape (continued)

- Provides access to several perspectives – client, counselor and their interaction
- Must be clear about procedures – when submitted, what will be reviewed and how it will be used

Live observation

- Most effective and least used (with exception of new counselors)
- Supervisor does not get involved in counseling session, but counselor initiatives can be addressed by supervisor in front of client
- Computer-assisted live supervision



Another Neglected Tool: The Infamous “Role-Play”

- Avoid the term – use other terms – “re-enact”, “recreate” or “try an experiment”
- Let’s not “wing it” – focus on a segment that:
 - Is a concern or problematic for the counselor (can also focus on a “good” section)
 - Not going up for an academy award
 - Not trying to recreate what actually happened in the session; even if major departure, it can be very informative
 - “Feel free to make mistakes” – particularly if assigned role as counselor

Giving Supervisee Feedback

- Clear and specific, with examples
- On-going and constant checking in with supervisee
- Balance with correctable input and evidence of skill strengths
- Use informal and formal assessment tools
- Summarize at end with opportunity to respond; Set direction for next session
- Invite supervisee to provide you feedback -- what helps/not as helpful





First Session Themes

- Why are we here?
- What will this involve?
- How different from administrative supervision?
- How will this work (procedures, assurances, schedule)?
- What is expected from counselor and supervisor?
- Review past supervision experiences
 - What took away from these experiences?
- Setting the stage
 - Create an experience that is collaborative
 - Place to make mistakes; place to learn, to ask questions
 - Take time to review what first session was like for counselor

Beginning Questions to Facilitate Collaboration

- What have you received feedback about from prior supervision that you would like to improve?
- When you think of the skills needed to be an effective VR counselor, what do consider are your strength areas as well as well as those you could improve on?
- What do you think your clients would say about your counseling skills strengths and those that you could improve on?
- How would you describe your counseling style or theory when working with clients? Are there any other approaches that you have considered and want to learn more about?



Source: Herbert (2018)

Supervisee Behaviors in Terms of Investment



- Responsible – consistent attendance and prepared for each session
- Takes measured risks in order to improve skills
- Listens to feedback, appropriately assertive and engaged
- Feels safe to make mistakes and feels supported throughout process

Was this a “Good Supervisory Session?”

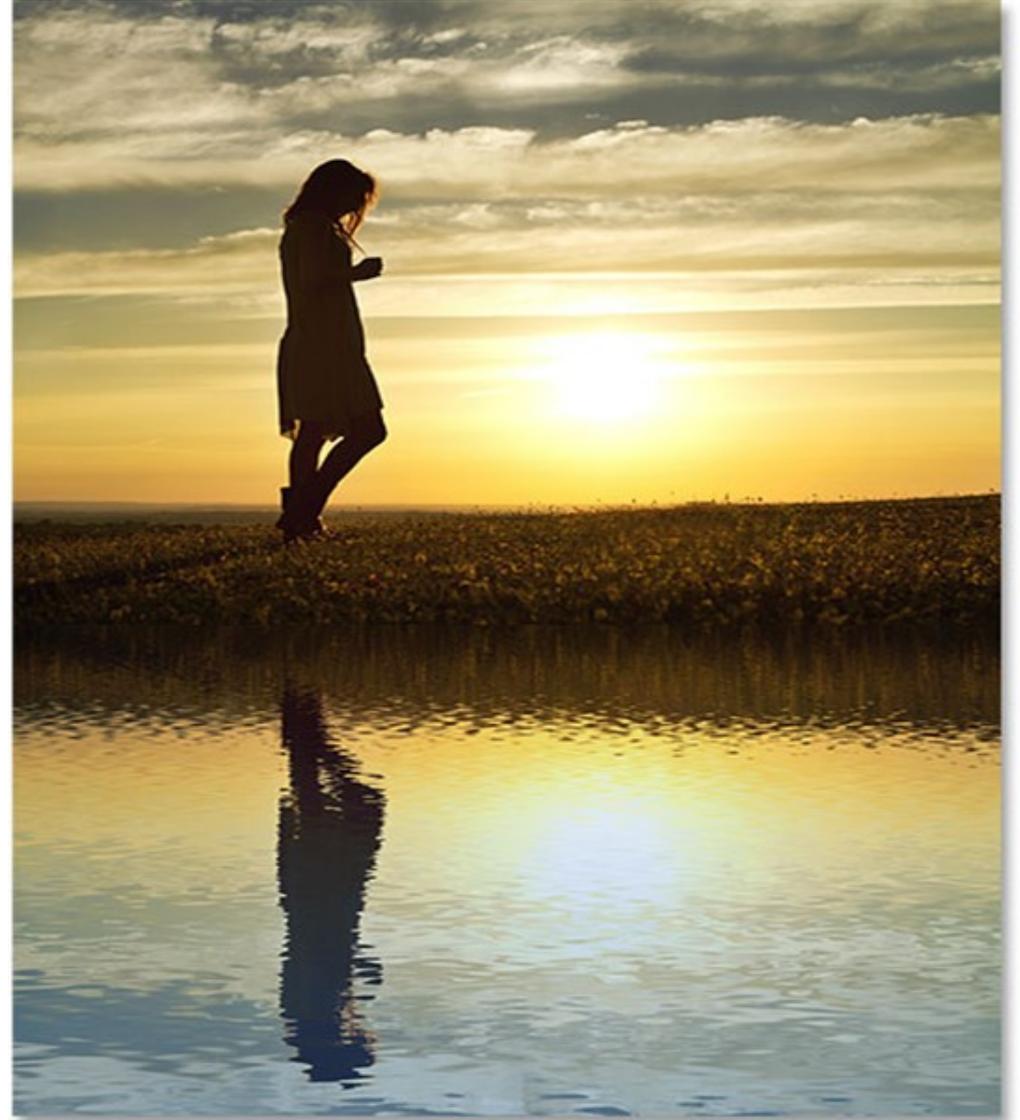
(Recall Module #1)

- Conducted in an environment that promoted privacy?
- Was there a purpose or focus to the session?
- How did it build on or expand earlier work?
- Were multiple tools used to address counselor concerns and client-counselor dynamics?
- Was specific feedback given that included both areas needing improvement and identified strength areas?
- Most important – Was the counselor heard?



Reflection Questions

- What are some take-aways from this module?
- How does this information impact how you plan to provide individual supervision with your counselors?



Suggested Learning Activities



- Write up a supervisory contract that you believe would work for you and the counselors you supervise.
- Read any of the references on the next page to learn more about the topics addressed in this module.
- Develop a checklist of things that you want to keep in mind prior to your conducting your next (first) counselor supervision
- Discuss your intent on how you want to make some changes in supervision with other colleagues who provide individual supervision and ask about their experiences in terms of what they do or do not do and consider having a peer group of fellow supervisors.

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Thank You!



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