

Clinical Supervision Series: Group Supervision - Module 4

JOHN WALSH: Hello my name is John Walsh. I'm the project director for the Center for Innovative Training in Vocational Rehabilitation at The George Washington University. Welcome to module 4 of our multipart series on clinical supervision. Today's training will focus on group supervision, in particular.

If you have not viewed our previous modules in this series, I highly encourage you to go back and complete these trainings to really gain that foundational knowledge, in which the other modules are built upon. I also encourage you to check out our final module, which will be module 5, that will focus on legal and ethical issues related to supervision.

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So a little bit about the Center for Innovative Training in Vocational Rehabilitation. We are sponsoring these training modules, and our website has a number of other free trainings that also provide CRCC continuing education hours. I encourage you to visit our website at trainvr.org and also to join our virtual community at trainvr.ning.com.

We also encourage you to join our mailing list, that way you can stay informed about all of our future training offerings. As in our previous training modules on clinical supervision, this training will be led by Dr. James Herbert from The Pennsylvania State University.

Dr. Herbert has extensive experience not only as a rehabilitation counselor educator, but extensive research and training background in the area of clinical supervision. Clinical supervision is a significant part of his teaching assignments, and he has conducted training in this area for 10 State VR agencies.

Dr. Herbert was also awarded the Mary Switzer Distinguished Research Fellow on three occasions, with one in recognition of his work involving the development of a training program

to enhance clinical supervision practice within State VR agencies. So it is my pleasure to have Dr. Herbert join us again for this very informative session, as he takes us through effective methods of group supervision. Dr. Herbert.

JAMES HERBERT: Well thanks, John, for that introduction and welcome back to all of you who are participating in our fourth module on group supervision. And before we begin this module, let's take a quick review of our previous module. And as John said, if you haven't completed the first three, I would strongly recommend that you do that before you begin this module. In the last module, we talked about individual supervision.

And we talked about how is it practiced in State VR, and what are some of the components that make good individual supervision. Excuse me.

We also then talked a little bit about some considerations. That when you have that first meeting with your individual supervisees, which is so critical, there's a lot of deliberate thinking that we reviewed that we wanted you to think about in preparing for that first important meeting, which sets the foundation for subsequent meetings.

We talked about the importance of developing an individual written contract, and what goes in when considering some of the components of developing a written contract. We looked at a framework of what are some of the areas-- what should you be covering as part of individual supervision.

So we looked at some of those aspects. And then we ended up with an outline, if you will, to try to help you determine was this a good supervision session or not so good. So I'm hoping that as a result of that module, you have a good idea about how to start, or build on maybe what you're currently doing when you're meeting with your supervisees on an individual basis.

Now today though, we're going to take a different, but related, path on providing group supervision. So let's get started on that. Well, in today's module on group supervision, here are some of the things that we're going to be covering. First off, we're going to operationalize what do we mean by group supervision.

And as you'll see in just a minute or two, there's some ideas of what people think group supervision is and also what group supervision is not. So we're going to talk specifically about what do we really mean when we say group supervision. Just as we did with individual supervision, we're going to look at how is group supervision practiced in State VR.

We're going to look at some of the basic stages for group development and what that means to you as an individual supervisor for each of those stages. We're going to look at how do I prepare for my first group supervision session.

And this is really, really important because, again, any time you're thinking about instituting something new, you want to make sure that you're fully prepared; you're ready to go; and you've thought purposefully about what's going to happen. Then we're going to end up with

some different approaches. We'll look at a couple approaches on how to deliver group supervision.

We'll start with, what I refer to as, kind of the traditional solution focused approach. But then I want to do something a little bit different. When I'm using the term nontraditional or question method, it's not necessarily something totally new, but it's a different way to look and provide supervision to counselors that we want to offer you as an alternative.

And then finally, we're going to end up with a variation of that, is a group supervision model that was developed by DiAnne Borders a number of years ago, using peer group discussion. And while peer group-- that's nothing new-- but what is new is she has a specific way that engages all of your counselors who participate in group supervision.

I think it's a really good model. So we're going to end up with that, and then I have a few suggested learning activities that if you want to enhance your skill level and group supervision, you can do that as well. So let's operationalize group supervision. Well let's first talk about what it's not.

And this comes from actually when I've had conversations with supervisors, or I've observed supervisors in State VR practice. And one of the things that I find is that sometimes there are supervisors that think group supervision is the same as a unit or a team meeting. You know how these go.

These are the monthly meetings that you have for information-- and what central office, what new development or new policy or procedures-- and you'll share that information. And then some part of that meeting, someone might say, I'm really having a hard time with one of my clients. And you might spend a few minutes talking about that.

There's not really any kind of structure, you may offer some kind of support, but it's incorporated as part of an informational meeting. That's not group supervision. So group supervision is not something that just-- part of a larger meeting or something like that. Group supervision also is not group therapy.

The purpose is not to try to change people or bring up personal issues that might impact, in terms of the counselor-client relationship. It's not therapy at all. Excuse me one second. So it's not a psychological intervention. It's also not a social activity.

So we're not getting together to have a good time and bond and those kinds of things. I mean, that may happen as a result of good supervision, but that's not the purpose. And it's also not a reason to meet over lunch.

Sometimes people, you get together over lunch or a break or morning session, and talking about your clients is kind of part of your day. But again, that's sort of an impromptu situation that just kind of emerges. So that's what it's not. Let's talk about what it is.

Well, as you can probably infer from my previous discussion, is that group supervision is a planned meeting; it has specific purposes; and those purposes basically are these. Number one, it's an intervention that is designed to enhance the counseling skills and case management decisions of the counselors who you supervise.

Ultimately, with that training, you're hoping that it'll impact the client-counselor relationship, which will impact and have favorable VR outcomes. So everything that we do in group supervision is all about how do I, as a supervisor-- how do I enhance my counselors' skills.

So I'm constantly thinking about what is it that I can do to try to enhance that. What tools can I use that are available to me that could enhance that. And in doing that, as the term implies, group is a group. It's a group of counselors that meet between 5 and 10 people, with one facilitator-- typically that would be you as the supervisor. Pardon me.

Or it could be shared leadership where you have peers. So it doesn't necessarily have to be one person as a facilitator. You could have a leaderless group where that responsibility is shared. But in today's session, we're going to focus more on where you, as the individual supervisor, serves as the facilitator.

Now, in that effort, as you kind of conceptualize what is my role? Your role basically, as I kind of alluded to a little bit earlier, is you want to promote an understanding about each one of your counselors, in terms of their role, in that client-counselor process-- to get some understanding more about themselves.

And by that, what I mean is, gets to kind of a central question. And that is, why is the counselor doing the things the counselor is doing? What's the purpose of what they're doing? Excuse me-- the counselor interaction with clients should have some ultimate ulterior purpose about why am I doing the things that I'm doing.

So that should be kind of a guiding principle there. Another aspect is that, in group supervision, you want to get some understanding of addressing client problems from the counselor perspective. So what is the view of the counselor; the issue that's being discussed; what is their perception; why is it happening; what contributes, sustains that.

So as you, as the group facilitator, you're constantly kind of thinking with that in the background. And then related to that, is you're thinking about what are some of the contributing factors that influence the counselor decision; influence the client-counselor relationship that ultimately contributes to either successful or not successful VR outcomes.

Now, one final thing I just want to mention before we go on to the next slide. A question that often comes up when I do consultation with group supervision is-- how large should a group be? What's the optimal size?

Well, if you look at traditional group counseling, and you look at the literature about number-- and that kind of stuff-- basically research indicates between 5 and 7 is an optimal number to have when you're doing group supervision.

Now having said that, though, I can tell you from my experience that I've seen a number of groups that have that number that function ineffectively. I've seen, conversely, situations where groups have been as large as 10 or even 15 and while that presents some really unique challenges-- but, because of the skill of the facilitator-- actually can be a very effective functioning group.

So while there's no magic number, I'll just tell you that my experience, usually between 5 to 7, usually when it gets a little bit more than that, what I find is, sometimes everybody doesn't get a chance to contribute and speak. And so sometimes it can be a little bit unmanageable. So just as kind of a guideline for something for you to think about.

Well, now let's take a look at group supervision and State VR practice. Some of my earlier research indicates that when I ask State VR supervisors about group supervision-- how do they do it; how often they do it; what's involved when they do it. My conclusion from that was that many supervisors misunderstand what it is and what it is not.

So hopefully the prior slide gives us now a better understanding about what is group supervision. Another thing that I know from my own research, is that a lot of supervisors perceive that they really haven't had much training themselves in group supervision, but they want to do it better.

And part of that problem, I think actually, is a problem with your training. And me as a rehab educator, as I reflect back, I think we need to do a better job in helping our graduates before they go on. To prepare them a little bit more on how to facilitate groups. So if you didn't get that in your graduate training then hopefully you get it on the job.

But again, I know from my own research-- and we'll see in the next slide-- that it's often something that's not provided. So you can see that they kind of put supervisors in a tough spot. They recognize that it's a skill set that they want to do something about to try to do it, but they don't know necessarily how to do that. So hopefully at the end of this module, you have a much better idea.

I know, from my own work, is that in group supervision it's a process that's really-- and I have to say this is a little surprising to me when I first did this study about 10, 15 years ago. And also too, I know from my current contacts with State VR, --I don't think that's really changed that much since then, but group supervision is something that's not really widely used.

And in those instances when it is used, it usually occurs on a monthly or bimonthly basis. So when you think about the number of clientele that each one of your State VR counselors is assigned, you can see that literally runs into the hundreds in terms of how do we monitor that.

And I also know from my research is that when group supervision is offered, typically it relies heavily on that case review method-- pardon me-- that tends to be so solution focused. And by that what I mean is, typically what happens, counselors will sit around and kind of talk about their clients, maybe clients that they're struggling with.

And then basically they're saying, hey, I need some help with this. Anybody have any ideas. Then people start kind of generating, well have you tried this, have you done this, what about that kind? So that's usually, I think, the process that happens. It's not something that happens very often-- when it does it relies on a case review method.

Supervisors themselves recognize, boy I wish I had more skill in this, I don't feel really prepared but I want to do something about it. So let's move forward on that. Well, let's talk about some reasons why you shouldn't be doing group supervision, and then in the next slide we'll talk about maybe some disadvantages.

But, let's talk about the reasons for doing group supervision. Well, the first thing is that group supervision, and this is particularly important for new counselors, it's a normalization process. A lot of times, and you know from working with newer counselors, they want to do it right. We talked about this earlier, in the earlier module, about the developmental process that counselors go through.

And so when, particularly for new counselors, when they're in a group with more experienced counselors, one of the things that they get from that experience, is that it normalizes what they're doing. So sometimes a counselor might have some doubts where maybe I should do it this way or boy I wish I would have done that.

But they listen to other counselors, and they realize that well actually, maybe I'm not doing so bad or maybe my thinking is pretty correct. Also too, I'll just say, while we're focusing on new counselors-- it's not just something normalization for new counselors. I mean, that also extends for experienced counselors as well. But I think it's particularly impactful for the newer counselors.

Another real advantage is that by working in a larger group, counselors get exposure to a lot of different client issues, client problems, that they may be able to relate to.

Or maybe some things that they don't currently have going on on their own caseloads. But nevertheless, it offers them an opportunity to expand and maybe learn about other areas, either by client, type of clients, or maybe you have specialized caseloads.

Some larger districts, I know, will have counselors by specialized caseloads like transition or long term mental illness, physical disability, et cetera, but also by specialty area. So you may not have a lot of expertise in assistive technology, but by listening to another counselor talking about an assistive technology issue, you as a counselor might gain from that as well.

Group supervision also, a real important strength is it decentralizes the overdependence that sometimes can exist, particularly with a new counselor, on the supervisor. So the real advantage there is you as a supervisor, you don't have to be, what I refer to as, the answer grape-- the all-knowing sage.

You have expertise in the room with other people, other counselors who have had experience. So as a result of that, it reduces the risk of an individual counselor being overly dependent on you. It's a shared responsibility. In group, everybody's part of this process, and again, it doesn't necessarily just fall on you.

We know from social learning theory, you may recall in your graduate training-- Albert Bandura and social learning theory-- we can learn vicariously. I don't need to take my hand and put it over a flame to realize it's hot, it's going to hurt, and burn me. If I watch somebody else do that, and I see the reactions like hey, I don't need to do that.

So we often learn vicariously by watching other people. Pardon me. I think another thing, too, for using group is that it facilitates some risk taking. Sometimes when we want to try some new things, it makes it a little bit easier if we see someone else trying some new things.

Last month we had group, and Mary was talking about an issue with a client. We were strategizing, and she tried to do something. And in this one's supervision we find that, wow actually that worked out-- could not work out, but it worked out. And so as a result, it facilitates risk taking on the part of other counselors. It's like, well yeah, maybe I could do it too.

You have multiple people in the room, you're going to have multiple input in terms of diversity of feedback and the quality and the variety. Again, I think that enriches the discussion. And so that quality of feedback is so important and often occurs as a function of the experience of your counselors.

But again, I will say to you, while experience is important, it's not the only single thing that I think can have a significant impact on newer counselors. I've seen some new counselors, in group supervision, offer some really tremendous insight as well. We talked earlier about reduces the dependence from a counselor on the supervisor.

But it also, from a supervisor, reduces dependence on again-- you as a supervisor can use the expertise of everyone in the room. As a supervisor then what that does is it allows you to monitor simultaneously how things are going. So that's also important as you think about the development of the individual counselors.

The other thing that for me, is something that's really not talked about much in the literature, but to me is kind of obvious-- we don't function independently. A good State VR counselor is not someone who kind of goes their own way, doesn't need the support, the input from other people. We're constantly getting input from others.

I mean, one of the strengths of the State VR program is because the large system of resources that are available. So group supervision actually is just an extension, or a manifestation, of that recognition. We're all part of a larger group; we're all part of a larger community.

And perhaps if all of those reasons don't convince you, maybe this last one might. It saves time. So if you have five counselors, and you spend an hour, hour and a half of individual supervision, monthly or weekly, is it possible I could meet with those same five counselors.

And instead of having five individual meetings, I could have one meeting. Now what's really interesting, and the dirty little secret here is when you go into-- and I just did this again in preparation for this module-- I reviewed the literature again to make sure that my original belief is still consistent, which it is.

First off what you find is there's very little literature that's compared the effectiveness of group versus individual supervision. Of the research that's available, basically what you find is that counselors have a strong preference for individual supervision.

However, when you look at skill set development, the difference between individual and group is negligible. So if that's the case-- and again I've not seen any studies specifically with State VR. Maybe that's something I can explore before I retire.

But, at any rate, if you look at that, what it says to me is, at the very least, this is something that I should be incorporating as part of my supervision. Now again, I'm not suggesting you kind of do an either-or. In fact, actually what I would suggest is maybe a combination of both individual and group.

The difference is, what I would say is, continue to do your individual. But maybe you don't need to meet as frequently doing individual, and you could supplement that with doing group. So something to think about in terms of your own practice.

And I hope that one of the things that comes from this is that you come to the realization-- is hey, maybe this is a tool that I haven't been using that maybe I could use more often and hopefully a little bit more effective. Now, let's look at the down side of it-- why group supervision-- are there any disadvantages to that.

Well, like everything else, there's always disadvantages. The big disadvantage that I alluded to a little bit earlier, is sometimes what can happen is the individual needs of a counselor may not be met. And this can likely occur when you have larger groups.

So I talked about the optimal number being between 5 and 7. You may be a supervisor of a large unit. Maybe you have 10 counselors. Well, 10 counselors and you're trying to do an hour, hour and a half of group supervision, it can be really challenging, and I would say nearly impossible if the goal is that everybody presents a case and discusses it.

So in that kind of instance, it's likely that a counselor's individual needs might not be met. Another concern that emerges-- and we'll talk about the importance of this when we talk about setting up ground rules-- but another issue is confidentiality. So while we talk about the importance of that at group, sometimes what happens, that's violated.

So a counselor who participates in group may go outside and disclose or share something and violates that confidentiality. And in essence, violates the trust of the group and that could be very damaging. Sometimes what happens is group issues impede learning.

And by that I mean, is that, the success of the group, while it clearly depends largely on the facilitator, it also largely depends on the makeup of the group. And sometimes, as we all know, certain counselors like other counselors. You have a different kind of in-group, out-group, cliques, those kinds of-- you have all the office politics.

Well they don't leave when you come and do group counseling. In fact what I would say is not only do they come in as part of the group, actually what happens is they tend to be manifested, played out. So if I don't like John, and we're in group, that interpersonal relationship may manifest itself in terms of the feedback that I provide or how I receive feedback.

So the relationships that exist, prior to doing group, can impact the outcomes of group. So as a result, that requires trust on the part of people. And that trust may or may not be evident. And if it's not evident, that's going to be something that will clearly impact group.

So what we're going to do now is we're going to talk about five stages of group process. And this isn't kind of new information in the sense of new terminology. And in fact, it was something that Tuckman talked about way back in 1965.

And so those five stages-- and we'll break down each one and what it means to you as a supervisor-- is that as in with group supervision and group development process, there are stages that each group goes through.

And so the reason why we're looking at each stage, is it has importance to you as a supervisor to, number one, recognize what's going on here and may help provide some kind of a context about-- oh yeah this is kind of where we're at as a group.

And then also, as you'll see, what does that mean for you as a supervisor that when you find yourself in this stage, what does that mean that you need to do in each one of these. So this gives us a context for why you want to do the things that you're doing at a particular moment in time.

So those five stages are forming and-- I won't describe each picture because I'll look at each one in the next slide. So for those participants with visual impairments, I'm going to suspend the pictorial description for now but those same pictures will be in the subsequent slides.

So those stages are forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. So let's break it down. Let's take a look at each one.

Well the first stage is forming. And on the right hand side of the slide, there's a picture of four kittens that are sitting next to one another, kind of crammed and crunched together. And the reason why I use this slide, or this picture, is kind of a metaphor of when we first start with our counselors.

They're all kind of like crunched together. We're all kind of new; we're in the same spaces; we're just kind of developing; we're not sure how this is going to go; so I just thought that was kind of a metaphor. So when we talk about the forming stage, or what I refer to as the starting to get comfortable stage, there are certain things that you as a supervisor have to keep in mind.

And in the next slide or two, I have specific suggestions about how or what we're to do. But just conceptually this stage, there are things that you as a supervisor have to get across in your thoughts and in your actions with your counselors. And those being these three principles.

One is that everybody in the group has respect and worth. Everybody has dignity. And while there may be interpersonal issues that exist between the subset of counselors in this group, we have to be respectful of one another and I'll talk more about that later-- about what does that mean.

We have to be supportive of one another. The whole purpose of this and getting together is how do we improve our skills-- our individual skills-- but do that in a collective process. The other thing that's really important, and this is really hard to get across, and it's not like a one time statement, we have to constantly revisit this over and over and over again. And I have specific ideas about how to do that.

But is this notion that in this room, where we meet collectively, mistakes are encouraged. Now, that's an important point. How often do we in the nature of work as--- my God, what would hap-- none of us like to make mistakes.

And when we make mistakes, yeah it's embarrassing, we feel bad about it. But we're not likely to disclose mistakes if I feel bad if I do that, I'm going to get attacked or ridiculed or put down if I disclose it.

Yeah I think I made a mistake here. Or you're uncertain whether you made a mistake. So it has to be that the message being communicated is, we're going to be making mistakes. And that's something that has to come through loudly in different ways and again, we'll talk more about that.

In that first stage of forming, one of the first things you need to do is you need to attend to the administrative-- you remember way back in module 1, I talked about the difference between administrative and clinical supervision. Well in this case, one of them is part of clinical supervision-- I talked about the complementarity of both-- and there's another example.

So before we jump in and discuss cases and let's get started here and roll up your sleeves and let's get moving, there's administrative things that we need to talk about. So we need to talk about basic things like where are we meeting, how often are we meeting. Attendance, is it mandatory, is it voluntary, how does that work.

What are the methods that we're going to be-- what are we going to do here when we get together. What's the process? What are you expecting from me as a counselor. So those procedural things, they need to be articulated and agreed to as part of this initial meeting that you have with your counselors.

There has to be a discussion about what are the ground rules and on the next slide we'll talk about those ground rules. But we have to know what are the expectations in this group that we're meeting with. What are you expecting from me, what behavior are you expecting from myself and the people that I work with.

We also have to recognize that at this point, you know obviously the group's just starting so they're not performing at a high level. In fact, actually, in that forming stage, my experience is that everybody, or mostly everybody, is kind of put on their good face, they're nicey nice. No one wants to be confrontational, although sometimes that happens right from the get go.

But, everybody wants to make sure that we're being nice and being supportive. So we're all kind of calm waters here. So that's something I often find as a characteristic of that forming stage.

So let's talk a little bit more about ground rules and procedural things that you should be doing in this initial stage. Now, before I said, let's talk about some things we're going to do and I definitely want to do that. But here's the first thing I want you to do, maybe, as you think about that.

I want you to think back to a time where you were a member of a work group, and this work group met over a period of weeks or maybe months. And hopefully you all have experiences in that. And as you reflect back-- and that doesn't necessarily have to be a group supervision work group. It could any work group or task force or anything like that--

But, what I want you to think about is this. When you look at that group or reflect, were there any kind of unwritten rules or practices that were followed that made that group successful. So what are some of the characteristics that, like wow, we did some good work.

Well, what were some of the things that contribute to why that particular group was really affected? And if you want, you can even contrast that-- maybe there are situations that you had it working with like, man that thing was doomed from the get go and it was pulling teeth all the way through, just wasn't good. And so you can think about it that way.

So before you begin this next slide and we talk about it, I'd like you to just take a few minutes, scribble on a piece of paper, or write down on your laptop, your reactions to that question. And

so let's just, if you want, stop the tape and do that and we'll reconvene when you're finished. All right. So hopefully you've had an opportunity to reflect on that.

Now I don't know, obviously, because we're not interacting face to face here, live at least, what were some of the contributing factors. But I'd be willing to bet that there, with the successful groups, that there were probably some commonalities. And I think these commonalities often serve as good rules of thumb when we're doing group supervision.

So let me look at four of these, in particular. Well the first one, I'd be willing to bet, is that in successful working groups, you felt respected. Now, if you ask your counselors, OK well, what are some of the ground rules, what are some of the things that you want and this would be one of the first, if not the first thing that comes up.

And people will say we should be respecting one another. OK great, wonderful. Now in that instance, what I would suggest, is have your counselors operationalized and what does that mean? Because we may have different views, different ideas as a result of our past experiences and who we are.

What does it mean to be respectful of other people. Because we may have some different ideas and what one person feels constitutes respect, may not be respectful in another. And next year when we develop some additional modules, one of the things we're talking about-- multicultural aspects-- I find that oftentimes this kind of situation comes up.

What one person sees as respectful, another person may not see as respect. So it's important when we talk about that dynamic, about what are some of our rules or common principles we're going to operate in some respect-- great, wonderful. What does that mean. So get your counselors to operationalize that. So things like well, only one person should be talking at a time.

We don't have side conversations. When we come into group, we're focusing on group, we're not answering our cell phone or searching the internet on our laptop. So whatever that is for your group, but spend some time in operationalizing that.

Another thing that often comes up and we know from successful groups is, groups are successful when people take responsibility for their actions. They're committed to the process, they're prepared in doing the work. So that's a discussion, there again, needs to be operationalized. So what are the expectations that you have when people come in for group.

So if someone's going to discuss a client case, is that just going to happen by chance? Who wants to discuss something? Is it going to be kind of a side, where you're each going to take turns. If there's some reading material or something that you want to assign to your counselors to review, and you expect them to read it and come prepared to discuss it.

For example at the end of this module, I have some training materials that you might want to use and one particular reading that might be helpful. Maybe that's something you want to

assign to your counselors to read or not. But the point being is that this is a theme that often comes up as well as part of a common ground rule of thumbs in doing group supervision.

Another one is, one I mentioned earlier was the importance of trust. You have to have trust in the group, and I talked about the importance of being willing to make mistakes. So what does that mean in terms of trusting and how is that manifested within this particular group. And so, if people have some concerns or I'm a little bit hesitant if I say something that maybe I'll make a mistake.

We have to have this kind of discussion about-- and this sometimes can come up by asking the question-- what are some concerns that people have about doing this group. And that might even just start off well, I don't even know if I want to be here, right?

Sometimes you'll get that with really experienced counselors. You know, this is good for the new people but I don't need to be there. And so having that discussion about what are the expectations, what are the concerns that you have about being in group, that's an important discussion to have in the beginning.

And the reason why I say that's important is before you start kind of jumping in, you have to have some buy-in. Or at least you have to know as a supervisor, who's buying in and maybe who's not so sure about buying in. And part of that insight can occur by asking that question about what are the expectations that people have? Think about the response of a counselor.

They say I don't really have any expectations or they're very low. Or versus the counselor, well you know, I need some help with this or this kind of client that I work with or this kind of situation. So there has to be some-- and this isn't-- also too I want to just say-- this isn't like a one and done kind of discussion, because in the context of group you often sometimes come back to this, especially when conflict arises.

And sometimes what you learn from that is that the conflict is because people have different understanding or different expectations about what the purpose is with group and how we're doing this. So it's important from the get-go to have that discussion about expectations. Well, let's look at some initial considerations and some of these parallel to our discussion with individual supervision.

Well let's look at the meeting space. We have to make sure wherever you meet that the space can accommodate private conversation. So in the open-- it's one thing to have a group supervision in a closed room that supports the physical space.

You can get around in a circle and see one another and I did mention that earlier. But yes, when you're doing group supervision I highly recommend you convene in a circle. So you have more easily visual and auditory access to one another as opposed to kind of traditional classroom, sitting behind desks.

Also too that you have your room that can shut the door and so you can have some privacy. If you have any technology needs or equipment and supervision, if you want access to the internet, or audio videotape kind of situation, if that's going to be part of your supervision, particularly if you're going to be doing obviously any distance supervision. Maybe you have counselors in the field that are spread out.

Maybe some are at the home office, but you have one or two people in the field office or maybe they're sitting in their car with their laptop, Whatever the case may be, all of those things have to be taken care of before. And also, make sure that they're working.

Nothing's more frustrating, you're all excited, everybody is ready to go, and you know how this goes. Snafus. So do a test run. So make sure your technology, firewall, all that stuff is working access, that it's working properly and when you use it, you're ready to go.

We talk about the group size-- that's a consideration in the dynamics, so I'm not going to go in with that as well. Now, in that first session, here are some things just based on my own experience that I found to be useful.

You certainly can use it, don't use it, come up with your own, but these are some things that I find and when I do group supervision some things that I explore in that very first session that I have with counselors. And this first question is no surprise, I mentioned this already.

And that is make sure that your counselors understand what are we doing, and why are we doing this. You know how this goes. Counselors are busy, you're busy. You have to convince them that this is going to be something valuable.

If this isn't perceived as something of value, what's the purpose, why am I here, I got more important things to do. Now in this first session, they may not perceive that, especially if you're trying something new. And especially again for more experienced counselors-- well we've never done this, why do we need to do this.

But there has to be some discussion about it. What are we doing and why are we doing it? Now, this next thing when I say speak your truth as a supervisor. You know that your counselors are constantly watching you, right?

And so what I'm saying is you can't expect your counselors to do something that you yourself are not willing to do. So if you want your counselors to disclose, to empathize, to open up, to make mistakes, to feel like I can do that. If you're not willing to go there with them, you're going to see through that real quick.

So when I talk about speak your truth as a supervisor, what I mean by that is you might in your first session, you might say, to tell you the truth I've got some mixed feelings about our group. This is something new and for some of you, this might be something that you're really looking forward to. Maybe for others not so much.

And that's going to present some challenges and maybe we can spend some time talking about that. But I just want to let you know as you're supervising and trying out this, yeah I got some mixed feelings about it. That's what I mean when I say speak your truth. So I don't know what your truth is, I don't know if you go in this, you're really excited, great can't wait or you have mixed feelings about it. Or truthfully you kind of something, you got to struggle with yourself.

So if you're more in line with I don't know if this is going to work, you know it's OK to put it out there. Make sure however, there's that other component. Is that honestly, I have some doubts about doing this, but I guess what I'm saying to each of you is you're important enough to me as your supervisor to invest. And I want to invest my time, our time together to help us all become better rehab counselors.

That's also part of speaking your truth, so yeah I guess what I'm trying to say here is you don't want to be phony about how excited you are, but meanwhile you're really not, you've got all kinds of mixed feelings. Counselors see that. So you need to be straight with them about that.

You might want to take some time, with your counselors, to just as we did in that earlier reflection. Maybe if you had spent some time what have we done this and have you done this before. Particularly for the newer supervisors and maybe you're working with experienced counselors, people have been there 15, 20, 25 years.

Yeah we did this back in 2000. It was a bust. Well, I want to hear that. All right? And I want to not just hear that it was a bust, but what made that a bust.

What can we do this time to make it a better experience and hopefully not a bust. So, take some time to talk about what are their expectations and their experiences, what concerns that they have about doing group. The other thing I'll just-- which I think is obvious-- but just in case, maybe that first session you don't discuss any client cases.

In fact, if you do the things that I'm talking about very first meeting. This is a full plate just doing this. Just going through all this, setting that foundation which is really critical. So before we just kind of jump in, you know you know you can't put a roof on the house until you've built the foundation or walls. Let's get the foundation set.

We already talked about the ground rules and the structure. So that's something you need to think of-- what are the ground rules here in group. Typically that involves those issues of trust and respect and those kinds of things that we talked about a little bit earlier.

And then the procedural aspects about where we're meeting; how long we're meeting; how long is each individual meeting; how long is this going to be going on. So as you can see there's a lot-- there's a lot to address just in that first meeting. And that first meeting will set the stage for subsequent meetings, so you want to make sure that you're ready to go.

I thought about this-- because sometimes supervisors ask well, what should I be asking. And to tell you the truth, I was kind of a little hesitant about specifying this, because what I don't want

is, I don't want you folks kind of like OK just reading off a piece of paper. You know because again that looks kind of canned. So what I would suggest, we can just quickly go through these but again, think about what questions that you might want to explore.

So some of these I've already talked about. So what would you like to see happen in this group; what do you hope to get out from being in that group; what might make this experience successful; Have you ever participated in group supervision before? What was that like. Did it work, did it not work, kind of mixed, where were you. Is there anything from those experiences that you learn, that might be helpful here.

I like that question because sometimes that can help set the parameter for the ground rules or how we want to operate. Now again, none of these are kind of magical mystery questions here. Actually they've been embedded in the things I've said earlier. You might have some other things that you want to think about.

But the point is, you should be having some thought about how do I engage in that discussion. So you've done all the groundwork; you've had maybe your first meeting; you've got your ground rules ready to go; you've got buy-in from your counselors, they're ready now for-- all right, now we're going to really get started here.

So in this slide, stage 2, it says storming. Or now we're getting to know one another. You'll recall that I said in the beginning, everybody-- mostly everybody-- tries to be nice and play nice and not confrontational and there you go.

But eventually, as we get more comfortable with one another, as this picture depicts on the slide it's a cartoon character caricature of seven. Well they kind of like look like monsters, or animal caricatures. They're sitting in a circle.

Some appear angry, some bored, some sad. The reason why I use this is depicting that once the group gets going and people feel a little more comfortable, they're letting these aspects of the interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics play out in group.

And so as a result, of that things can get tense, things can get a little testy. That's not a bad thing. So the reason why I bring this up, because sometimes as supervisors-- it's like wow-- this morning's session was a little tense there.

Well that's not necessarily a bad thing. How you deal with it, how you work through that can make all the difference. And in fact, sometimes, as they say, those are opportunities for growth. We usually don't grow as professionals when things are just all kind of lickety-split-- working out all hunky-dory, so to speak.

Growth typically comes when there's tension or there's conflict, where there's opportunity for us to kind of take a look at what's going on. So what happens in this storming stage-- there's power, there's conflict that can result as a function of counselor beliefs or styles. Again, as I said, people who come into group they don't leave that outside of the room.

They bring all those dynamics and the dynamics that exist among counselors, they bring that into the room. Sometimes what happens, there's new alliances that are formed and old ones are reaffirmed. So for example, if John and Mary are best buds, but they don't like Frank over here. Those dynamics can come and play out.

And so as a result, there's resistance to group and we'll talk about specific strategies and how to deal with that resistance. So your task as a supervisor is, number one, recognize that it exists. So your first meeting, your second meeting is going on, maybe a third. Maybe there's a session, wow it didn't go well.

That doesn't mean hey, stop doing group supervision. No, this is part of the process to get everyone moving. As they develop you're going to have some rocky times. It may be, as a supervisor, like what's going on here. Why was there tension, why was there anger here, or hurt feelings.

Well, sometimes what happens is, because we're not adhering to whatever our ground rules are. So if you see that going on, that might be the opportunity-- OK, let's take a time out. Let's revisit, remember one, that we're talking about the importance of respect and we said that this is what we're going to be doing. Well are we doing that?

So if Mary's trying to talk, but every time she talks, John jumps over what she's saying, interrupts her, or disagrees or puts her down or whatever, well, we need to revisit that.

And while it's great if other counselors can kind of point that out and maybe process that, if nothing else, it's your job as a supervisor, when you see that dynamic, if it's being ignored, to bring that back into the group and say let's take a time out for just a minute here-- see kind of what's going on here.

So that might be your time to kind of observe what's happening, comment for the group process. So maybe the kind of thing-- we talked about the importance of being respectful. And I'm just wondering, are we doing that right now. So you're throwing that out to the group, you're letting your group members provide some input.

It doesn't necessarily mean that you have to be the person to articulate yes-no. Let the other group members also do their work. That's why it's a group, so use the power of the group in that way. So again, just for group development process, recognize that most likely it will occur.

And if it occurs it doesn't mean you're doing a bad job. In fact, actually, it's kind of part of the normal process. Our next stages, stages 3 and 4, refer to norming and performing. And I put those together, because basically they're kind of the same process, just along a continuum of working together.

And the other thing I'll just mention, when you think about this-- any kind of a stage model, theoretical description-- sometimes it's sort of like this stage, and this stage and then, you can

revert back. You could go to stage 3 and 4 or norming and performing, and there may be a session where there's what seems like quote, unquote kind of a regression of storming.

Maybe an issue that came up, doesn't mean that you're regressing. So these are fluid stages can move back and forth. So in the picture, there are four nondescript characters, human shape, each of different colors-- red, yellow, blue, green-- and they're holding a large puzzle-- kind of almost like the shape of a large pizza, if you will.

Each piece-- hold on one second, excuse me-- each piece also has a different color and they're four pieces, they all fit together. And the norming part is trying to figure out what are the pieces, what are the tools, the resources available. The performing part is like, let's put it all together in an organized whole.

So in this norming and forming stages, the expectations of each group member, they're known. People know what's expected, what we're here for, what are we doing, how's this working? We're following that, we're implementing, people are starting to value the contributions of other people.

While there are conflicts that arise, they're a little bit easier to resolve because now we have a relationship-- trusting relationship hopefully-- one that's like hey, if I make a mistake it's not the end of the world. Or valued with that, and basically it's a positive experience. Your job as supervisor, in these stages, becomes a lot easier.

As you can see from in the earlier slides, you know that those first two stages of forming and storming, there's a lot of work for you. But once things kind of get going, and once you set up how this is going to work-- I won't say things get easy, they're not easy, but they certainly get easier, that's for sure.

So your role in this storming and performing stage is basically, you want to continue to model that same behavior that you expect from your counselors that you're following. So how you interact-- again just be cognizant of what you're doing and what you're saying because again, you're modeling that for your other counselors in the group.

As you'll see later in the presentation, there are specific things-- tools that you can use to provide feedback and we'll look at some of those in just a few minutes. But you want to make sure that you're looking at the impact of the feedback that the-- in this case-- presenting counselor has. How is this all impacting?

So you want to make sure that in this process you're constantly checking in with the counselor. So when people are giving feedback, you might say, so John I'm just curious, as you listen to the feedback to your colleagues, how does that impact you? Is that working for you or not. Yeah that was good, but I'm not so sure about that.

Your job as the facilitator, the supervisor, is constantly checking in with the individual and also with the group. So how are we doing, any reaction to this morning's session, is there anything that we can do to make this experience better.

So again, you have to have that kind of like big picture view where you're constantly being aware of individual behavior and how it's impacting, and the whole process of the group. Eventually, like everything else, everything comes to an end.

And this is our last stage, the adjourning, stage 5. And I have it in there, parentheses, parting is such sweet sorrow. And there's a picture of-- or actually a cartoon animation of a person with kind of wild hair, holding up a handkerchief, sort of as if waving goodbye, tears are coming from his or her eyes.

And it's just, again, just kind of a metaphor, everything comes to an end. Now if depending on the group, you may, again this is something that you're going to structure way back in that initial meeting. You might decide, OK well let's try this out. Maybe a group will say, well, let's have 10 sessions and then we'll see where it goes.

Or are we going to have an open ended group every month, every two months we're going to get together. And this is going to be part of what we do. So again, depending on how the structure of it is, this may or may not be an issue for your counselors.

Now having said that, I'm also aware, though, that many of you supervise interns, or students who are in practica. And so for those students, so they're here for x amount of time and then they leave.

I just want to mention the importance of that is that this is the one stage of group development, I find, that actually you don't pay much attention to. I've seen groups where literally the supervisor will say well today's our last day-- last day I thought we were getting together a couple more times.

So if you have a structured group and you've decided that you're going to meet for a specific term or a number of times, you want to make sure that in that process that you set that up. So that could be something as easy like, today's our ninth meeting, and I know that we, nine weeks ago or nine months ago, we first started this, we said we're going to get together and we're going to end at week 10 or month 10.

So I just wanted to bring that to attention. And that might be the opportunity, well do we need to renegotiate that or no, that's it. So you're just alerting your counselors to, this is kind of the final process you just don't kind of spring that on them. So again, this depends on how you set up the group.

If it's open ended, people come and go, well then that's not an issue as a group but it may be an issue for an individual person who might be leaving the agency. Or in this case, as a rehab

counselor educator oftentimes what this means are practica and internships students who may have participated in this process.

So your task, in this final stage of our journey, is if the group is coming to a close, oftentimes then maybe in that last meeting or second to last and continue the last meeting. Maybe take time to just kind of reminisce. So as we think about this group, what do we take away from it.

What was it like, what did you get from this? And then there's the other flip side of that, the unresolved concerns of here's some things that yeah group was really good but, here's some things that weren't really helpful. Were there any kind of issues that we hadn't discussed that we need to discuss.

And the reason for that is, that if you decide with an intact group you set it up for a certain number of sessions then that's going to be important information for you if you continue with a new group or make some changes in any subsequent groups that you do. So just be aware that all things come to an end.

And I think the meta message is yeah you don't spring it on like, well today's our last day. Think a little bit more purposefully. At the very least what I would say is if you're meeting for 10 sessions, in session 9, towards the end, you know just again remind people.

The next one is our last, here's what we're going to be doing. So just make sure that you spend some time to process what it was like in being in the group, what do they gain from it, how could we improve it.

Now we're going to talk about some different formats that you can use in providing group supervision. And there are four, not really necessarily four different formats, but there are four variations of how you can do group.

And those being the traditional solution focused approach. A variation of the solution focused approach where the presenting counselor wants to discuss a client, works as an observer and I'll talk about that in a minute or two. The Socratic approach, a question focused approach, and a different approach.

That was developed by Dr. DiAnne Borders using peer group, structured peer group approach that we'll talk about. So let's look at each one of these kind of formats as used in State VR.

One thing, I guess maybe before I get into this approach where the counselor works observer. You saw on the previous side that the traditional approach is a solution focused approach. And typically this is something that often happens in group supervision and that's where a counselor might present a client case.

Here's the issue I have going on. People listen to it and then everybody kind of goes around and offers some suggestions on how to address the problem or what could resolve it. And that's typically what happens.

Not necessarily anything terrible with that approach, but I'm hoping in these other ways of doing supervision, I think there are some more effective ways you could do that. And this is the first one.

If you want to use that solution focused approach, one variation that you might want to consider is, you have the counselor who has a presenting client problem. They may start off and say you know I'm working with a client right now I'm really kind of struggling with-- I've been trying to help her find suitable employment, we set up a number of job interviews and it just hasn't worked out.

She's had three job interviews she's bombed. She's gone through job interview training, she's getting really frustrated, I'm getting really frustrated, and I don't really know where to go. All right so in this approach solution focus, step 1 is exactly what I just presented, so what's the issue.

So the counselor will explain the issue and basically is saying to the group, here's what I want, here's what I need help with. It may be very general-- does anybody have any ideas? It may be very specific questions that requires input from other people.

So group members are given the opportunity to maybe ask some questions or ask clarification-- what do you mean or did you do this or whatever. The second step is well, how are we going to work with this issue.

Now after the counselor presents the concern and there may be some preliminary questions-- but yet you as a supervisor, you want to be careful that you don't get too far into this. People start doing the work before. But just allow a few minutes just to set it up. OK so we present the case.

All right, now, here's the variation. Rather than the counselor who presented the case participate in the discussion, what you instruct the counselor who presented the case, what you do with the counselor who presented the client case, is to ask the counselor who raised the case not to take part in the discussion. Just remain silent.

If they want to take notes, in fact I do encourage them to take notes-- the counselor-- but just listen to what other people say. So after that, then the discussion ensues sometimes that can be 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes usually at 5 because of the number of case presentations, I usually don't like it to go over 15 minutes. I find, to be honest with you, after about 10 minutes, my observation is, a lot of times, there's not any new information.

It's just kind of a regurgitation, re-summarization, repackaging of what someone else said. In fact, sometimes what I'll do to facilitate that, a question I might ask as a supervisor is, OK we've heard a lot, is there any new information? Is there anything that hasn't been said or hasn't been asked, that someone wants to add here.

So after this discussion ensues, then the counselor who presented the case is as you as the supervisor would say, all right so, you've had the opportunity to listen to your colleagues, I'm curious, we're curious what did you take away from this, what did you notice, what did you think, what's your reaction to this, how did you feel about this?

And at that point, then the counselor is provided opportunity to share opinion. And the other thing I should mention is, I also ask the counselor, don't interrupt the counselor who is presenting the case, just let that person talk.

So the same thing noted about the shoes switched on the other foot. Because you don't want to get into this, well yeah I agree, the counselor says, yeah I think John had a really, I tried that, that was really good. But, eventually that didn't work out.

Mary's comment, that might be en route, so avoid any kind of characterization or what was good or what was bad, trying to defend any individual input. Counselor just saying, here's what I observed, here's what I took away.

And so the issue here for the counselors it serves, what did you learn from this? Anything that you gained from this. Were there things that were helpful or not. Now, I can tell you this, I've done this many, many times. And I will guarantee you that you will have situations where people give all kinds of input and then you might have counselor that said to tell you the truth, I didn't really get anything from it.

I didn't really find that was helpful. That is going to happen. So the question is well now what. We just tried this new thing, quote, unquote and it was a bust. If that should happen, one of the things I would suggest to you, would be to reframe that. Because sometimes, generally you have things, yeah it wasn't helpful.

In that instance, typically what I said-- OK so none of this was helpful. Now, you as a supervisor, facilitator had to decide, well do I want to kind of re-engage or do I want to kind of stop that and revisit it later. I would suggest that maybe you spend some to reengage. And by that what I mean is, you might say to the counselor, OK so it sounds like none of this helpful.

OK, so I wonder if you could reframe, maybe your original question in a way that might be helpful. The reason why I say this, I find sometimes what happens, the counselor presenting a case and what they originally-- and the way they characterized the case, and they present it to the other counselors, when you listen to it actually that wasn't the issue at all.

Really there's another issue, that seem that, and sometimes this can actually occur as a result of listening to the discussion, that it needs to be reframed. So if that happens, and I will guarantee you that it will, you might want to take that opportunity to say, OK, well, let's kind of reframe that.

So you know I might say well, yeah it's disappointing that you didn't-- it sounds like you wanted some feedback here that wasn't particularly help for you in advance. I wonder if you could-- as

you listen to the discussion-- if you might want to reframe your question a little bit because it sounds like we kind of missed the mark.

So can you help us and kind of reframe that. Not in every instance, but I find in doing that, oftentimes that might help us to break through. But obviously there's no 100% kind of guarantees. But I am saying to you that that situation will happen. If it does, be prepared for it.

So I guess I kind of covered this material on this next slide about providing answers versus asking questions. But, I alluded to that, The traditional approach in State VR practice is this solution focused, answer providing, focused approach. And the typical scenario goes something like this.

The counselor will say, I have an issue with this client that I'm working with and then describes the scenario. And then counselor peers will say something like, well have you done this, did you try this, what about this situation. Now, in many instances, that approach can be very helpful. And it can be very helpful particularly when there's specific kind of information.

Does anyone know about this kind of technology for this situation or where is the best-- who's one of the best substance abuse counselors in the area. So that's kind of a technical information-- pardon me-- situation that that format works. A lot of stuff though-- when a counselor is asking us for input, sometimes a little bit broader than that.

And so when we get into this kind of-- I have a problem, here's the solution. When we do it within group supervision, my observation of it is that, number one, it places the onus of the group in coming up with quote, unquote the right answer. And again, with that is one of the things I mentioned on the slide sometimes that leads to the yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, but I did that.

You know it's like yeah, but. When I hear that yeah, but. Sometimes that can happen. The other thing what I find is when you do that solution focused, it often, in group supervision, you have what I refer to as kind of like your good doobies. You know the counselors that-- they're going to provide some input and try to answer the question.

But then sometimes too, you're going to have counselors that kind of like, sit back, hands folded, chilling out, let other people do the work. So the quote, unquote answer is a function on the expertise and the participation of some of the members of the group. So you're not taking advantage of all of the expertise that exists.

So let me suggest a different paradigm that hopefully will invite that. So rather than a solution focused approach. We're going to look at it now a different method, an inquiry or question based focus. OK, so rather than the typical scenario of here's the case and here are some ideas, solutions, we're going to use a different way. And that is a question format.

Any of you that remember Greek philosophy and remember Socrates-- his approach in working with students is that when he was giving lectures and talking with his students, he would begin

his presentation with a question. And the purpose for that was to engage his students, his learners.

So similarly, even as an old, old approach to learning, in State VR counselor supervision in groups, it's new. So the issues-- the stats are the same essentially, but there is one important difference. So we still have, where they're using this question method. The counselor begins a discussion about what's the issue, here's the problem.

So they'll talk three to five minutes about that. The next step is well, how are we going to work with it. Now, here's the difference. a supervisor who facilitates the discussion, rather than people offering solutions. What happens is you go round-robin.

So if you have five, seven counselors, and the counselor who presented the case presented it, all the other counselors that will start rather than with the solution of a question. So they might say something-- remember the earlier example about the client who went on multiple job interviews and wasn't successful.

So rather than say well I would do this, instead the counselor-- the other peer counselor would say, well one question that comes to me is, does this person have a clear idea of what they want to do. What jobs bring them satisfaction? Another counselor might say, I'd be curious about the support system. About what it's like for this client when they indicate they're going on a job, how does the partner, spouse, what's their view on that. Another counselor might say I'm interested in terms of the benefits that the client perceives about getting this job and in particular insurance benefits. I may have a question about that. Another counselor might raise the question of tell me about are there limits about how far the client's willing to travel or accessible transportation or whatever the issue may be. So the point being is rather than offering, did you do this, you're reframing that in the sense of having a question. Now the first time everyone is expected to raise one question and one of the things I say when we do this I'll say make sure you only raise one question because sometimes what happens-- someone says well I have a couple of questions. I want to know this-- no, no, no, no, just one question per person. Let's go round-robin. So everyone has an opportunity to ask the question. Now whether with a counselor who presented the case, t I usually don't invite them to raising questions or presenting the case, c I'll have them take notes. So what I might say to the counselor presenting cases, I would say, as you listen to the questions, if you want to write down those questions-- And again, the reason why I like doing that, one, it assigns the counselor an activity, number two, it engages in their learning because they're participating in that. Three, and most importantly, how many times have we been in meetings and people have asked, said some things or ask really good questions and then like an hour goes by and then you go back to your office like, what was that question? What did they-- that was really and I can't remember. Write it down. So everyone has one opportunity to present a question. In the second, third, fourth, however many go-rounds, then if you have a new question that has been asked, do you want to present, you would then offer that. So maybe the first and second round everybody has a question. Third round, instead of all five counselors, maybe though only three of them have questions and maybe by that fifth round there's only one other question that someone hasn't

asked that a counselor. So you continue that process until all the questions are exhausted and again, if you find that things start to get repeated you as a supervisor just say well, again I'm just wondering, are there any new questions or any things that we haven't asked that we need to ask. At the end of that discussion, then the counselor who presented the case, is provided an opportunity to discuss all of the So step three is the same as before in the solution focused approach. In that again, you as a supervisor are asking the counselor present of the case, what did you learn from that, what did you take away from that. Were there some questions that were particularly helpful for you? Now again, the benefit from this is rather than kind of saying it's some kind of prescriptive thing we're offering the counselor a way to kind of conceptualize the think about as it may be a way that he or she has not conceptualized before. So then finally you might ask then the counselor to listen to that given the input from your colleagues. Are there other questions does it raise for you. Now I will tell you from my experience, as I describe this, it might seem like kind of a subtle, I don't really know, this is a very powerful way of learning and gaining insight about client issues or problems or concerns. So, and the other nice thing about this that I find, is that it's a technique that's really easy for a supervisor to do. So just making this one subtle but very important change can really alter the dynamics and the quality of the discussion that ensues in group supervision. OK, this brings us to our fourth format on doing group. And while peer groups are often used in group supervision, ones where they're leaderless groups, i.e. the supervisors there's not a designated person, but a shared responsibility. The format that I'm going to be talking about is where you as the supervisor still serve as the facilitator. But I want to incorporate what's called a structured peer group format that DiAnne Borders-- and there's an article that describes this that's attached to this module, that I would invite you to read that provides you even greater detail. So I'm going to pick up the key components and then amplify some other things that I've kind of changed, added to that, as part of the structure peer group. So when you're working with your counselors in group supervision-- and you'll remember way back when, I suggest avoid the term role-play and instead use the term reenactment-- in this situation, while you can use w video tape I find a more powerful way is actually do a reenactment. And so with this reenactment method is-- now we're actually getting down to the nitty-gritty of what may have transpired between the client and the counselor where the counselor was getting kind of stuck and by perhaps this reenactment, we might be able to kind of come up with some approaches or solutions that will help the counselor kind of break through this. So this reenactment method basically

what we're trying to do is this is a focus where you're concentrating on micro counseling skills and also maybe as a result of this, the counselor might get some insight as applied to this particular client. Your job as the facilitator, as a supervisor, again, yo can use tape, audio video, or reenactment to address the concerns. Now if you use reenactment, and frankly I find this probably the easiest way in terms of logistics, but I would recommend that the counselor who's presenting the case service the client so they're going to reenact the situation as a client. The reason why I do that, recommend that is they know the client, they know the nuances better than another counselor is trying to reenact the situation. The other thing I say to my counselors is when we're setting this up, we're not trying to recreate the exact thing that happened. We can't do that because you don't have that client and that counselor, we're simply taking what the counselor presents and going with that in a way that hopefully will gain some insight about

how to address this issue. So the purpose is not to try to recreate exactly what happened. The details are going to be missing, things are going to be different. So I also kind of mention that. Even so, I've seen many situations where the reenactment is actually quite different from what initially the counselor presented, but because of what this approach does, the counselor got a lot of insight about the situation that maybe initially may not have seen as relevant. Now here's something else-- you'll remember in the earlier module I talked about the role-play and I suggested not using that, you use the term reenactment because of all the negative connotations associated with role-play. Now one of the big issues, especially with group, if you think doing reenactment of one individual supervision can be tough, doing it in group, doing it when you're asking a counselor to reenact in front of peers, my God, can you make it any more anxiety provoking. All right. Now while the counselor presenting the case serves as the role of the client, you have to have a counselor, one of the peers, to serve as-- take on the role of the counselor-- so there's a lot of social anxiety, performance anxiety with that. Let me suggest a few ideas that might help the counselor who's going to do that. Let me also suggest, you're going to love this one, that in the very first scenario, that perhaps you as the supervisor, jump in as the role of the counselor. Now, so think about that for one second, if that didn't heighten your anxiety level some of it. Well let me suggest two things that I think will bring that down. And the one I found actually just by dumb luck, but I remember many years ago when I was demonstrating this with a group of about 25 counselors, I found-- I guess OK so I took on the role of the counselor-- and it's like man, I'm really kind of getting tense and so before as I'm doing kind of an internal check. I think oh what's going on, like oh my God, suppose I screw this up, it's like I'm the all-knowing blah, blah, blah, blah, and it's like, I didn't do a good job. All right, so one of the things that just struck me is like well I know I'm going to make mistakes. So what I did was, something that I'm going to offer to you that I would suggest you might to try. Well knowing that I'm probably going to make mistakes I found that if I publicly admitted that I'll probably be making some mistakes, almost immediately my anxiety level went down. And so one of the things that I even now, I still do, when I'm facing some kind of social anxiety as it relates to this kind of stuff I'll just say look I'm probably going to be making mistakes and in fact today the truth, I'm intentionally going to see if I can make some subtle mistakes so I want you as counselors, as you're watching, observing me to see if you can pick out. So it's basically what you're doing, is you're giving yourself permission and also your counselors when they assume the role of the counselor, permission to make mistakes. You remember way back when we began this I said it's important that this scenario that we create in group is that people should feel comfortable making mistakes. What better way to kind of demonstrate that right here, right now, right? So by just saying look, I know I'm going to be making mistakes, that's OK. In fact, I'd be curious if you can kind of pick up and to tell you the truth, I might even intentionally make that, some may be unintentional. So put that out from the get-go. It reduces your performance anxiety, it also, by asking the other counselors to observe you, it allows them to be engaged. You know when you have these reenactment, if you're not one of the two role-play, you sit back like OK, that's cool I can think about what I'm going to have for dinner tonight, I don't have to worry. But if I ask you, and you'll see in just a few minutes and each of you are going to take a role or have responsibility in this as well. Well now you have to be engaged. And I'll talk more about that in just a minute. So and then also too, when I say how I'm going to make some subtle mistakes, intentional, some unintentional. The other thing that I really

appreciate and I love about this, is that sometimes I'll do things that I don't think are a mistake but a counselor might say, you know I didn't really like the way you did such and such, and then I thought, wow I hadn't really thought about that, but what it does it kind of gives me some insight about what they're kind of focusing in on, what are they kind of cueing about. So in this method, if you do reenactment, keep that in mind as you're setting that up and again I would suggest, on the first time that maybe you as a supervisor, you might serve as the counselor. Remember I said way back when, can't expect your counselors to do something if you're not willing to do it yourself. So if you want to kind of build that trust and that feeling of Yeah Maybe the supervisor, yeah I make mistakes. Yes, we're all human, we make mistakes, it's OK. Here's your opportunity. Now let's just say even when I just got finished saying, that still isn't enough for you, you still have some anxiety, . here's my second suggestion. You remember, I'm not a big wrestling fan, but I think they still do this where they have kind of a tag team. You know wrestlers get in there and they have two or three guys on the team, and some guys get beat up, you can hold out his hand and the other person has to slap and then he can jump into the ring. Well you can do a tag team supervision. So one I remember years ago, I did a training for a supervisor, we talked about this, and still her anxieties were still pretty high. So I suggest well what if you had a team with you. So what we did was we had to get a counselor whose working role was the client, the supervisor was working as the counselor, but then she could pick one or two other people with her that would be kind of a co-counselor. So if she got stuck, she could turn to the other person and say look I'm stuck can you help me out. So by that way, you had another resource available to you. So even if you got stuck, you still have somebody there, next to you, who could help you out. So if in the reenactment, and you're, boy this isn't going-- you could turn to the person next to you, Mary, can you jump in here? The other benefit from that is, it again, it gets more people actively engaged in that process. So you have two additional tools that you could use if you want to use this reenactment approach within group. All right. Now let's take a little closer look about this structured peer group. OK, so I mentioned that you have a counselor and a client who are reenacting a situation, but you also then have the other counselors sitting around a circle observing. Now you need to get them engaged too. And Borders has developed a good strategy here. And what she basically did was, she asked the observing counselors to take on a specific role, or a task, or perspective as they watch this reenactment. So for example, let's say if you have a group of five counselors, five or six counselors, this very first one you're the counselor, reenactment, the counselor's the client reenactment. The other people sitting around observing this are assigned specific roles. So you might say, for example to the counselor who is observing counselor one you might say, all right Mary, as you're watching this reenactment, I'd like for you to focus on my nonverbal behavior and what that might be communicating to the client. Second counselor you might say, OK Juanita, I want you to, as you watch me, think about what is a theoretical orientation, a counseling approach do you think that I'm trying to communicate. Do you see is this kind of person centered or motivational interviewing, rational motive. Third counselor might be all right, Dominic. I want you to focus on, I'm going to say the alter ego of the counselor. In other words, as you watch me are there messages or things not communicating that I'm not saying to the client directly, but you think I may be communicating. To the fourth counselor it might be well that's kind of the same way, from the client perspective, you might say, all right James, I want you to imagine that you're the client and you're listening to this, what are things that you

want to communicate to the counselor, but you're not saying. Another counselor might say, well, I'm just, I'm thinking there are endless possibilities depending on the situation. But it might be-- you might say-- how well do you think I'm addressing multicultural aspects within this scenario. Or you might say, how well-- if there's a specific question, or a technique, or an approach, might say-- how well do you see the me using positive confrontation. So again, depending on the situation, really endless kind of possibilities. But the important thing is, in this structured peer group method, not only is the counselor and the client in that reenactment, they're clearly engaged and then if you ever have any co-counselors, they're engaged, but then what about all the other observers. This is a way to get everybody engaged. And so everybody has an individual role. So again, I just mentioned some of those examples, you can cue, on specific aspects. Beyond what I've already presented, one other thing I note is sometimes when I would say, create a metaphor for the client counselor, the counseling situation, the process. By that I mean, sometimes I've asked that a counselor, as you observe this what metaphor kind of comes to mind. How would you describe that. Sometimes I find that that question can be really impactful, really powerful. And I can think of a number of occasions where like an observing counselor might just say, I just kind of felt like the client was on the island and the counselor was in a rowboat rowing away from the client waving goodbye. Wow. about that that metaphor, that message. So what happens then is that you assigned everyone roles, you do the reenactment. Again if you do use an audio videotape, you can do that and have people assigned there. The benefit of that, of course, is that you don't have to have the reenactment but you still have the material there which you can ask people to listen to or to give some feedback as a result of their assigned roles. At the end of that, and sometimes this might go on like 10, 15 minutes. At the end of it, your role then as a supervisor, you're moderating. Your role then is to focus, as I use the term, you're a process observer, where you're summarizing, here's what you saw, here's what you observed. You can also though, share that. You don't have to be the lead person, that might be something you put out to the group. So you might ask that question, OK so what do we take from that? Usually what I do, though, is I'll start with the counselor who is playing the role of the client and I'll ask for his or her input because they're the one that's kind of presenting the case. So I might say so, what do you take away from that. How's that-- is that useful or is that not useful, or what reactions-- or they could take it in any direction that they want, and then conversely the assigned counselors also can contribute in that way. So there's, as I said, I have the original article that's attached to this module that you are invited to read and provide even more detail than what I provided here and hopefully we'll get you going-- if you want to use-- what I think is actually a really effective group supervision technique. , OK so we're at a near close of this module, as in past modules I'd like you to reflect maybe on the content again like when I asked these reflection questions it's often accompanied by a picture. And as in past modules again there's a picture of someone standing on the edge of a shore and her reflection is in the pool of water and looks like a sunset behind her. So I want you to reflect. What are some of your takeaways from this module? Was there anything in this module that was new for you? Was there any information that kind of you maybe relearned with things that you knew before, perhaps expanded your thinking in some way. But more importantly, what I want you to do is kind of reflect on how does the information in this module, how does that impact on your plan to provide group supervision with your counselors. I want you to spend some time thinking about that and perhaps you might want to develop a plan, an action plan

that you could use in supervising your counselors. Before we go though, I have a few suggested learning activities that I would ask you to think about. We started asking this question a little bit earlier in the module. Think back to your experiences in group supervision. Maybe you've had some in your training, and if you think back to the facilitator, what did he or she do that made that successful or not successful. Are there some things that you can take away-- yeah I definitely want to do that with my group or maybe I definitely don't want to do that in my group. We talked about the importance of thinking purposefully on how to plan that most important first group supervision. So think about the things that you need to prepare for, what questions that you want-- you think that might come up in that first group meeting. Think about how are you going to address that, how are you going to prepare for that. And then, as I mentioned before, there's an attached PDF paper written by Dr. Borders called a Systematic Approach to Peer Group Supervision. Familiarize yourself with those six steps that are described in that approach, that are articulated in this module. Think about maybe how you could implement that in a case review-- pardon me-- that you could use in group supervision. Again, if you feel like man I don't know if I'm quite ready for that, although frankly I think you, the great thing about this you don't need a lot of training in terms of implementing that. At the very least though, I hope you would think about using the question method. I think that's a subtle but really important thing. So these are some activities that I think if you engage in that, will help you be prepared. And I want to thank you again for taking the time to be with us. The other slides, there's some references that I used in preparing this module that if you want to look at, some are textbooks. Some are journal articles and also some chapters. Things that I've written. So you're welcome to look at those as well. I wish you continued success and I thank you for taking time to meet with us.

I look forward in working with you in our last, in this series. So keep up the continued good work and thank you again.