Supervising Multiple Supervisees

Group & Triadic Supervision
Before you begin...

- Read Chapter 4 in Borders & Brown (2005)

- Reflect on your experiences where you weren’t the only supervisee.
  - In what ways is group or triadic supervision different from individual supervision?
  - What were the advantages of these models?
  - What challenges might these approaches create?
Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you should be able to:

• Articulate definitions of group and triadic supervision
• Describe the rationale and considerations of both group supervision and triadic supervision
• Outline the characteristics of effective supervision with multiple supervisees
• Summarize at least two structured formats for both group and triadic supervision
Why multiple supervisees?

- Some distinct learning methods can be achieved only with multiple supervisees
- Expected by accrediting bodies (i.e., CACREP) and allowed by some licensure laws
- Group or triadic supervision is an efficient use of time and resources
Group Supervision

- The process whereby supervisors oversee a supervisee’s development in a group of peers (Holloway & Johnson, 1985)
  - Typically involves case presentation by a presenting supervisee(s) and feedback from remaining members
- Group size:
  - 5 is modal number
  - average is 8
  - maximum is 12
- Group supervision requires a unique set of skills and understanding to implement as a learning intervention
Advantages of Group Supervision

- Group process provides new learning potential
- Minimizes supervisee dependence
- Presents opportunities for vicarious learning
- Exposure to broader range of clients
- Greater quantity and diversity of feedback
- Greater opportunity to practice feedback
- Provides a more comprehensive picture of the supervisee
- Greater opportunity to use action techniques/collaboration
- Normalizing/social support
Disadvantages of Group Supervision

- More feedback for the supervisee to consider and integrate
- Client care considerations may be more challenging to address
- Unhelpful group dynamics can interfere with the process
- Evaluation feedback may become more challenging
Characteristics of Effective Group Supervision

- Appropriate structure
- Established a learning environment
- Facilitative (vs. directive) role of the supervisor
- Peer involvement and feedback
Appropriate Structure

- Practical issues
- Greater emphasis on task
  - Case presentation
- Structure varies according to:
  - Development
  - Setting
  - Purpose
Creating and Maintaining a Learning Environment

- Discuss and set ground rules early in the process
- Address confidentiality
- Deal with supervisee anxiety about the group setting
- Attend to group dynamics
Facilitative (versus Directive) Role of Supervisor

- Supervisor’s role shifts with group development
- Group process needs thoughtful leadership
- Supervisor as group moderator rather than leader
Role and Importance of Peer Feedback

- Definition: Clinical guidance, reactions, insights, and explorations provided by counselors other than clinical supervisor
- Teach supervisees to prioritize feedback
- Provide guidance on appropriate peer feedback
- Peer feedback often more impactful
Summary of Supervisor’s Role

- To provide clear structure and expectations of group process as it relates to supervision
- To facilitate leadership and positive group dynamics
- To encourage peer feedback
- To continually assess group needs (development, setting, experience, goals) and adapt accordingly
Case Presentation

- Written description of the session
  - Background of the client and the counseling relationship
  - Internal or subjective experiences of the supervisee
  - Purpose of the selection
  - Request for feedback and direction
Structured Peer Feedback Model (Borders, 1991)

- Encourages a supportive and reassuring environment
- Provides focus on both the process and content of supervision
- Utilizes a case presentation approach
- Group members select or are assigned roles or tasks that guide their feedback
- Supervisor acts as moderator
Review of Structured Peer Group

- What did you like about the demonstration?

- Which of the key characteristics does the peer group model address?
  - Clarified need and goal for supervision
  - Supervisor assignment of roles
  - Process facilitator role
  - Assists in translating to performance
Triadic Supervision

• Definition: a clinical supervisor providing clinical guidance to two supervisees simultaneously

• Recognized by CACREP and permitted by some licensure boards

• Matching of developmental level between supervisees may be most critical

• Offers many of advantages of both individual and group (but is different than either)
Advantages to Triadic Supervision

- Overall advantages
  - Less intense, but with benefits of both peer feedback and supervisory guidance.
  - Allows for vicarious learning (like group), but with more involvement of supervisor (like individual)
Advantages to Triadic Supervision

- For supervisee:
  - Peer-to-peer support
  - Increased self-supervision skills
  - More willingness to take risks
  - Learn from another counselor’s cases over time

- For supervisor:
  - Peer communication is usually developmentally appropriate
  - Supervisees can see “it’s not just me” by working closely with another supervisee
Disadvantages to Triadic Supervision

- If not well-planned, can take more time (or be ineffective)
- Responsibility (and liability) for all clients resides with supervisor
- Additional relationship to manage
- Pair match is critical
- Evaluation issues
Formats of Triadic

- Split focus
- Single focus
- Peer supervision
Formats of Triadic

• Split focus – Equal times of each meeting are divided between presentation and review of one supervisees work and feedback from the other

• Single focus – Schedule alternating meetings for case presentations between to two supervisees
Formats of Triadic

• Peer supervision – A more directed and thorough peer review of the entire session in advance of the triadic meeting rather of clips of the meeting

• Because of the need for increased attention to more than one supervisee and an additional caseload, triadic is typically scheduled for 90 minutes, rather than the traditional hour
Split- or Single- focus

- Establish presentation schedule
- Induction to the format of triadic
- Pre-session planning
- Case presentation
- Effective engagement with non-presenting supervisee
- More active role than facilitative
Peer supervision focus

- Shift leadership to the non-presenting peer
- Guided review in advance of session to facilitate analysis and feedback
  - Responsiveness to presenting peers request for feedback
  - Strengths
  - Overall impressions
  - Opportunities for improvement
  - Question/response dialogue
  - Summary
Summary

• Group and Triadic supervision are beneficial interventions that complement individual supervision

• Intentionality of the supervisor is key to maximizing the usefulness of supervision format

• Facilitation of peer feedback is integral to supervising multiple supervisees