

BAPPS

# *Supervision Review*

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## Supervision Training

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## Foreword

Anne Power (Lead Editor)

The theme of this edition of 'Supervision Review' is upon supervision training. This choice of focus begs a question about the validity or importance of training in supervision. As an organisation BAPPS promotes the training of supervisors and requires its members to be qualified, whether by means of formal qualification or by accredited prior learning via the apprenticeship model. This accreditation process is not an uncontroversial position and many practicing supervisors have learnt their trade informally as an extension of the therapeutic process rather than as a distinct albeit related activity.

These questions regarding supervision training bring to mind the notion of the 'barefoot supervisor'. The concept was coined by Turner in an article in 2006 in *Therapy Today*. At first glance the term suggested a supervisor who had had only rudimentary training – akin to the farm workers who in 1960s China were trained in basic medical care. This original sense of the concept was conveyed by 'The Barefoot Psychoanalyst' (Southgate and Randall) a manual of experiential exercises to foster awareness and understanding of unconscious process. However Turner used the term differently. He described himself as freshly qualified with a diploma in supervision; he used the concept to convey the sense of working at the coal face, of being alongside supervisees in the particularly uncertain terrain of hospice work where the conventional boundaries of the therapy room could not be maintained. In the particular setting where he worked there was a need for adaptability and therefore a challenge to maintain the principles of the frame in an unusual setting.

Turner ended his piece by describing how he came to recognise that the issues he took to his peer supervision group were the same as those brought by supervisors from very different fields; he recognised that in any setting therapeutic work takes us to a pioneer territory where the practitioner, like a barefoot doctor, has to respond and make ethical choices without the immediate back up of the big chiefs in the big hospital. He concludes, "Perhaps we are all barefoot supervisors." (2006:p41) It makes sense to suggest that all supervisors need to retain an element of the barefoot ethic – being grounded, adaptable, staying in touch with their community, and knowing how to apply core principles to unexpected challenges. Whether our preparation for supervision is more or less formal, what we most seek is a growing awareness and a capacity to reflect; without these we would be not so much barefoot as footloose.

In this edition of *Supervision Review* Jenny Gower's paper takes us directly into the tensions of the training group as she shares her experience of teaching supervision to therapists of different theoretical backgrounds. Greg Nolan writes from his experiences as both a student and subsequently a trainer on supervision courses; he reflects on some of the learning methods as well as the outcomes. It is interesting that both Greg and Jenny's papers make very positive reference to the use of alternative channels of communication in supervision. Greg writes about the use of a sand tray and Jenny about musical instruments. From quite separate positions they describe the enrichment which comes through these non-verbal means of interaction. Anne Power's paper assesses the response to the questionnaire on supervision training which many of you completed and returned earlier in the year. Gertrud Mander's account of the BAPPS Spring Conference may leave those of us who weren't there feeling that we missed a fascinating talk which related to issues of training through the general subject of psychoanalytic education.

The editorial team would like to warmly thank those members who completed and returned the questionnaires, thus making possible the study which is written up in this edition of *Supervision Review*. The Winter edition will focus on typologies, the Spring edition on dreams and next Summer's edition will look at supervising in different settings. As always we would greatly welcome contributions on these themes and the publications committee would be very pleased to talk over ideas with readers who are considering writing a piece.

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Turner, D. 2006 The Barefoot Supervisor in *Therapy Today* Oct 2006, pp41-42.

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## When two 'tribes' Come Together For Supervision Training

Jenny Gower

### Abstract

The article reflects on the group process of twelve students on a Certificate course in supervision. The course was in its fifth year and the two tutors were psychodynamically trained but students were taken onto the course from a number of models of counselling. This article is reflecting on the interactions within the group where out of the twelve students, five were trained and experienced in the integrative model of counselling and the other seven were trained in the psychodynamic model and of this seven one was also a music therapist.

The first day of the course contained all the usual anxieties of a new training but there was also an element of 'tribalism' between the two counselling models with the lone music therapist only partly 'in tune' with either group. All the students were experiencing the normal anxiety of starting a new course, but for some there was an outward appearance of being more confident because they knew the training centre and therefore had a sense of belonging; in addition they had fully trained in the psychodynamic model. The struggle of the students to manage their anxiety is described in Klein's (1975) paranoid-schizoid position which gives us a way to understand the students' extreme anxiety, the anxiety of the unknown of the course and the 'tribalism' of having to tolerate the difference. In times of fear individuals can regress to earlier methods of defending themselves against these feelings of unease and then project these feelings into another individual. With the integrative students it appeared as if these unwanted feelings that were being projected were related to the fear of not belonging and for both 'tribes' there was the fear of tolerating the difference.

As the course progressed so did the divide between the groups as the students who were integrative struggled with understanding the more complex psychodynamic theory of supervision. There was a sense of omnipotence from those who 'knew' the theory, creating a defence against their own anxieties: were they going to lose some members of the group? Would the course continue? Could they tolerate their own 'not knowing'? Bion (1961) describes this process as the 'fight or flight' mechanism to ward off the threat of a perceived enemy or to take flight from them.

The structure of the course is that students have to present a paper and as it was a large group these presentations were arranged in pairs. As was predictable the students paired with other students from within their own 'tribes'. The music therapy student had been encouraged to bring examples of her work to the group but had found this difficult. However, she did assure me that she would incorporate her music therapy into the presentation.

On the week of this presentation the training room was filled to capacity with musical instruments of all shapes and sizes. There was an excited buzz and sense of expectation in the group that had not been there before. The presentation showed how one might work with depression through a combination of music therapy and psychodynamic interpretations; this clinical work would then be reflected on in supervision. One student took the role of the 'client'; she had a drum which she was hunched over - just hitting the drum now and again, in a low monotonous tone. The music therapist was playing a very fast melodious tune of a flute and it was obvious that both therapist and client were 'out of tune' with each other. The student then went on to explain that through discussions in supervision this 'out of tune' dynamic could be thought about.

The students then continued the demonstration of the therapy. The client continued to beat the drum in a slow way with no eye contact with the therapist. The therapist listened to the beat of the drum and started to play the flute slowly and gently keeping in time with the rhythm. Gradually there was synchronicity between them and the drum beats became more regular. As this was being demonstrated I noticed that the group were all listening intently as one. The student then continued to explain how she used music in her work in combination with psychodynamic theory.

There was time for questions and discussions and then the group were invited to take one of the instruments and play. There was no hesitation; all the students went forward and took an instrument and the group played music together, seemingly without inhibitions. At the end they were laughing and talking to each other and I could feel a definite change in the dynamics of the group. There no longer appeared to be the 'tribal' split but here they were all students together. In that moment of being given a space to 'play' change had taken place. Klein (1975) would see this as an example of the emotional maturity of the depressive position; the group had reached a stage where they could now tolerate the ambivalent feelings that they had felt towards each other.

The parallel process between the group and the presentation by the music therapist was interesting. Here was a client and counsellor who were out of tune together, not understanding each other, but through the process of presenting in supervision they had found a way of enabling a process of change. Through this demonstration and through the opportunity to all play music together a change had taken place for these two 'tribes'. They had found a way of being able to express themselves non-verbally, in a safe environment and consequently they had come together as one group.

There was a short time in the plenary to reflect on the day and there were some comments from the students about how they had enjoyed the presentation and the opportunity to learn about music therapy. They also commented on their enjoyment of playing together as a group, 'not in harmony', but together. There wasn't any time to follow the process through and as the course met once a month it was not reflected on again. However, the students continued to work closely together until the 'live supervision assessment' when once again there was now a verbalised apprehension of them having to supervise the work of a student who was not working in the same model as themselves. This did not last long and on the day of the 'live supervision' the nervousness of the assessment itself was more pronounced and all the students survived the day.

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# Counselling and Psychotherapy Supervision Training

Greg Nolan

## Abstract

*The pre-structured training course is just one potential element of learning about counselling and psychotherapy supervision. This article also relates thoughts and experiences on: the use of IPR (Interpersonal Process Recall) ; mutuality and creativity; risk and trust; the intersubjective 'dance' towards insight in supervisory relationships; and the impact of researching the supervisory encounter on both self and therapeutic practice.*

I decided eleven years ago that it was the right time to take a year's certificate course in counselling supervision, having worked as a therapist managing a team of counsellors for the previous ten years, and then as a supervisor with trainee counsellors and experienced practitioners. I was eager and ready for the challenge and experiences of that training, led by Barbara Lawton who, with Colin Feltham at that time, was in the process of completing her edited collection of papers (Lawton & Feltham, 2000). Perhaps this is a key factor in choosing a training course – knowing something of the tutors and their track record in the field as well as the course content and venue.

What this year of training gave me was an unforgettable rich mix of theories and structures of supervision practice, active experiential work, and the opportunity to 'play' in using creative approaches. What was particularly 'seminal', shifting my perception, was experiencing the use of IPR (Interpersonal Process Recall) (Kagan, 1969; West & Clark, 2004). Supervision sessions with peers on the course were videotaped and viewed immediately afterwards with a facilitator; 'supervisor' and 'supervisee' then questioned and investigated thoughts behind interventions and reactions at significant moments, deconstructing the processes behind stuckness and insight. I hadn't before witnessed and understood the complexities or insights that might arise from supervisory encounters, the replay clarifying reflexive contemplation and challenge and intuited thoughts. IPR is a key element that I use in supervision training courses, students repeatedly emphasising its sometimes revelatory impact in shifting practice insights on to a deeper level of felt awareness.

When contracting with new supervisees I also highlight an expectation of some mutuality – that each of us is likely to learn something new in the relational, intersubjective and creative space. No more so than on the occasion when one supervisee, who works with children in schools, brought her sand tray with her to the session, and with toy figures proceeded to reconstruct the storying process conducted with one of her 'clients' – the symbolic representation and re-creation of what began to emerge as phenomenologically harrowing material impacted on the emotional engagement between and within each of us, enabling reflection, deconstruction and deeper insight into the therapeutic and parallel process. I acknowledged with her the excitement and impact that this session had had on my own learning, and have since put together my own portable sand tray and collection of figures, as symbol and archetype, which I use in my own practise and in practitioner and supervisor training.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that most will have had experiences of 'good', 'bad' and 'indifferent' supervision at various times; findings from my own research (Nolan, 2007, 2008a, 2008b) indicate elements of what can distinguish a 'good' or 'excellent' supervisor from one who may offer little in the way of insight and support. The formal training of practising supervisors is varied in the number of hours, expectations, academic level, quality and nomenclature of certificated courses, a significant proportion of which have no external validation, and a 'Certificate' or 'Diploma' could be for a weekend or of up to 2 years of attendance/study (Mann & Docchar, 2008). What is clearly necessary, and a task that BACP is currently addressing, is a defined 'Core Curriculum' for Counselling and Psychotherapy Supervision courses in which is laid out a series of key components and expectations of professional training.

Where a truly meaningful supervisory relationship has been informed by good and inspirational training, there may be sufficient trust to openly reflect on feelings and perceptions. The practitioner is able to own flaws and imperfections in the risk of being fully human, the very problematic at the core of some client needs. Without the opportunity for such calculated leaps there can be little professional development or new discovery. With shared practitioner wisdom and mutual engagement, seen as "colourful/vibrant", and of witnessing "grace" and mutual "respect" (Nolan, 2007: 156), this supervisory 'dance' can be intersubjectively expressed, enabling a 'space' for emotive experiencing and, for a time, contemplative stillness...

I experienced supervision research as a form of training in itself, interviews inevitably straying in and out of a 'supervisory' relationship; transformational moments shared within deeply felt and trusting exchanges of considerable participant ease, a kind of 'wisdom' and 'stillness' in which we contemplated that which might otherwise be glossed-over:

"In the act of typing this down, I am feeling, in-the-moment, the enormity of this interview experience as an adrenalin rush, exhausting but a 'thrill' for each of us when we ended, having shared and tolerated intimate emotions whilst each was gaining insights and new learning." (Nolan, 2007: 191)

– and in the process,

"I found a way to let-go, step off the cliff-edge and play among the stars, permitting unformed ideas from the 'unthought known' (Bollas, 1987) to coalesce. Translating these from whimsy to the concrete is both challenge and joy, the '*jouissance* of the drive' (White, 2006: 203) and

'... the *jouissance* of the true self, a bliss released through the finding of specific objects that free idiom to its articulation.' (Bollas, 1992: 17, cited in White, 2006: 28)" (ibid.: 212)

So too are the best of those special, seminal moments that we may touch as both trainee and supervisor practitioner.

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## The Value of Supervision Training – BAPPS Survey

Anne Power

*Abstract* The paper reviews the data collected from forty respondents to a questionnaire on supervision training which was sent to two hundred subscribers to Supervision Review. Respondents evaluated aspects of their training and demonstrated their preferences through a rating scale. Provisional ideas are offered about the meaning of these preferences and the particular role of anxiety in learning is considered.

The questionnaire distributed with the Winter edition of Supervision Review was designed to identify those elements in supervision training which best promote learning. The chart below sets out how respondents rated each aspect of training on a 0-10 scale. I decided that the clearest way to present the responses was to measure what percentage of respondents gave a high mark (eight or more) to each question, as well as noting how many gave very low marks (three or less). The choice of these high and low categories was a subjective one which I arrived at by reading the rating figures in conjunction with the comments. I sensed that people were giving eight and above when they felt strongly that this ingredient of the training had been useful. Where marks of three or less were given there was a sense from comments that this aspect of the course had been judged to be a waste of time.

In total there were forty-three responses to the two hundred questionnaires sent out and seventeen of these forty-three forms included written comments. Three forms were returned by supervisors whose training had been via apprenticeship rather than through formal training. Sadly the comments on these forms were not sufficient to provide a basis for a comparison with the bulk of responses – the forty supervisors who had undergone a specific supervision course. Results from these forty forms are displayed in the chart below.

The majority of forms were returned by post in hard copy; a handful came by email. It was not always clear whether the respondent considered that they had done an apprenticeship as well as a formal training; there is perhaps a sense in which all supervisors go through an apprenticeship whether or not they do formal training. A few respondents clearly had experienced the two styles of training and this group provided something of a comparison of the two routes to acquiring supervision skills; their opinions were varied. One gave eight for formal and ten for informal, commenting that the latter was more useful. Another gave nine to both, saying of informal: "Watching and learning from a range of supervisors. Very important to change supervisors from time to time." Another gave nine to formal "essential" and five to informal which was described as "hit and miss". A more positive comment about apprenticeship described it as: "Invaluable – I had to learn from my mistakes." This sentiment was echoed on a few forms.

## Reflections on Results

This section offers a few observations on the responses to each question whilst the bulk of written responses are listed below so that readers can get a flavour of the survey in its pre-digested form. As there were some themes which emerged from across the twelve questions I have written about them separately below.

The first question invited a general rating of the value of formal training and the response was strikingly positive with 85% giving eight or more. This very high support for formal training is perhaps not surprising given that the questionnaire went to a self-selected group of supervisors who may have reasons for wanting to view their training as a good investment.

In such a small sample we cannot draw firm conclusions but I wonder if there is an interesting trend in the different ratings given to the different types of supervision of supervision. Group supervision of supervision came out nine percentage points ahead of individual, but perhaps more significant was that individual supervision of supervision received eleven top mark ratings (ten out of ten) but also some strikingly low marks (two threes, a four and a five) whereas group supervision of supervision received only five top marks but nor did it receive any mark lower than a five. Would it be fair to deduce that when individual supervision of supervision is a good fit it is experienced as a particularly rich learning environment but when it does not go well it leaves the supervisee badly disappointed? The stakes seem higher than for group supervision where ratings were more moderate.

Elements of supervision training to be rated out of ten.	Percentage of respondents who gave 8 or more to this item.
<b>Formal supervision training in general</b> 47% gave ten out of ten. No one gave less than 5.	<b>85</b>
<b>Supervision of supervision in a group</b> Six had not done this. No one gave less than a 5	<b>70</b>
<b>Individual supervision of supervision</b> Four had not done this. Two gave a 3 and a number gave 4 or 5.	<b>61</b>
<b>Live supervision with feedback</b> One person gave a 2; others were all 5 and above	<b>51</b>
<b>Lectures</b> Three people gave 3 or less. (1,1,2)	<b>40</b>
<b>Seminar discussions</b> Three marks were 3 or less. (2,2,3)	<b>50</b>
<b>Experiential exercises</b> Three marks of 3 or less (1,3,3)	<b>44</b>
<b>Preparing and making presentations</b> Two marks of 3 or less (2,3)	<b>34</b>
<b>Writing essays</b> Two marks of 3 or less (2,2)	<b>49</b>
<b>Reading</b> No marks of 3 or less.	<b>73</b>

This comparison between the two types of supervision of supervision shows up the implications of the method I have used to display the results. If I had added all the scores to produce an average score for each question then individual with its high number of ten out of ten scores might have come out as more popular than group. This usefully reminds us of the limitations of statistics as a way of presenting information. Listing the average responses might have given a 'purer' result but I thought a less informative one.

Comments about live supervision were some of the most interesting including one respondent who gave a low rating for the learning she gained from this but added, "I feel this is essential for trainers for assessment purposes but not very helpful for me as a student." The question on lectures prompted several comments about quality; so lecturers may continue to quake – you *are* being judged! Comments on experiential exercises and seminar discussions were again very mixed with a number citing quality of facilitation as critical. Responses regarding preparing presentations and essays seemed to reflect the student's acceptance of the 'no pain, no gain' motto. The question on reading indicated how this can be hard to maintain without the incentive of the presentations and the essays.

The final question asked what other elements had supported learning. There was considerable agreement on this between respondents. Most favoured was "ongoing contact with peers, including peer supervision." "Own supervision of clinical work – individual and in groups" was also strongly endorsed as was "just doing the work" or "learning on the job". There was also strong feeling about the value of one's own analysis and analytic training; the former helping with insight into oneself and the latter supplying essential theoretical understanding. One comment seemed to convey that one of the most subtle aspects of a training could prove the most powerful: "The time it took enabled a deepening of thought and experience."

## Emerging Themes

Certain themes began to emerge quite strongly even though the questionnaire had not specifically sort to measure these. Most striking of these were assessment, group dynamics and the role of anxiety in learning.

### ASSESSMENT

The question of evaluation came up in many different comments, indicating that this was an aspect of training which was highly rated by many supervisors. Comments suggested that assessment can itself be facilitative of learning (rather than a necessary evil). So it might have been interesting to have asked directly how much respondents considered this had contributed to their learning.

The importance of evaluation was also endorsed in comments under 'other': a number of respondents wrote of the value of evaluation: both formal and informal, including feedback from supervisees and clinical managers as well as ongoing self evaluation. Live supervision, recorded sessions, essay writing and presentations were all seen as valuable because they require the trainee supervisor to expose their thinking and practice.

## GROUP DYNAMICS

Comments about the variability of group process came up under several topics, suggesting that difficult group dynamics can impede learning in many areas of training, notably: discussions, presentations, live supervision and group supervision of supervision. Some respondents favoured individual supervision because it freed the process from group dynamics; others favoured group supervision because this gave them a model for their own group work. Descriptions of group relationships varied between playful, pedestrian, tense and competitive.

## THE ROLE OF ANXIETY

This is an area which interests me considerably and so my selection of this for special focus is reflective of the subjective nature of this study. Some of the comments on essays and presentations related to the window of opportunity for learning where anxiety is optimal. We know instinctively that with too much anxiety we cannot learn, whilst with too little we lose motivation. This relationship between anxiety and performance is described formally in the Yerkes-Dodson Law (1908), though the point at which arousal ceases to support performance is different for each individual and in different settings. Respondents' comments confirm that in training settings the management of group process is critical to containing anxiety and maximising the window of learning opportunity.

Comments about live supervision were particularly illustrative of the Yerkes-Dodson Law. Two respondents noted the experience of sufficient, but not overwhelming anxiety: "Challenging but tactful." "Very daunting but good." A third had found anxiety prevented learning: "This was so nerve wracking that it is hard to think if it was useful or not." A fourth describes the process by which an intense learning experience stays with us: "If the level of arousal is right this experience becomes hard wired, for better or worse!" Comments about experiential exercises also reflected the importance of this arousal-safety ratio: "Useful if safe." Another respondent said of preparing presentations: "Not helpful to me at all, only anxiety provoking." Another described the positive experience of anxiety in essay writing saying it provided, "an essential encounter with superego, good enough or otherwise!"

## Useful Lessons from the Process

As this was a relatively informal survey I have not adopted the rigorous methodology which would be necessary for academic research. In processing the results I have become aware of a number of confusions in the data and so I thought it would be interesting to share my reflections on what I now see as design errors. These problem areas indicate where particular care would be needed if a 'real' research project on this were undertaken – they highlight where amendments to the protocol would be needed if this survey had been a trial for more serious research.

When faced with an item which is close to their area of interest but not asking the question which really engages them, respondents will understandably answer the question which they would prefer to have been asked. The questionnaire was focused on "which elements in your training were most useful and why?" but it became clear that many respondents were answering a more general (and in many ways more interesting) question about "what has been the making of me as a supervisor?" and this question naturally includes continuing professional development. Comments such as "I rarely do this [individual supervision of supervision]", demonstrated that some respondents were answering questions in terms of their on-going learning. This confusion almost certainly applied more to some questions, such as the value of reading, than others. A similar frustration for respondents was evident around the question of quality. Many indicated that a blanket question asking about the usefulness of lectures, for example, was not helpful as the usefulness was so dependant on quality.

On a few questions, the comments written implied that the respondent might be replying not from their own experience, but from their *opinion*. For example respondents mentioned that they had not personally experienced a certain item, but they still rated it according to their judgement of how useful it might be. Whilst respondents' opinions are interesting in themselves, they would not be relevant in a piece of research which claimed to measure experience.

The instructions given with the form may not have been sufficiently clear that written comments were welcome in addition to the mark out of ten; about half of the respondents did give written comments. There was a technical hitch in processing two of the email returns which seem to have been 'scrambled' in the transition between different computer programmes, leaving uncertainty about which figure belonged to which question.

## Conclusion

Although a questionnaire is a blunt instrument, these results do provide an interesting snap shot into experience of supervision training. This may be of practical use to readers who design and deliver supervision training and could indicate future areas of research. From this study we can deduce some important guiding principals: that optimal conditions for learning require group dynamics to be carefully managed and that anxiety needs to be at an appropriate level. In addition we can see that different students benefit from different parts of the course but that the preparation and giving of presentations came out considerably lower than other aspects of training. A more extensive project would need to review methods of research used to explore learning in other settings; there may be an existing research instrument which could be adapted to measure the experience of supervision trainees and which could throw more light on the fascinating and subtle aspects of the learning/ teaching process.

## Further Comments from Forms

(Full stops are used to separate the contributions from different respondents.)

<p>Formal training</p> <p>A new world opened up. Essential. Provided an opportunity to link theory to practice and to experience learning with others. Not as useful as my personal analysis; mostly confirmed what I had learned on the job. Consolidated what I had learned at the coal face. Reassurance after years of practice. Helped me to understand the supervisory relationship. It's a step change in thinking; hard to imagine it happening as well informally.</p>
<p>Group Supervision of Supervision</p> <p>Value depended on members of group. Excellent learning. Preferred the range of input in a group setting. Useful to model group working for group supervisors. Patchy because group was of too diverse experience. Helped me to understand the way I work as a supervisor. Gave me confidence. Helps connect theory and practice. Revealing. The combination of peers' collegiality and experienced supervisor created a potent learning environment.</p>
<p>Individual Supervision of Supervision</p> <p>Allows closer focus on the work; offers containment and fewer dynamics than group. For specialist areas – such as addiction work the supervisor needs to have knowledge and experience of this. [several comments here were evidently referring to CPD – e.g. 'important for ongoing supervision of supervision or consultative one offs for new or difficult situations.']</p>
<p>Live Supervision</p> <p>Tapes of supervision also very useful. Video playback extremely useful. It alters perspectives; I have reservations. I feel this is <i>essential</i> for trainers to do for assessment, but not very helpful for me as a student. Challenging but tactful. Very daunting but good. I think I would find this very anxiety-provoking; (<i>This was from someone who hadn't experienced it</i>). Could never have learned to do it otherwise! Dynamics in the observing group can be unhelpful. This was so nerve wracking that it is hard to think if it was useful or not. I think it did give me confidence. If the level of arousal is right this experience becomes hard wired, for better or worse!</p>
<p>Lectures</p> <p>Varied from interesting to boring. Interesting but I cannot consciously remember a single one. Stimulating. I don't see much place for lectures – too passive for learning to take place. Occasionally inspiring, mostly not. Most useful &amp; informative when backed by the reading. The encounter with theory and research is vital for supervision training.</p>
<p>Seminar Discussions</p> <p>Almost always interesting and helpful. Allows consolidation of information; can be playful and helpful or tense and competitive – less helpful. Often pedestrian. Useful as a way of forming my own ideas.</p>
<p>Experiential Exercises</p> <p>ESSENTIAL! – [capitals and underline] Very variable. Useful if safe. Not enough but valuable. Excellent in focusing and in role playing difficult situations. Enjoyable. Very important from point of view of the importance of play in learning.</p>
<p>Preparing Presentations</p> <p>Not helpful to me at all, only anxiety provoking. Helps integrate learning, but anxiety can have a negative effect. Can depend on group dynamics which complicates the group response and the learning. Makes me really think and I learn from the participants. A good incentive to read. Helped me understand more deeply. Key for forcing reading, yes I mean forcing! Value from preparing my presentation – 7; value of hearing others – 10.</p>
<p>Writing Essays</p> <p>A pain but good learning. Not helpful at all – who am I writing it for. Useful assimilation of learning. Makes you reflect on your practice. Helped me to formulate my own theory of supervision and make sense of my own personal style. Good discipline to expose oneself more formally. Without this vital level of organising and clarifying learning doesn't happen. Also the essay is marked and assessed, so an essential encounter with superego, good enough or otherwise!</p>
<p>Reading</p> <p>Particularly useful post course, integrated with practice. Depends on the article. Invaluable exposure to range of experience and knowledge. Inspires and shows how other supervisors approach their work. Vital for the training experience, harder to keep going later.</p>
<p>Other</p> <p>Making process notes. Learning from my mistakes. An exceptionally gifted trainer. The other trainees on the course. Watching live supervision master classes. Working with colleagues of diverse experience and ethnicity. Teaching supervision. Writing a book on supervision.</p>

## References

YERKES, R.M., and DODSON, J.D., 1908. The relation of strength of stimulus to rapidity of habit-formation. *Journal of comparative neurology and psychology*, 18, 459-482.

**Anne Power** trained at the Centre for Attachment-Based Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy and is studying for the Wpf MA in supervision. She has a private practice for individuals and couples and she supervises at Regent's College and Wimbledon Guild.

# Superego Intropression

Bernard Barnett

Spring Conference Report

Gertrud Mander

The BAPPS Spring conference this year was led by Bernard Barnett, an eminent training and supervising analyst in the British Institute of Psychoanalysis, who teased out the implications of this term brilliantly. It was coined by Ferenczi in 1938 and applied by Bernard 'to the disciplines of psychoanalytic/psychotherapeutic supervision, teaching, training, learning and education in 2009'. Having started as a child psychologist and a teacher of child psychologists before he became an analyst, Bernard used his talk to go through the whole spectrum of education, psychology, psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. He began by emphasizing how things have changed since the Sixties, when Michael Balint talked about the dangers of 'how a rigid ego ideal may lead to a too dogmatic attitude in analysts and supervisors'. Winnicott had described how a false self is constructed out of compliance; this helped to explain the over-idealisation which started with Freud's followers who internalised him leading to a barely digested father-*imago*. Bernard called this a process of swallowing Freud whole, due to an inhibition caused by their primitive initiation procedure based on Freud's authoritarian techniques. In those days candidates apparently were too passive, and therefore they received a training which easily overawed them and tended to make them dependent and submissive. In other words, the process was a wholesale incorporation of their analysts, which led to failure of integration and digestion, to covert collusion and in fact to the 'super-ego intropression' of the title of the talk. Kohut once humourously pointed this out in his story of a man who swallows a clarinet and when he opens his mouth, out come the sounds of the clarinet. Bernard suggested that this was like swallowing a penis and failing to digest it.

He mentioned that Ferenczi once referred to an educative process in which 'a rule or precept is forced into the superego', which may then produce an over strong super-ego, a weakened ego and other negative effects both on the supervisee and on the organisation in which the training happens. He described his own fate of over-identification with Freud as reliance on another power, followed by a renunciation of a part of oneself in order to carry out an order. He quoted Balint as saying that the purpose of training is to build up a personal ego, free from unnecessary identification and able to be critical and liberal. Unconscious identification is of course universal, and can be both benign and malevolent. Ideally, teaching leads to self-discovery and to an individualised identity, by way of a continuum of identifications, which are the building blocks of normal identification. Bernard's final summing up was a description of how to become a person who is capable in health of free choice, spontaneity, authenticity, and liveliness, as taught in the works of Winnicott. The question remained, how is this possible in the face of all the pressures experienced by the individual in the course of a lifetime of training and other difficult experiences?

Bernard's view was that since the severe inhibitions of the 50s and 60s have been overcome there is a vast literature about how this problem can be solved. In his view there is such a thing as a complete psychoanalytic education, an initiation helped by the candidate's training analysis, which enables him to identify his personal problems and to dissolve the Oedipus complex, going through a process of self-evaluation, the growth of independence and initiative. The aim is enrichment, not indoctrination, and encouragement to produce creative living and thinking. Students themselves need to create what they need to learn, in a climate of spontaneity and safe holding which enables a revelation of the self to the self. Good enough supervision allows evaluation by the supervisee of the supervisor, who needs to respect the dignity of trainee and patient. There is always the importance of timing, of the capacity to be alone (in the presence of another). Bernard then dealt with the question of when the mature supervisee can practice without ongoing supervision, of how to handle the ending of supervision, and whether there is such a thing as the 'internal supervisor' (Patrick Casement). Another aspect of the supervisory task was described as the imparting of technical skills, but also as a modelling of the analytic attitude of being calm, restful, relaxed and feeling at ease with the trainee or the patient. Ogden pointed out the importance of having time to waste, and Balint the merit of unintegration, of having the courage to fail, of using associative processes, reflective spaces and a deeper capacity of deep thinking. It was recognised that idealisation may be a necessary initial phase of learning - but when to intervene? Finally Bernard addressed the question of whether supervision is an impossible pursuit.

Other issues which were dealt with were interpreting aggressive feelings sufficiently, identifying negative transferences, correlating ambivalence and a punitive superego. Some learning is painful. Do we learn from people we can't stand? Bernard mentioned Albert Einstein's exhortation to nurture green shoots and emphasized the care that is needed when training and supervising, he quoted Marion Milner's advice to allow the mind a freedom to be and to think (not logically), Winnicott's notions of unintegration, resistance to conversion and disintegration. Some patients are of course much easier to treat than others, so are some candidates. The need for trainees to present their patients remains a key issue that produces terrible fear of loss of self and of the process. A problem shared can become a problem doubled.

After the sensitive mapping of the problems and the developing of concepts, the talk led to the naming of personal experience, with Bernard telling us that now in his old age he has discovered that it is not too late to start learning to draw. And it ended with the naming of everybody's favourite authors, -Winnicott, Balint, Marion Milner, Wilfred Bion and Jung - which led to an enumerating of some of the platitudes of the profession. Altogether it was very rich and became a nourishing collective experience further enriched in the small groups and in the final group discussion of the plenary.

We went away full of new ideas and many of us acquired Bernard's recently published book, ironically entitled 'You Ought To' (Karnac).

*Gertrud Mander is a founder member of BAPPS, worked as a supervisor/trainer for the WPF from 1983 to 2000 and has been working in private practice as a psychotherapist since 1980. She has published many articles and two books, "A Psychodynamic Approach to Brief Therapy" and "Diversity, Discipline and Devotion in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy."*

## UKCP Supervision Conference: 'Relational Dilemmas & Challenges in Supervision'

*Geri Dogmetchi and Penny Wise*

The 2009 UKCP Supervision Conference was held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June. The list of attendees, and their organisations, showed a wide range of theoretical backgrounds and mixture of modalities.

The first speaker was Dr. Gottfried Heuer whose title 'Spooky Action at a Distance' borrowed from Einstein, attempted to explain in a scientific manner a major question supervisors have not yet explored about the parallel process and enactments in therapy and supervision: how?

He managed to combine Jungian theory, neurobiology and quantum physics together in a fascinating exploration of the relational experience between bees, fish, birds, monkeys, neurons, and humans. He described the role of mirror neurons which trigger linked behaviour within and between organisms.

Adding more ingredients to the menu of the day, a presentation by BAPPS member, Anne Power, 'Attachment Theory in the Supervisor's Kitbag' was a moving and personal examination of the usefulness of attachment theory in understanding the relationship between supervisor and supervisee as well as therapist and patient. She gave some wonderful examples to demonstrate these dynamics. Questions from the audience were additionally interesting raising further theoretical ideas about the processes and dynamics within supervision as well as difference, culture, power relationships, and more which showed, despite great differences in theoretical backgrounds, most supervisors share similar experiences in their work. That the day revolved around relational dilemmas was particularly meaningful in this context.

After lunch, the conference broke into several small groups discussing themes such as embodiment in supervisor and supervisee and supervision of groups in different settings. The day finished with a plenary discussion that provoked more lively discussion. It was a fascinating, thought provoking and enlivening conference. The date for next year is already set – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2010

## Call for Articles Winter 2009 & Spring 2010

### **Winter 2009 – Psychological Types and Supervision** (lead editor Chris Driver)

One area of supervision that intrigues me is in relation to psychological types and how the way we approach things affects how we think, reflect and understand. Does a person who is strong on thinking work differently from someone strong on feeling? What happens when someone who works intuitively is supervised by someone who works from a more rational, thinking perspective?

If you would like to write something on psychological types and supervision for the Winter 2009 'Supervision Review' do let Chris Driver know.

([chris@driver4.prestel.co.uk](mailto:chris@driver4.prestel.co.uk)) The copy deadline is October 17<sup>th</sup>. Chris Driver

### **Spring 2010 – Working with dream material** (lead editor Lynda Norton)

Dream material can manifest itself in supervision in a number of ways such as client dreams presented in supervision; the dream of a supervisee about the client (or supervisor?); the dream of a supervisor about the supervisee (or supervisee's client?). How do you work with this material? Do you have concerns about and/or how do you manage the boundary between personal material of supervisee and the focus upon clinical material.

If you would like to write something on working with dream material in supervision for the Spring 2010 'Supervision Review' please contact Lynda Norton. ([lynda.norton@ntlworld.com](mailto:lynda.norton@ntlworld.com)) . The copy deadline is February 12<sup>th</sup>.

### Summer 2010 – Supervising in Organisations (lead editor Annie Power)

This edition will explore the issues which arise from supervision in different settings: the concept of the clinical rhombus, the impact of the organisation on the work and ways in which power and boundaries are held. We would very much like to include papers on work in a range of settings. If you supervise in a counselling agency, in primary care, in a hospital, a charity, a commercial organisation, a college or any other place where counselling and psychotherapy take place, we would welcome an account of your experience of the organisational impact.

If you would like to write something on supervising in organisations for the Summer 2010 'Supervision Review' please contact Annie Power. ([anne.power@gmail.com](mailto:anne.power@gmail.com)) The copy deadline is April 30th.

[General guidelines](#) for writing an article for 'Supervision Review'.

## BAPPS WEST

Ann Bowes

BAPPS West would like to formally thank all those BAPPS members who have supported us with information, reflections or the sheer hard work of travelling to Bristol to offer much appreciated seminars at the STPN (Severn and Thames Psychotherapy Network) course. It is a fantastic feeling to see the names of our STPN graduates on the BAPPS membership lists. The STPN course is unique in that it offers accessible teaching days, one Saturday per month in Bristol whilst the supervision of supervision occurs in the participant's often far flung locality. It has also enabled us to offer the training in addition to psychoanalytic psychotherapists and psychodynamic counsellors to a broader professional group, namely group analysts, music therapists and an art therapist. Our second intake is just coming up to the end of the formal teaching days.

I am always around to answer queries about the course or BAPPS West, on 0117 9735844 or [ann@bowesuk.co.uk](mailto:ann@bowesuk.co.uk)

## From the Ethics Committee

*Gill Bannister. Chair, Ethics Committee*

Please would members amend their code of Ethics and practice to include the following additions and changes, which have been agreed by the Executive.

**B5 ADVERTISING** i) Members may advertise services; however advertising, including the use of personal websites, must be limited to a statement of name, address, qualifications and type of supervision offered. Such statements should be descriptive but not evaluative.

**B1 MANAGEMENT OF WORK** Clauses xi) and xii) become the new additions (below) and the last 3 clauses in this section need to be changed numerically.

xi) **Publication** BAPPS Members are required to safeguard the welfare and anonymity of supervisees/ patients/clients when any form of publication of clinical material is being considered and to obtain their consent whenever possible.

xii) **Research** BAPPS Members are required to clarify with supervisees/patients/clients the nature, purpose & conditions of any research in which the clients are to be involved & to ensure that informed & verifiable consent is given before commencement.

xiii) Members must have adequate insurance etc. etc.

## Articles for 'Supervision Review' General Guidance

Winter 2009	<b>Psychological types</b>	Copy deadline Oct 17 <sup>th</sup> Lead editor – Chris Driver
Spring 2010	<b>Working with dreams</b>	Copy deadline Feb 12 <sup>th</sup> Lead editor – Lynda Norton
Summer 2010	<b>Supervising in Organisations</b>	Copy deadline April 30 <sup>th</sup> Lead editor – Anne Power

**Theme:** Articles need to address the theme from the perspective of psycho-dynamic / psychoanalytic / analytical psychology and focus upon supervision (vignettes may be from the perspective of supervisor or supervisee).

**Copy Deadline:** This allows time for editing/checking queries prior to the committee meeting and 'Supervision Review' going to print. NB. If you would like feedback on a late draft please let the lead editor know beforehand and agree an earlier deadline to allow sufficient time for this process.

**Article length:** Articles are usually 2,000 words (approx), although where appropriate and by negotiation we can offer flexibility with this wordage up to 3,000 (approx). 'Nuggets' i.e. more informal / shorter pieces are also welcome.

**Format:** For articles please include the following:-

- **Title of article and name of author**
- **Abstract** – a one paragraph summary
- **Six key words** - The key words are for use by the internet search engines for the e-journal
- **Main text**
- **Bibliography**
- **Biography** - a few sentences of personal biography.

**E-Journal:** Please note that any published article will also be included in the e-journal on the BAPPS web site.

**Copyright:** If you wish to include/use any of your material previously published in a book/journal please ensure that you liaise with your publisher to obtain permission.

**Lead editor:** This rotates between Chris Driver, Annie Power & Lynda Norton. The role of the lead editor is to provide support & constructive feedback during the process of writing & submission. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have an idea for an article & would like to sound someone out or if you have any other queries.