



BAPPS

Supervision Review

*The Journal of the British Association for
Psychoanalytic & Psychodynamic Supervision*

Groups

Spring 2009

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Foreword

Lynda Norton (Lead editor)

Welcome to the first edition of **'Supervision Review' - The Journal of the British Association for Psychoanalytical and Psychodynamic Supervision.**

Penny Wise, the new Chair of BAPPS tells me that the Executive Committee unanimously agreed this title; their decision was based upon the views of the membership expressed in the wealth of e-mail correspondence as well as the in-depth discussion at the AGM & subsequent poll. One of the more passionate areas of debate was as to whether the BAPPS publication should be deemed a Journal. Some members were firmly of the opinion that the range & quality of articles meant that the term 'Journal' was appropriate and should be included in the title. Others had reservations because traditionally writing for such publications can be somewhat daunting and can entail a long lead in period between submission and final publication (owing to the lengthy time scales required for rigorous peer review and rewriting).

These reservations notwithstanding, the publication committee is delighted; most especially because of the interest and involvement of so many of the BAPPS membership in determining the new title. As before, the role of lead editor will rotate and the intention and aspiration of the editorial team continues to be to encourage writing, reflection and debate concerning psychoanalytic and psychodynamic supervision. We will also continue to operate within relatively short time scales for publication in order to foster fresh ideas and contributions and we encourage you to consider the forthcoming themes for 'Supervision Review' (see page 4). Please contact the relevant lead editor with a view to submitting an article so that the journal can benefit from the wealth of experience and insight of the membership. Given that dictionary definitions of a professional journal include - '*A periodical presenting articles on a particular subject,*' and '*the transactions of any society*' it would seem **'Supervision Review'** more than fulfils the criteria for the strap line of **'The Journal of the British Association for Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Supervision'**, **however** the vitality of this publication continues to be dependent upon, and underpinned by, the active engagement of the BAPPS membership.

The theme of the Spring 2009 edition is **'Groups'**; herein lie three fascinating and complementary papers on the topic. Groups form the bread and butter of most therapeutic and supervisory trainings (e.g. training group, experiential group, clinical seminar group, supervision group and supervision of supervision group). It is therefore timely for *'Supervision*

Review’, to reflect upon different dynamics within the group and to relate group theory to supervisory experience.

Debbie Gautier’s lively article brings an account of sibling rivalry and the desire for approval, of being ‘special’, in a group supervision experience. She highlights the greater potential for such anxieties to be aroused within a group; hence the group experience is double-edged bringing both greater threat and opportunity. She notes that a fragile group - in which the third is experienced as a threat - finds it hard to contain and work through these anxieties; an impulse to flee the group may be evoked to avoid the anxiety.

Robert Plant and Margaret Smith’s thoughtful and engaging article uses two vignettes; one of sibling rivalry and a second of ambivalence and absence, to illustrate the theme of countertransference and parallel process within the group dynamic. They recognise that on occasion free associations / interpretations made by a peer within the supervision group may be more readily heard and utilised than those arising from the supervisor, although whether this is to do with envy of the supervisor or perhaps timing of the comment and readiness to hear is not explored. Once again the double-edged nature of the learning potential within the supervisory group experience is illuminated.

Amélie Noack’s accessible article explores concepts in group analytic theory and practice which have particular relevance to supervision. She notes that the group-analytic attitude fosters the supervisees’ engagement in the process of supervision paying particular attention to the overlapping processes of *dynamic administration* (e.g. frame, working alliance, agency,) and *shared therapeutic work* (e.g. resonance, free group discussion, mutuality and interdependence). She identifies key group dynamics occurring on a *horizontal level* (sibling rivalry such as unconscious competition, rivalry and envy) and on a *vertical level* (power / authority issues such as anxiety and boundary transgressions) which dovetail beautifully with Debbie’s clinical vignette. Similarly her comments on resonance and mirroring underline the dynamics that Robert and Margaret identify and illustrate so skilfully in their article concerning countertransference and parallel process. Resonances can reverberate within the group and become amplified and so the ability to tolerate ‘not knowing’ is crucial.

These three articles resonated within me, and called to mind a personal experience as a supervisor in which maintaining the frame and attending to group dynamics was essential in order to ensure that the supervision group could remain focussed upon clinical work in the wider context of a tragic accident.

A respected senior counsellor within an organisation died suddenly, in the glare of publicity. The entire institution was in shock – administrators, supervisors, counsellors and clients. The case load of the deceased was transferred to experienced counsellors including some (but not all) within

my supervision group for a fixed term period – offering a holding phase to explore initial reactions/ grief and to explore and agree an appropriate way forward in the longer term.

This meant that the group dynamics changed overnight and without prior warning; the group had been struck by a parallel trauma. In addition, clinical material relating to intense unprocessed feelings resonated with the raw feelings of each and every one of the group members including myself; these feelings required containment and, with time, processing. There was a danger that the 'work' function of the supervision group could become lost in a veritable hall of mirrors because in this context parallel process was operating in both directions and resonance was amplifying the impact. Although the supervision group was securely established and ordinarily, invariably 'work' orientated, it was vital at this critical juncture to pay particular attention to the frame, working alliance and purpose of the group. The first session after the tragedy was especially difficult and understandably highly charged; the sense of exposure within the group and the need to tolerate the seemingly unbearable 'not knowing' - that Amélie refers to in her article - were palpable. Whilst the supervision group was categorically not a therapy group, time was set aside at the beginning in that first session (and a shorter time thereafter) to consider the ongoing impact of the trauma upon group dynamics. This provided fertile ground for subsequent exploration of parallel process and resonance within the group of client material: for example, the ongoing and unfolding mourning process and the range of ways in which grief is expressed; feelings about the sudden influx/intrusion of traumatised new clients and the ramifications upon the existing case load; practical issues such as attendance at a funeral with counsellors and clients as fellow mourners; rivalrous fantasies as to why some but not all group members were 'chosen' or 'burdened' by the client load of the deceased.

The strategy of setting aside a short period of 'group time' at the beginning of the session not only recognised the importance of these issues but also set a clearly delineated boundary; enabling the lion's share of the supervision time and group energy to focus upon the work in hand - to work with parallel process and resonance in the service of illuminating, containing and processing clinical material of the client. With the passage of time it was possible to dispense with the set aside 'group time' and return to my usual practice in which the process of attending to the frame and group dynamic is integrated with the exploration of the clinical material.

The issues that Debbie, Amélie, Robert and Margaret explore in this edition regarding group analytic theory and clinical practice - especially concerning dynamic administration, shared therapeutic work, parallel process, resonance and sibling rivalry - were all key issues in helping me to reflect again upon the clinical vignette outlined above. I would like to thank them for their generosity in sharing their experience and thinking. I hope and trust that you too may find resonances of your own as you read further.

References

Gautier, D. (2009) *'The Impact of Sibling Rivalry in Group Supervision'*
Supervision Review – J.BAPPS

Noack, A. (2009) *'Using the Group as a Medium of Supervision'*
Supervision Review – J.BAPPS

Plant, R & Smith, M (2009) *'Counter transference and Parallel Process in Supervision Groups'* Supervision Review - J.BAPPS

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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) The copy deadline is October 17th.

Spring 2010 – Working with dream material in supervision (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? Other reflections concerning working with dreams?

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) . The copy deadline is February 12th.

Please note: [general guidelines](#) for writing an article for 'Supervision Review' are on the final page.

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The Impact of Sibling Rivalry in Group Supervision

Deborah Gautier

Abstract:

This article seeks to demonstrate how primitive forces can come in to play within the group setting. Although competition and envy can be aroused in a one to one supervisory setting the article recognises that there is a greater potential for anxiety to be evoked within a group supervision context. It argues that this is not a reason to avoid group supervision, on the contrary, it is a fascinating experience that can facilitate learning about our primitive self as well as that of our supervisees and their clients.

Within a group setting, the supervisory experience can take on an additional struggle, one of sibling rivalry. Feelings of rivalry will derive from earlier feelings of rivalry experienced within the supervisee's family. Depending on how these were managed, will affect how they manifest within the adult supervisee, greed and competition will be very much alive within a group supervisory setting (Driver 2002 p87). For the supervisees within a group the supervisor may take on the role of mother and a need to compete for her food, attention, and affirmation will manifest (Klein M, cited in Mitchell J. 1986 p 44-45). Sibling rivalry may be acted out as each supervisee struggles to become the special child.

This may be done by showing off the knowledge held and trying to impress the supervisor. In this endeavour, the supervisee denies any feelings of dependency and at the same time denies any need to be fed. This denial of need can lead to an anxiety of being "caught out" a sense of being discovered a fraud. The feeding space takes on an uncomfortable

experience of having aroused envy and aggression in the siblings; a tension will manifest around competition. The supervisee who is trying to “out do” the others will fear negative transference and defend against feelings of dependency coming to the fore and being experienced by the supervisee and seen by another. (Klein M, cited in Mitchell J 1986 p163-4).

In a group supervision session a supervisee presented a client that was very erratic in his attendance and presented with suicidal feelings as a consequence of not feeling that he fitted into this world. This particular supervisee was very concerned about gathering adequate client hours for her college course and had waited several weeks for a new client. It seemed not an unreasonable enquiry when a member of the group asked the supervisee if she was feeling angry with this client due to his erratic attendance. However her response was one of complete surprise and she replied “of course not, I would never feel anger towards any client, I may feel confused, but never angry”. This response created confusion in the group and the group members volunteered that it would not be inappropriate to feel anger toward a client.

The supervisee was very uncomfortable and looked to me, it seemed, to assure her that she was correct and the others were wrong. It seemed that the supervisee could see a potential triumph over her siblings whom she felt sure had done something “wrong in mother’s eyes”. The group became quite heated and I stated that what we were talking about was transference and counter transference. I suggested that it was a vital element of the work and therefore not at all inappropriate to feel and discuss in supervision. At this point the supervisee felt some shame; I imagine that her shame was not that she felt she had got something wrong, but that she had tried to shame the other group members. I endeavoured to keep the group cohesive by encouraging a feeling of value and respect, but felt it was not helping. It seemed that this supervisee wanted to shame the others so that she could be “next” to me.

I noticed in this process that both parties were trying to gain my approval by looking to me for support of their point of view. As we discussed this, the supervisee who was denying feeling any anger began to “back pedal” and in effect change her response. It seemed what couldn’t be tolerated was the fear of being pushed out.

At the beginning of this session I had talked with them about the feeling of fragmentation and fragility that was surrounding the group, it felt that there was a threat of a third not being tolerated. Although there were more than three of us, they represented one, the client another and I was the third. There was sibling rivalry along with an oedipal struggle all manifesting in the same space. Whilst this experience was alive no learning could take place; it seemed there was no space for anything other than survival. The feeling of being “caught out” left the supervisee with no safe place to go and aroused enormous anxiety. To allow any other idea in to the internal

space threatened annihilation However, in this triangular experience, to not allow my ideas in, created a threat of being pushed out and defeated by the other siblings. In other words the defensively organised oedipal situation had been disturbed and control was lost (Britton 1998 p49).

Despite my efforts, the following week the supervisee left the group saying she was not getting enough client hours and therefore needed to find a different placement. I offered a one to one session to provide a space for her and me to think further about this, but she declined, insisting it was a purely practical reason for her leaving. She had only been with the group for a few months and had constantly challenged my style of supervision saying she would like more theoretical input. This had undermined my confidence. On reflection, I think she was fearful of the experiential learning that was available to her within my group and wanted to take refuge in theory. However, possibly I needed to adjust my style and offer the knowledge or food in a different way, to make it more palatable for her. I consider that my anxiety, resulting from her demands for a more theoretical style, prevented me from being able to think clearly and stay with the experience and facilitate her struggle effectively. We both got caught up with anxiety about not feeling good enough which also reflected the client's material, who felt he didn't fit anywhere in the world.

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Deborah Gautier has worked as a counsellor in a boy's senior school since 1996 and for the NHS from 2001 – 2008. She is Head of Youth Counselling at The Wimbledon Guild and supervises the counsellors within this service. She has a private practice working with adults and as a supervisor. She completed the MA in Supervision at WPF in 2007.

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Using the Group as a Medium of Supervision

Amélie Noack

Abstract

This is an exploration of how concepts of group analytic theory and practice may inform supervision and can be applied to it. Some aspects regarding group processes and their complexity and dynamics are described and developed in relation to the understanding of supervisory relationships. The importance of mutuality and interdependence are highlighted as indicating a new multi-faceted viewpoint.

Supervision is now firmly acknowledged as one of the three cornerstones of analytic training, besides theory and personal analysis. Good supervision provides a safe container for thinking, models competence and contributes to the development of a professional identity. Supervisors offer observation, support, education, and challenge, as well as knowledge of theory, practice and ethics. They may also assess a candidate's readiness for qualification. In any good supervision the unconscious meaning of the communications presented will emerge clearly and the supervisee's ability to recognise the importance of the transferences and counter-transferences and to handle them will develop.

Besides trainees, experienced practitioners also use supervision, because it creates an external viewpoint to the therapeutic relationship(s) and brings triangulation into play. For instance, group analysts arrange supervision to find 'The Third Eye' (Sharpe 1995) necessary to get hold of the complex dynamics in groups, may it be with a senior colleague or with peers; and therapists working with more disturbed, perverse or violent patients are in particular need of a containing space for thinking (Bion 1984) to counterbalance the attacks on the therapist's mind inherent in this work. These supervisory relationships which often are established after training and after ending personal therapeutic work, require additional skills. They may continue for years and therefore become often the closest personal attachments in the matrix of professional relationships. While it would be useful to expand on this topic, this is - regrettably - beyond the remit of this paper.

My expertise and experience as a supervisor over many years was originally based on the individual analytical model and a supervisors training course. Having since undergone a training in group analysis, as well as a group analytic supervision course, I want to use this opportunity

to reflect on the change in my supervisory attitude and practice due to the group analytic input. Group analytic orientated supervision relies to a certain extent on the same analytical theory and principles as individual supervision, such as transference and counter-transference dynamics, projective identification and the like. However, groups present a more complex phenomenon than the dyadic patient-therapist situation and require additional concepts and skills, which can accommodate and deal with this complexity.

It may well be true, as Yalom (1994) states that the supervision of group therapy is more taxing than individual supervision, not least because there are about eight people in each group to keep in mind. My aim here, however, is not going to focus on the difficulties of supervising groups. This topic has been well explored in 'The Third Eye' (Sharpe). Here, I would like to describe some group analytic concepts as well as the tools group analysis has developed to deal with the inherent complexity of working with groups and apply them to supervision. I hope that the group analytic viewpoint will add to the scope and understanding of processes occurring in supervision.

One of the main differences between group and individual work is the fact that group analysis emphasises the aspect of therapeutic work belonging to frame, setting and management by rewarding it its own name: Dynamic Administration. Trainees and newly qualified therapists are usually so eager to do what they consider the proper work of a therapist, namely interpreting, that they may neglect the more basic tasks of therapy, like boundaries and the establishment of a secure holding environment as well as the working alliance with the patient. Dynamic administration creates an immutable division and clear boundaries between inside and outside the group, which in turn provides within the group a secure space for psychic exploration. The group related focus on dynamic administration enables the supervisor to highlight the importance of the establishment of these basic aspects of therapeutic activity which, I believe, literally make up the bedrock for the work and are solely the responsibility of the therapist. If overlooked they may lead to drop outs or negative therapeutic reactions.

In the domain of dynamic administration the group analyst reigns supreme and may even be seen as dictatorial. This is complemented by the advantages of the democratic process of group analysis as such. In the therapeutic process within the group, agency is shared by the facilitator with the group. This means in practice, that every group member is in a position to make observations which might be succinct and fitting interpretations of what is going on in the group at the time. This approach makes use of the strengths of the multi-perspective aspect of the group and, combined with the increased capacity for insight, this facilitates a sense of synergy through difference as well as similarity of understanding.

The principle of resonance evokes free association, which has an impact on each group member and on the group as a whole. In the group, free association takes the form of dialogue and discourse and develops eventually into free group discussion. The deepening aspects of free group discussion eventually take on the role of traditional interpretation. The complementary working together of both these aspects, dynamic administration and shared therapeutic work, and the understanding that these are overlapping processes taking place at the same time, contribute to the group-analytic attitude. The supervisor also must hold these different aspects in mind. A supervisor with a group analytic attitude would want to facilitate involvement in the supervisory process to enable the supervisees to make contributions themselves and to learn from others. This process would be akin to the constructive process of ego-building in therapy, which Foulkes (1964), the founder of group analysis, called 'ego-training in action'.

In addition to holding frame and boundaries, the supervisor has to pay attention to the interactions in the supervision group. Group dynamics may manifest in a variety of ways in supervision groups, and Fuller (2003) and Scanlon (2002) amongst others have referred to the dynamics of Bion's basic assumption attitudes in supervision groups. In addition, I would like to mention two further dynamic situations, which occur in supervision and which may manifest either on a vertical or a horizontal plane. On a horizontal level conscious or unconscious competition, rivalry and envy might emerge between members of a supervision group. Similar issues also emerge amongst professionals in peer group supervision, combined with status and rank concerns and are often suppressed due to the fear of scapegoating. These phenomena all demonstrate sibling dynamics, which need to be understood as such and perhaps could be talked through in the supervision group. In contrast, profound anxiety and boundary transgressions would indicate problems with authority. They are showing up the power dynamics on the vertical plane and would need to be addressed in relation to the supervisor.

Both dynamics illustrate some of the more destructive, aggressive or potentially traumatic experiences which may emerge and could be acted out in the supervisory group. They may well be derived from the patients' dynamics, and group analytic concepts like resonance and mirroring highlight what aspects may be reflected in the supervision group of the individual or group under discussion. These two concepts describe the parallel process, a notion going back to Searles' (1955) idea of the reflective process. While Zinkin (1995) states that what happens in therapy is unique and ultimately incommunicable, the participants in the supervisory space can get a glimpse of it with the help of the parallel process. An optimal functioning supervision group does reproduce a reaction to the supervisee's material, which usually is a reflection of the state of the group presented by the supervisee. For instance, a rather helpless atmosphere in the supervision group would indicate helplessness, which was experienced by the group during the session presented.

Supervision can then serve to initiate the process of mentalisation for split-off or encapsulated psychic parts by holding them in the supervisory space, where they can begin to be thought about.

When using the group as a medium of supervision, it is essential to use the full potential of the supervision group. This works best when supervision reflects the fundamental value system of group analysis and includes the importance of principles like mutuality and interdependence. Group analysis stresses that the therapeutic process in a group is '...analysis of the group, by the group including the conductor' (Foulkes 1964, p 3). This describes the fact that group members as well as the conductor are all equally exposed to the impact of events occurring in the matrix of the group during the session. While it is well known that a patient's developmental process occurs in correlation to the practitioner's capacity for change and further development, working as a group analyst throws this notion into further relief.

As the group conductor I am more exposed to the impact of events in the session than an individual analyst because I am not sitting behind the couch, but in a circle on the same kind of chair as everybody else, visible to each and everyone. My own resistances or defences may to a certain degree be visible in a similar way to those of every other group member. This visibility is usually also distorted by transferences, but the group is always there to offer a corrective to that. It is often exposure that patients fear from therapy and as a group conductor I find myself in an similarly vulnerable position. This is a sobering experience and constantly forces me to reassess the function of shame and exposure in therapy, and consequently in supervision.

It is the complexity of communications and events in each group session that can at times feel overwhelming. This might be due to projective identifications, which may attack the therapist's capacity for thought, but there are also other occasions, when resonances reverberate within the group and associations are amplified and assembled, resulting in the group analytic condenser phenomenon. These are moments when the group analyst must be able to tolerate 'not-knowing' and remember Foulkes' notion of 'trusting the group'. Condenser phenomena are events in which the therapeutic or supervisory process may move on to a new level of understanding or meaning, akin to the notion of the quantum leap in physics.

The capacity to stay with 'not-knowing' may be difficult, but it is essential for any meaningful therapeutic activity, and this includes supervision. The ever widening experience of learning to tolerate 'not-knowing', is to develop what Keats (1817) called 'Negative Capability, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.' Within this space, which I consider alike to Bion's notion of O, creativity and transformation can come into being and out of

this space meaning may emerge. This applies, I believe, to therapy as well as supervision. If the group conductor or supervisor can manage these difficult moments and work under such conditions, which means to be able to maintain or in time recapture the capacity to think, the patients will eventually also learn to do the same.

The ability to identify this space of 'not-knowing' and differentiate it from resistances or defensiveness, presupposes, however the conductor's or the supervisor's aptitude for translation, another group analytic concept, which I find especially useful. In addition to the psychoanalytic concept of interpretation, Foulkes (1964) introduced the notion of translation through which meaning is traced and defined. Translations are the group analytic equivalent to making the unconscious conscious. They are verbal communications which convert primary process into secondary process language, or move the symptomatic on to the symbolic level of thinking and understanding. They can take various verbal forms, like drawing attention to something, linking, confronting or interpreting. Translation is an essential part of communication, given that every individual - and every group for that matter - has their own specific language or idiom. In therapeutic work we are always translating the patients' language into our own and vice versa, and supervision has to juggle additional translation processes, which are propounded in group supervision.

In conclusion I would like to mention the importance that group analysis places on the social dimension and on the notions of mutuality and interdependence, concepts which all take an underlying shared human matrix for granted. Foulkes referred to Jung's idea of the collective unconscious when describing his idea of the foundation matrix in groups. This points to a shared understanding between Jungian thinking and group analysis about a fundamental layer of psychic life, which encompasses individual and collective processes: '...just as the individual is not unique and separate, but is also a social being, so the human psyche is not a self-contained and wholly individual phenomenon, but also a collective one.' (Jung 1977, p 144)

In the Western world we usually consider the individual as the originator of thought and thinking, and for many people the experience of mutual dependence is a frightening notion. Therefore Western thought tends to deny the importance of a joint human matrix as the basis of all relationships and thought.

The group analytic concept of a matrix of interdependent relationships takes account of individual, as well as collective and social phenomena. It accepts the dynamic notion of a socially grounded individual within a shared human matrix and this view offers itself as the basis for a new psychotherapeutic paradigm. If engaging in supervision helps us to develop a 'third eye', which offers triangulation as a new viewpoint, group analytic supervision might be trying to push the development one step further. It

might open the way for a new way of lateral seeing, where we may be able, eventually, to allow for a many-sided or multi-faceted point of view. This would presuppose, however, the ability to truly tolerate difference and diversity.

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Countertransference and Parallel Process in Supervision Groups

Robert Plant and Margaret Smith

Abstract

This paper is drawn from Robert and Margaret's experience of the way that presentation of clinical material resonates with and is mirrored in the dynamics of the supervision group. The details in the vignettes are disguised to maintain confidentiality.

Parallel Process in Supervision.

Parallel process is more usually referred to by group analysts as mirroring. In his introduction to the Book *The Third Eye: Supervision of Analytic Groups*, Malcolm Pines comments that while parallel process in individual supervision can feel a little artificial, he finds the examples in the book, all drawn from supervision groups, " ... very convincing because the group situation itself acts as an amplifier, increasing the range and intensity of the supervisee's response" Pines (1995) p2.

Vignette 1

A supervision group of trainees was caught up in sibling rivalry and in conflict with their supervisor. When this was linked with the material from the work being presented in the weekly supervision group, one of the group members felt that another was a favoured supervisee and felt so agitated that she said she was thinking of leaving the group.

In a recent session, the client she had been presenting had been talking about his brother as the "preferred elder son". The day after he and his brother had a row, his Father, with whom he had little contact phoned to chastise him for picking an argument with his brother. This had reminded

him of the way that he had always been the one in the doghouse and this had left him depressed, and he presented in the next session as on the verge of falling to pieces.

When the supervisor asked the group for their thoughts about the supervisee's distress at feeling less favoured in the group, one of the other members made the connection between this and the material that had been presented in the previous supervision. Different group members talked about their wish to be the favoured supervisee in the group and the supervisee who was named as most favoured also told the group how at first they had been secretly pleased to be seen like this, but they had later got in touch with a sense of discomfort at being seen as special.

The supervisee who had felt that this person was more favoured was then able to think about the resonance for them of the client's story. The group then focused on what should be done to support the patient who, the supervisee feared, might be in danger of having another psychotic breakdown.

Working with the therapist's countertransference in Group Supervision

Sharpe (1991) recognizes that:

'... It takes courage to expose oneself to one's colleagues ... particularly as alternative interpretations are often freely offered – not to mention envy that may be aroused.'
(Sharpe 1991 p 63)

However, as Moss (1995) suggests, once a supervision group has enough trust to share and reflect on countertransference, listening to the associations from colleagues who may be less anxious, and therefore more able to reflect on their emotional response than the therapist, can unblock the therapeutic work. It can reduce anxiety in the therapist and allow them to be able to get in touch with feelings that may have a bearing on the work or enactments within the therapy. In this vignette, the role of the supervisor was to facilitate the group free-association which allowed thinking rather than enactment.

Vignette 2

A supervision group of three, where one member was absent, were discussing a dream brought by one of two new members in a therapy group. The dream was about the therapy group member running through a tunnel trying to escape. In the supervision group, the supervisees were excited and invigorated by a discussion about how this fitted with this man's family dynamics and that of other members in the therapy group. The supervisor, aware that this man had only been in the group for three weeks, and mindful that a previous person had also left the group after only

a few weeks, suggested that they might also think about this as to do with the group and the member's ambivalence about him joining the group. The supervisees made passing reference to this being a possibility at the time.

This therapist was absent at the following supervision session and arrived late for the one after that. The other two supervisees were both there. When he presented his group, he mentioned that the man in his therapy group who had had the dream they had talked about in the previous supervision session, had written to him to say that he was no longer able to attend the group because of work commitments. The supervisee then asked the supervision group whether he should write a letter to say goodbye to him. The supervisee who had been absent when the dream was presented made an association to a dream presented in her group and the way in which the group worked with it to understand the dynamics that prevented them from going deeper in their exploration of intimacy. The supervisee was then able to think about the dream as a group dream and this allowed him to explore with his therapy group their ambivalence to new members joining. He also made arrangements to meet with the patient who had left the group for an individual session to explore his ambivalence about being in the group and to see if he might reconsider leaving.

It was the free association by a colleague in the group, rather than the supervisor's intervention, that he had been unable to hold on to after the end of the session.

An exploration of the recent absences within the supervision group, facilitated by the supervisor, was also useful in exploring their sense of ambivalence towards receiving supervision. Verbalization of the sense of rivalry in the supervision group and members fears of being seen as incompetent allowed a deepening of the work within the supervision group. It was also helpful to the supervisee in thinking about how to approach offering the man an individual session; a man who had been shamed by his family throughout his childhood and craved but avoided intimacy. The role of the supervisor in this group was to reflect on their counter transference and to enable them to voice those things that the group was either not conscious of or were unable to voice at that time; while mindful that some supervisees can find it easier to hear things from a colleague who has struggled with the same issue than from their supervisor.

Both these vignettes illustrate the fundamental value system of group analysis and the importance of the social dimension including the strengths of the multi-perspective aspect of groups, the synergy achieved through bringing differing insights from group members. They illustrate the power of the deepening aspects of group free association in a trusting supervision group and the advantages of the democratic process of group analysis in which authority is shared by the facilitator with the group.

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Margaret Smith is a Group Analyst and Psychodynamic Psychotherapist. She has worked as Staff Support Manager in Liverpool since 1993 and currently works for Mersey Care NHS Trust. She provides a range of therapeutic interventions for NHS staff and patients including psychotherapy groups. She is a member of BAPPS (The British Association for Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Supervision).

She been Course Director of the Liverpool Diploma in Psychotherapy Training, taught on a Diploma in Psychodynamic Counselling and a 150 hour Diploma in Supervision training. She is a visiting lecturer for the Tavistock Institute and has been a tutor on the Tavistock Liverpool D10 MA programme, Consultation and the Organization: Psychoanalytic Approaches.

Robert and Margaret are co-convening the new IGA Supervision Training, "Using the Group as the Medium for Supervision" which is planned to begin in September 2009.

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BOOK REVIEW

Mathers, Dale (Ed) (2009) *Vision and Supervision. Jungian and Post-Jungian Perspectives.* London and New York: Routledge.

Reviewed by Christine Driver

Any book on clinical work and supervision will reflect the theoretical underpinning of the authors. Written from a primarily, but not exclusively, Jungian perspective this book considers supervision in terms of the key issues which a supervisor needs to understand and be aware of as well as consideration of the supervisory relationship and what it needs to hold and promote. Written by eleven authors with an introduction by Murray Stein it develops around themes that link to accountability as well as the fact that 'good practice requires not only good training But also ongoing learning and increasing consciousness throughout one's career' (xiii).

Dale Mathers sets the scene in the Introduction by bringing in his vision of supervision as an exercise in detection and that the supervisor is at a fulcrum point of knowing and not knowing. The task he presents sits within a paradox between naming and acceptance that not everything can be named within supervision and that as both therapists and supervisors we have limitations. He goes on to consider the role of narrative, myth, symbol and metaphor in supervision and the 'meta' place in which the supervisor sits in a process that requires thinking, intuition and imagination.

Following Dale Mather's Introduction there are three chapters which come under the heading of the 'Strange Effects at Boundaries'. This starts with a chapter by Jean Stokes who considers boundaries in terms of separateness, merger and mutuality. The focus of this chapter revolves around the way boundaries 'regulate distance between people' (13). Building on the Jungian idea of the *bene clausum* – the well sealed alchemical vessel – Stokes considers boundaries from both an ego, ego-self and symbolic perspective and provides key question to consider in relation to boundary and frame related issues in supervision. Following this Fiona Palmer Barnes considers Ethics in Supervision and the supervisory contract and provides an interesting diagram that reflects the complexity of the therapeutic relationship especially within a training context. Here she identifies the importance of understanding the interacting dynamics between the inner issues of the supervisee and archetypal dynamics and personal complexes in relation to the supervisor, patient, training committee etc. This reflects ideas put forward by Eckstein and Wallerstein about the Clinical Rhombus but here Palmer Barnes looks at the dynamics in detail and the importance of the perceived and actual and gives detailed consideration of these dynamics. This section ends with a chapter by Dale

Mathers on Difficult Patients. Starting with the question 'what does difficult mean?' (48) Mathers provides a detailed if somewhat challenging consideration in relation to what he terms the 'therapeutic tetrahedron' (53). With useful supervisory examples Mathers deconstructs the concept 'difficult' and ends by reflecting that difficult patients have 'difficulty with themselves' (61) and he describes the ways in which clarity can be achieved within supervision by the therapist.

The next section is headed Individuation and the four authors; Martin Stone, Jack Bierschenk, Carola Mathers and Richard Wainwright, explore and expand this concept in terms of the importance of a process which 'leads to psychological differentiation and inner development of the individual personality' (Stone: 67). Stone considers the importance of a dialectic process to enable this but also the areas of tension and conflict that can emerge in supervision, especially within training, that can impede this process. He provides a useful reflection on 'getting the patient you need and not the one you want' (70) and considers the dynamic of countertransference within this. Jack Bierschenk has entitled his chapter 'The Spirit of Inquiry' and here there is a more detailed exploration of transference and countertransference. With a sensitive reflection on the 'fragile and complex nature of the psyche' (82) the dynamics of the psychologically intimate nature of the relationship between patient and therapist and therapist and supervisor is examined with reflections on how to explore and survive such explorations. The next chapter, by Carola Mathers called 'Mind the Gap' uses the phrase, taken from the London Underground, as a symbol and metaphor to examine the importance of the issues that come into supervision through gaps in the frame and the process. This ranges from consideration of giving presents, the presence of pets, dreams and symbols in terms of the significance of their emergence within and through the gaps in supervision in terms of what they communicate and their meaning. Richard Wainwright writes the final chapter of this section on 'Representation, Evocation and Witness'. Here, using a number of supervisory vignettes, Wainwright explores the importance of allowing imagination and the 'spirit of dreaming' (113) within supervision to enable understanding. I found this a particularly rich and helpful chapter which considered the importance of dialogue and conversation in supervision rather than adherence to a format in which recital of notes or a 'need to know' is felt to be required. Wainwright gives attention to how to encourage a supervisee into a process in which the unexpected emerges through the 'ordinary' process of conversation and dialogue.

The final section, Part III, focuses on the Collective. James Bamber starts with a chapter on 'Working with Organisations' and of how the 'sacred space of supervision can be swept along and battered by the organisational weather system' (134). With reflections on other writings in this area Bamber considers the issues of organisational expectations, organisational ponderables and the advantages and disadvantages of

group supervision in terms of what the supervisor is taking on when they become a supervisor within an organisation. A different theme is taken up by Begum Maitra in the chapter 'Seeing the Point of Culture'. Here the very important, but seldom addressed, issues of culture is considered in terms of the need to be 'extravagantly self-critical' (148) rather than be trapped in the seeming requirement to be politically correct. Addressing the issue of culture and the importance of the supervisor understanding this, Begum Maitra looks at the issue of 'non-verbal communication', 'embodied selves, memory and nostalgia' and the 'self in western and non-western therapeutic discourses. Moving on to look at cultural issues in supervision and multi-cultural groups her underlying ethos revolves around the need for openness and dialogue to a 'culturally responsive style of psychotherapy' (161) and supervision. Chapter 11, by Gottfried Heuer, looks at the issues of parallel process in Jungian analysis and supervision. Using Jung's Gate diagram of the dynamic between the conscious patient (soror) and analyst (adept) and the unconscious patient (animus) and analysts (anima) he considers how the therapeutic couple 'does not exist in isolation' (167) and that the dynamics resonate with the life and lives of both. He expands this diagram to include the supervisor's conscious and unconscious and portrays the growing complexity of interaction and parallels. With reflections on neurobiology and the use of clinical examples he comments that he is giving the 'phenomena of parallel processes a scientific basis' (179). Whether or not that is the case this is certainly an interesting and challenging chapter. The book ends with an 'Afterword' by Keven Hall who reflects on the importance of a Jungian perspective on Supervision especially within the context of supervisor training.

This is a stimulating book which contains a lot of material and ideas but some of the chapters perhaps contain a little too much. In addition some chapters reflect ideas written in other works on supervision. However the significance of this book is its Jungian focus in relation to supervision and its examination of key Jungian concepts such as complexes, the alchemical metaphor, the dynamics of the unconscious, psychological types, the use of symbols and imagination and the importance of dialogue and process. There are some fascinating perspectives which reflect what one author calls the 'spirit of enquiry' and a rich exploration into areas such as psychological types, the shadow and individuation plus a useful and reflective insight into issues relating to culture and the collective. Reflecting the views of the authors this book provides a useful addition to the growing number of works on supervision and the supervisory dynamic.

Christine Driver is a Professional Member of the SAP and a Training Therapist of FPC. She is Director of Training and Clinical Services at **WPF Therapy** and previously ran their Supervision trainings. She is also in private practice. She has written and co-edited two books on supervision: *Driver, C and Martin, E (2002) Supervising Psychotherapy, Sage;* (2005)

*Supervision and the Analytic Attitude, Whurr , and was Chair of BAPPS
(British Association of Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Supervision).*

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Vacancy: UKCP Delegate

Now that Penny Wise has taken over as BAPPS chair, we only have one UKCP delegate.

The job involves attending three monthly UKCP meetings for our Section (the CPJA); putting forward BAPPS views; voting on behalf of BAPPS; and feeding back to the Exec and membership. The meetings take place in Central London on a Saturday. Attending the meetings provides an

Stop Press ... A date for your diary

BAPPS Autumn Conference & AGM

The date of the BAPPS autumn conference and AGM will
be

Sat 7th November.

Please pencil it into your diaries – further details will follow
in the Summer 'Supervision Review.'

Articles for ‘Supervision Review’ General Guidance

Summer 2009 **Training**

Copy deadline April 30th

Lead editor – Annie Power

Winter 2009 **Psychological types**

Copy deadline Oct 17th

Lead editor – Chris Driver

Spring 2010 **Working with dreams**

Copy deadline Feb 12th

Lead editor – Lynda Norton

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 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.

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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.