Staff in all the helping professions are working under increasing amounts of pressure. They are having to balance growing levels of distress, disease and disturbance, while at the same time managing an increasing speed of change in the financing and organizational structures of their employing organizations. Staff will only stay effective at their important work if they are supported and well supervised. Often their supervisors move straight from being a skilled practitioner into a management and supervisory position, with no training in the skills that staff supervision requires.

This series is aimed at the increasing number of people who act as trainers, tutors, mentors and supervisors in the helping professions. It is also designed for those who are studying to become a trainer or supervisor and for supervisees, who can use the books to reflect on the many complex issues in their work.

The series is designed to follow on from the success of the bestselling title *Supervision in the Helping Professions* by Peter Hawkins and Robin Shohet. Each book explores the key issues, models and skills for trainers and supervisors in the main areas of the helping professions: social work and community care, the medical and nursing professions, psychotherapy, counselling and mentoring for managers.

Current and forthcoming titles:

Meg Bond and Stevie Holland: *Skills of Clinical Supervision for Nurses*
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Maria Gilbert and Kenneth Evans: *Psychotherapy Supervision*
Peter Hawkins and Robin Shohet: *Supervision in the Helping Professions* (2nd edition)
Psychotherapy supervision

An integrative relational approach to psychotherapy supervision

Maria C. Gilbert and Kenneth Evans
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It is a great pleasure to welcome this book and to introduce you as the reader to it. This book provides a new integrated model of psychotherapy supervision which we believe will set a new landmark for the profession. The first landmark in the field of psychotherapy supervision was laid down by Ekstein and Wallerstein’s in their creation of their classic model in The Teaching and Learning of Psychotherapy in 1972. Our own process model of supervision in Supervision in the Helping Professions (1989; second edition 2000), provided a new way of thinking about the various areas of focus in supervision and provided the first integration of humanistic and psychoanalytic processes in supervision. However, our book while being used extensively to train psychotherapy supervisors, grew out of work across all the helping professions, and was not specific to psychotherapy. Thus although there has been a real growth in the field of supervision books and articles in the last ten years, most of it has been from the fields of counseling or counselling psychology, with only a limited contribution from the field of psychotherapy. In this same period the field of psychotherapy has also greatly changed and developed and in our view the time was ripe for a major new theoretical approach specifically from the field of psychotherapy supervision.

If we take the period of time since Ekstein and Wallerstein wrote their book in 1972 we can see how much has changed in the field of psychotherapy in all parts of the world. The field has grown enormously, with many more people entering the profession and many new training institutes being established. The variety of people entering the profession has also expanded, with more people coming from fields beyond psychiatry and psychology, greater numbers from different cultures and many more women.

In 1972 the field of psychotherapy was still dominated by the psychoanalytic institutes in both Europe and the United States. In the 1970s and 1980s there was a proliferation of different psychotherapeutic approaches. Over the last ten years there has been more of a move to find integration across the different approaches. This movement has been nurtured by many psychotherapists
who, having qualified in one approach go on to have psychotherapy and/or supervision from a psychotherapist from a different orientation. This in turn has led many psychotherapy supervisors to consider how to develop approaches to supervision that are fundamentally integrative and can be used for supervising psychotherapists from different orientations.

Also in the last ten years there has been a great deal happening in the politics and organization of the profession. In many countries new umbrella organizations have been established and they in turn have set up processes for evaluation and accreditation of both training organizations and individual practitioners. These organizations have also been at the forefront of developing the codes of ethics and practice for the profession and the complaints and grievance procedures for maintaining good practice.

The two authors of this book were specifically chosen as they have both been at the forefront of not only developing integrative approaches to psychotherapy and supervision, in their work training both psychotherapists and psychotherapy supervisors; but have also been active in the wider development of the psychotherapy profession, both in the UK, across Europe, the USA, South Africa and other parts of the world. They bring to the book a breadth of knowledge of the current state of the profession, with a depth of interest in developing new understanding of what happens in the psychotherapeutic and supervisory relationships.

We often forget how young the psychotherapy profession is, with its origins just over 100 years old. For the first half century the emphasis was very much on the psychotherapist objectively understanding the patient's inner world and finding ways of intervening in it. Only in the 1950s with writers like Searles and Winnicot, was more emphasis put on understanding ones own reactions as being key to understanding the patient or client.

In the last ten years there have been two parallel developments that have taken this trend even further. In the USA, some of the selfpsychologists that followed the work of Kohut, developed the approach of intersubjective psychotherapy (Stolorow et al. 1987, 1992, 1994). At the same time some of the Gestalt psychotherapists (Hycner 1991, 1995 and Yontef 1993) were developing 'dialogical psychotherapy' which also emphasized the attention to the space between the psychotherapist and the client which both parties co-create and which forms the medium through which they relate and understand each other.

This book is the first to explore in depth how an intersubjective approach can be used in supervision, where there is an interplay between the intersubjective relationship of psychotherapist and client; and the intersubjective relationship between psychotherapist and supervisor.

Gilbert and Evans also provide very practical guidance in the areas of professional development such as evaluation, assessment, ethics and equal opportunities. We believe that this book will not only prove invaluable to the psychotherapy supervisor but also to all those who teach or manage psychotherapy, counselling psychology or counselling trainings.
In our training of supervisors we have drawn heavily on many of the interesting texts on supervision that have been written in recent years. To mention only a few, we have been indebted to the excellent work of the following authors: Michael Carroll, Elizabeth Holloway, Peter Hawkins and Robin Shohet, Stephen Page and Valerie Woskett, Patrick Casement, Rudolf Ekstein and Robert Wallerstein, and Gaie Houston.

In this process of training and supervising supervisors we have increasingly felt the need for a book on psychotherapy supervision from a humanistic integrative perspective that would honour the revolution in thinking, which has come with the focus on an intersubjective perspective on the psychological relationship. This change in thinking has had a far-reaching impact on both our clinical practice and our work as supervisors. We remain rooted within the value base of humanistic integrative psychotherapy, which has been substantially enriched by contributions from dialogical psychotherapy, from psychoanalysis, and in particular from intersubjectivity theory and self psychology.

For the sake of simplicity we have used the pronoun ‘she’ for the supervisor and ‘he’ for the psychotherapist or client throughout the book where this pronoun could refer to either a man or a woman. Where the gender is clearly indicated from the text we have used the relevant form of the pronoun, particularly in the chapter on the model in action where Kenneth Evans is the supervisor and the gender of the supervisees is clearly indicated.

Except where specifically indicated, the examples of supervision given in this book are synthesized examples from our work with many supervisees over the years and are not drawn from any one particular case. Rather, we have used generic examples of the kind of issue that comes up regularly in supervision in slightly different forms in order to illustrate the points that we are making.
Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the support we have received from our families in this demanding process. A special thanks to Matthew Gilbert to whose expertise in computer graphics we are indebted for the diagrams. We wish to express our gratitude to Mairi Evans whose article on developmental stages linked to the work of Daniel Stern has served as a source of inspiration in the development of our model of supervision.

Much of the material in this book has evolved from our training and supervisory work at The Institute of Transactional Analysis Metanoia Institute, Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute and the Gestalt Psychotherapy Training Institute. We wish to thank all our supervisees and our colleagues who have contributed directly and indirectly to this book. In particular we wish to thank Michael Carroll for his unfailing readiness to help out with references, copies of articles and sundry other requests for help.

We are grateful to those people in our supervision practices who have allowed us to reproduce samples of their work; the transcripts in Chapter 3 and the examples of supervised supervision in Chapter 8 are in this category. We also wish to honour all the people we have supervised over the years; these people have inspired us in our work as supervisors and have contributed substantially to our resolve to write this book.

Finally, we wish to thank Peter Hawkins for his help and feedback as series editor and also Geoff Heath for his detailed and exhaustive feedback.
What is supervision? When a psychotherapist or a supervisor consults with a more ‘seasoned’ and experienced practitioner in the field in order to draw on their wisdom and expertise to enhance his practice, then we would call this process of engagement supervision.

There exist many definitions of supervision that stress different aspects of supervision, inter alia: the importance of the supervisory alliance, the educational or instructional goals of supervision, the primary focus of the supervisory process as the welfare of the client, a central focus on the professional development of the supervisee and the idea that supervision can be seen as a form of ‘metatherapy’ (Ekstein and Wallerstein 1972; Hess 1980; Holloway 1995; Carroll 1996; Martindale et al. 1997; Holloway and Carroll 1999; Hawkins and Shohet 2000).

Generally there is agreement that supervision is a learning process in which a psychotherapist engages with a more experienced practitioner in order to enhance his skills in the process of his ongoing professional development. This, in turn, promotes and safeguards the well-being of his clients. Supervision is a branch of knowledge with associated skills in its own right, derived from research, closely linked to clinical work and based in the supervisory practice of many experts. Supervision as a discipline possesses a growing body of literature and recent years have seen the development of sophisticated models of supervision differing from those of the psychotherapies. These models provide conceptual frameworks for supervision, a discussion of developmental stages in supervision as well as a focus on the tasks and functions of supervision. The discourse of supervision is not simply psychotherapy transposed to a different domain; it is a discipline in its own right!

It is important at the outset to distinguish between personal psychotherapy and supervision; they are two separate activities with differing aims and goals. In our view, the purposes and objectives of psychotherapy are as
Psychotherapy supervision follows: to understand, change, resolve or alleviate conditions of suffering in the client and to promote self-knowledge and experience of self in the wider context of the person’s life. Psychotherapy aims at enabling a person to make better use of his potential in his interactions with individuals and groups. The psychotherapist’s role will include the ethical objective of promoting the existential potential of the individual as well as of the society/culture, and so to foster a dynamic balance between self-determination and adaptability. Supervision of the psychotherapist has as its primary goal the promotion of the welfare of the clients in his care; this is achieved through thoughtful reflection on and a critical exploration of the therapeutic relationship between them.

Supervision includes specific learning goals for the supervisee; the supervisor’s role is to stimulate the integration of personal development, knowledge and skills in the process of evaluating the interaction between the supervisee and the client. In this respect, the welfare and development of the supervisee becomes as important as that of the client since the supervisee’s growing expertise will benefit that person’s client base. The central importance of the working alliance is common to both these processes: psychotherapy and supervision.

The intention informing this book

This book aims to provide the reader with a model for accessing supervision through focusing on the dynamics of the relationship in both psychotherapy and supervision. For this reason, we provide an integrative relational framework, which is as relevant to psychotherapy as it is to supervision. Whereas we do not believe that one should conflate the two processes, we do consider them as inextricably linked with both their similarities and their differences. To fully appreciate supervision in its context, an understanding of the nature of psychotherapy is indispensable. While psychotherapy and supervision have separate and distinct objectives as outlined above, some of the issues that are relevant to the supervisor will be equally applicable to the psychotherapist, in particular the importance of the working alliance in the interests of the welfare of the client.

Supervision: a space to reflect

Providing a reflective space for the supervisee is one of the primary responsibilities of the supervisor so as to enable the clinician to review his caseload and his own reactions to his work with clients in a supportive atmosphere. In this sense, we regard receiving regular supervision as an important aspect of the supervisee’s self-care. In the supervisory process the supervisee is enabled to gain a meta-perspective on his psychotherapeutic work so that he can reflect on it and consider ways forward with a client. The supervisor will encourage links between theory and practice: aspects of theory will be
drawn in to highlight certain client dynamics or the nature of the therapeutic relationship itself so as to enhance practice. At other times, aspects of the therapeutic encounter that lead the clinician to ‘feel stuck’ will be minutely analysed in order to be understood in the context of the psychotherapeutic relationship that has been co-created by these two people. Such a micro-analysis of the therapeutic dialogue can reveal particular points in the interaction that are problematic for the psychotherapist. This in turn may lead to a focus on a characteristic style of interaction for either the therapist or the client that leads to a non-productive outcome.

These problem points in the therapeutic dialogue have been variously referred to as ‘empathic failures’ (Kohut 1984) or ‘therapeutic alliance ruptures’ (Safran 1993). An exploration of such miscommunications or discord lie at the heart of our approach to the supervision of psychotherapy. We see that it is only through attending carefully to the times when we reach another person and the occasions on which we ‘miss’ that person in the course of our interactions that we can truly communicate effectively. In that sense, I can only learn to communicate effectively with you by the mistakes I make and by learning from you how to redress these! This process of gradually learning to match one another’s communication styles is as relevant to the supervisory alliance as to the therapeutic relationship. Careful attention to communication at this microscopic level will lay the foundations for a firmly based relationship that is able to tolerate conflicts and disagreements and provide a container for growth and change.

Training and consultative supervision

We recognize a distinction between training supervision and consultative supervision as is now beginning to be more widely honoured in the field of supervision (Carroll 1996). The term ‘training supervision’ is used to describe the process of supervision of psychotherapists during training. The term ‘consultative supervision’ is used to refer to the process whereby an experienced and qualified practitioner seeks consultation with a peer or with a more experienced psychotherapist concerning client work. The responsibilities of the supervisor will differ considerably between these two endeavours.

The training supervisor will be required to report regularly to the training course about the development of the trainee and to play an active role in the assessment process. Consultative supervision involves much more a discussion between peers about aspects of the psychotherapy practice of the consultee. The difference between these two types of supervision is very dependent on the needs of the supervisee. In our experience of training supervision, supervisees need regular guidance, teaching, support, discussion of ethical practice and an ongoing overt assessment of their development as psychotherapists.

In training supervision there is also frequently the need for supervisors to be orientation-specific, unless of course they are involved with supervisees from an eclectic or integrative training. Even in the latter case, it is important for the supervisor to be well apprised of the particular approach
to integration on which the course is based. In consultative supervision, experienced psychotherapists are more often looking for an extension to their existing knowledge base, for the integration of new perspectives to their current orientation to client work – both theoretically and in terms of techniques/therapeutic strategies. Of course, even in this type of supervision engagement, the role of the supervisor as the monitor of ethical practice will remain a duty of the supervisor. However, in our experience, consultative supervision takes more the form of a dialogue between peers, an opportunity to refine and extend clinical practice. We believe that an integrative relational model of supervision can be used to equal effect by training and consultative supervisors since it provides a generic model for viewing the supervisory process.

**Possible applications of the model**

Our integrative relational model of supervision can be integrated into the specific orientation to psychotherapy that is being practised since it is based in the primacy of the psychotherapeutic relationship as a vehicle for change. For integrative psychotherapy training courses, our model based in the mutuality of relationship has particular relevance because most of these courses have a primary focus on the therapeutic relationship, which forms the core of our model of supervision. We believe that the goal of all psychotherapy supervision is the attainment of a meta-perspective on psychotherapy practice, as this is embedded in its particular context.

Likewise in consultative supervision where cross-orientation supervision is often being sought, a model based in the centrality of the therapeutic relationship provides a common point of departure.

Frequently supervisors in National Health Service settings, or in voluntary or other organizations that provide client services to the public, are ‘assigned’ supervisees with orientations to psychotherapy different from their own. These supervisors are inevitably, therefore, required to supervise across theoretical orientation. Since such supervisors have the primary task of assuring the welfare of the supervisees’ clients, and not specifically the brief to remain orientation-pure, considerable flexibility is called for on the part of the supervisor. After much experience of this process in the course of supervising and training supervisors, we could see the need for an approach to supervision based in the commonalities between psychotherapy orientations rather than on the specific differences.

In such supervision practice the first emphasis is on ‘What is effective psychotherapy?’ and only secondarily on ‘Is this pure person-centred, or psychodynamic, or gestalt, or cognitive-behavioural psychotherapy?’ We believe that these demands from the workplace have influenced many supervisors to adopt a more eclectic approach to ‘what works’ in psychotherapy practice rather than focusing on the ‘pure’ elements of approaches. We are offering these supervisors a coherent approach to supervision drawing on integrative relational theory, which spans orientations and provides a model that can be readily shared with supervisees.
Overview of contents

In Chapter 2 we present an integrative relational model of supervision grounded in intersubjectivity theory, developmental research and dialogical psychotherapy. This model is grounded in constructivism, phenomenology and field theory. Chapter 3 demonstrates the model in action giving four vignettes accompanied by a commentary and discussion linked to Chapter 2. The chapter concludes with the identification of four phases in the educational development of the ‘internal supervisor’. Chapter 4 deals with the challenge of creating an effective learning environment for the supervisee. This chapter highlights the significance of the supervisory alliance, countering the effects of a shame-based educational experience, the need to develop critical reflective thinking and the importance of fostering a ‘research mind set’ in the psychotherapist to facilitate effective outcomes in the work with the client. In Chapter 5 we discuss clear contracting as a basis for effective supervision through establishing clear boundaries, which support the supervisory alliance. We emphasize the centrality of the contractual process for effective relating in any context. In the course of this chapter we overview two major traditions that have influenced the development of supervision as a discipline. Chapter 6 provides a critical review of contemporary theoretical and research foundations for our model of supervision. Here, too, we discuss the contribution of field theory and constructivism to our model. Chapter 7 focuses on the assessment, accreditation and evaluation of supervision practice. Chapter 8 looks at the evolution of the supervisor’s personal style with a particular focus on the role of countertransference as a valuable source of information regarding the psychotherapeutic process. In this chapter we address the interface between psychotherapy and supervision. Chapter 9 grapples with the complexity of ethical decision making and gives examples of the process of dealing with ethical dilemmas. The chapter raises questions about the principles on which complaints are investigated. Chapter 10 builds on the preceding chapter on ethics by exploring the perpetuation of anti-oppressive practice in both psychotherapy and supervision. It highlights the need for reform in psychotherapy training organizations if a multicultural perspective is to be embraced fully. An example is given of an organization that reviews and implements changes in its anti-oppressive practice. In Chapter 11 we review supervision in the wider context. Finally we provide some examples of resources for the supervisor who seeks further training.