Proceedings of the Seminar on

SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

**Riding the Waves and
Rethinking Social Work Supervision**

Singapore, 8 - 9 July, 2021

Social Work Supervision:
Riding the Waves and
Rethinking Social Work Supervision

Proceedings from the "Social Work Supervision: Riding the Waves and Rethinking Social Work Supervision" Seminar 2021 held on 8 and 9 July 2021.

Organised by:
Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board (SWAAB)

Supported by:
Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF)
Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW)

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Programme Schedule

Day 1: 8 July 2021

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5:25 pm – 5:30 pm	Closing Remarks	

Foreword

Good social work supervision directs supervisees to useful skills and knowledge and facilitates their personal and professional development. It also provides opportunities for practitioners to reflect on their responses towards clients' issues and the latter's experiences with agencies. This is especially important in the pandemic situation where practitioners have lesser time for reflection due to the influx of clients and the need for adaptation.

I would like to thank our speakers for their erudite sharing and all the participants for their active discussion which further strengthened our social work supervision landscape. I hope that this compilation of the proceedings at the "Social Work Supervision: Riding the Waves and Rethinking Social Work Supervision" Seminar 2021 will benefit you as you provide good social work supervision to your supervisees.

Ms Ang Bee Lian
Director-General of Social Welfare and
Chairperson, Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board

Foreword

It is heartening to see that the Social Work Supervision Seminar has brought together passionate local and overseas practitioners who are interested to advance social work supervision. I am grateful to the presenters who willingly share their practice wisdom in supervision and for the support given by SWAAB to build the community of supervisors. Indeed, many of us have stories to share about the impact of supervision in developing our understanding of social work practice and our identities as Social Workers. Moving forward, I hope that the conversations to build each other up will not just only take place during supervision seminar. Rather, may it be a mindset that we have as we interact with our supervisees so that each encounter and experience we have with each other would be life giving. May we remember too that the outcome of supervision is not just for the development of supervisees, but it is to enhance our practice so that we can better serve our clients.

Once again, thank you speakers for the lively sharing during the seminar and the effort to document your good supervisory work.

Dr Peace Yuh Ju Wong
Chairperson
Social Work Supervision 2021

Welcome Address and Launch of Supervision Guidelines

Ms Ang Bee Lian
Chairperson of SWAAB
Director-General of Social Welfare
Ministry of Social and Family Development

Introduction

Ms Ang welcomed the participants from Singapore and abroad and expressed her appreciation for their participation in the seminar. She shared that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and technology, connecting with one another has become seamless and hoped for everyone to remain connected in the decades ahead.

Ms Ang narrated that she still vividly recalls the supervision seminar held in 2015, where practitioners met to discuss their challenges with supervision. Since then, there has been more awareness on how supervision is integral for social work practice.

Importance of Supervision

Ms Ang shared that supervision is an opportunity to reflect on how an agency's response to the clients' issues and problems and how their experience with the agency can affect their continued contact with the agency. To a large extent, social workers work with involuntary clients. Depending on the level of resistance to receiving or getting help, we make effort to engage and build rapport in order to effect influence over the client. In an increasingly complex and fast paced environment, the working relationship with clients can get intensified by expectations for quick resolution. In such a climate, supervision of practice protects the worker by facilitating access to exploring dilemmas, getting advice and coaching on decisions and follow up.

Supervision of practice therefore involves talking through the impact of the work on the worker both personally and professionally as well as exploring decision making. It is an integral part of practice as it is about the practitioner's well-being, professional development, and part of management oversight. Supervision helps both the agency and the practitioner to achieve the best possible outcomes for the vulnerable, be it the children, the adult victim or older person and in some instances the perpetrator.

Supervision—An Art and a Science

Ms Ang viewed supervision of practice as an art and a science. It is a science in that supervisors need to have the theoretical knowledge and skills on how to facilitate conversations with their supervisees to support learning and professional growth. However, it is also an art as the supervisor needs to plan their supervision sessions to meet the unique needs of each supervisee, be supportive and yet not lose sight of what the service is meant to deliver and be accountable for.

Ms Ang further shared pointers worth keeping in mind when supervising Social Work practice.

Pointers in Supervising Social Work Practice

1 **It starts with being clear about each other's roles in the supervision process.** Each supervisor and supervisee should prepare the contents and agree on how the time is to be spent. There is however the less spoken part of this process, which is about holding the supervisee accountable for the progress on the goals. It is generally found that supervisors who are keenly supportive have supervisees reporting that they enjoy the supervision sessions. And supervisors who hold supervisees accountable for progress and commitment to goals will have supervisees less inclined to say that they enjoy or want supervision. It is sometimes not a wonder therefore that not everyone wants supervision or enjoys being supervised. So, supervisors would want to be both supportive and hold supervisees accountable. There should be an open offer that the supervisee can ask for help or guidance if the supervisee reaches an impasse or is unable to make progress.

2 **Good supervision of social work practice should also help the workers to improve their performance, competencies, and expertise and consequentially their well-being.** In this regard, a supervisor should always aim to be the much-needed resource or be able to direct the worker to timely and useful knowledge, skills and considerations.

3 **Supervision of social work practice is likely to focus on practice questions that relate to the outcomes of the interventions.** Good case documentation is part of safe practice. It should show evidence of proper assessment, a plan that is followed and reviewed, and on-going evaluation of intervention and outcome. It should also explain the practitioner's thinking and principles behind key decisions, the

professionals involved in the decision-making process and how the practice complies with the standard of care and protection.

Framing a Dilemma

Ms Ang recapped that Supervision of practice is about talking through the impact the work has on the worker personally and professionally as well as exploring decision making. She shared that one good way to do this is to have the supervisee frame the issue or concern as a dilemma. It is a useful way as it legitimises the tension, struggle, and discomfort that the supervisee has.

Ms Ang illustrated the above point with an example where a Social Worker found it challenging to address a single mother's harsh physical punishment on her children. Punishment would include hitting them with hangers, belting them, and throwing objects at them whenever her children misbehave. The Social Worker empathises with the mother's struggle as a single mother who had to care for her four young children while grieving the loss of her husband. She did not want to jeopardise the therapeutic alliance built with the mother by addressing inappropriate physical punishment, given that grief work with the mother just began. The Social Worker views that such punishment could be due to stress and will likely end after providing the mother with the financial and emotional support that she needs. She also rationalised that as she had likewise experienced physical punishment as a child and turned out fine, such an occurrence was not a big deal. Furthermore, the Social Worker did not notice any injuries on the children, and they appeared comfortable with their mother.

Ms Ang said that the dilemma in this example could be framed by the Social Worker as: "I really wish I can speak to the mother about the discipline of the child, but I am very worried that this will alienate me from her, and she will not want to see me anymore."

When the dilemma is surfaced for supervision, the supervisor could help the Social Worker to recognise that as part of safe practice – there is a need to prioritise the safety of vulnerable persons in case management. While providing support to the mother is important, this cannot take precedence over the children's safety and well-being. The supervisor can also help the Social Worker to gain insight on how her personal experience shaped her view on the use of physical punishment. As part of her professional development, the Social Worker needs to be mindful that as a Social Work professional she has the responsibility in keeping vulnerable persons safe.

Protected Time for Supervision

Ms Ang also highlighted that it is increasingly a given that practitioners wish to have protected time for training, supervision, and professional development activities. However, the question is about how to have the supervisor and supervisee commit to the protected time being used for supervision of practice. Ms Ang qualified that she is referring here to actual practice and less about personal development and growth. Not everyone enjoys supervision and there are those who want to avoid it. Ms Ang posits that supervision will be perhaps more valued by supervisees if it is tied to the decision-making process for cases. Part of the struggles of practitioners is having to plan and even make decisions in the face of incomplete information, and resources. Ms Ang opined that this is where supervision can be helpful as part of the supervisor's role is to be a resource to the worker.

Ms Ang gave the example of a practitioner having to adapt to working remotely with clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Concurrently, the practitioner faced an increased workload due to an influx of clients' requests, from requesting IT equipment for their children's home-based learning to urgent cash for food and necessities due to breadwinners' income loss. As a result, the practitioner has little time to reflect on her practice. Furthermore, the practitioner found it challenging to connect with clients using remote means and felt incompetent. The practitioner was also anxious when doing remote check-ins to assess the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable clients, worrying that clients could be put at risk if she overlooked significant concerns and risk factors. Over time, the practitioner's motivation and energy levels dropped and her work piled up.

To manage the workload, the practitioner began justifying the lack of reaching out to clients who were not forthcoming (e.g., not keeping with their online appointments or did not pick up calls from her) as being clients' right to self-determination. The practitioner also began procrastinating on checking in with vulnerable clients. She busied herself with providing clients with practical support as doing so gave her a greater sense of satisfaction and achievement.

In the above example, having protected time for supervision allowed the supervisor to surface her observations of the practitioner for discussion during supervision session. With the dedicated time and space set aside and with the supervisor as a sounding board, the practitioner was able to reflect on the impact of the changes on her and identify how her coping strategy was affecting her work and the support that she needs to better manage the changes.

Launch of Supervision Guidelines 2021

In closing, Ms Ang shared that as the COVID-19 pandemic catalysed use of technology and innovative approaches to facilitate supervision, the social work profession should continue to reap these gains. She expressed her hopes for supervisors to continue learning and stay relevant to remain effective in their supervisory practice.

Ms Ang then announced the launch of the Social Work Supervision Guidelines 2021. She added that the social work competency domains had been incorporated in this edition of the guideline to provide insights on further development for new and experienced supervisors.

Keynote Speech:
Rethinking Social Work Supervision:
Towards a Strengths-Based Practice

Professor Lambert K Engelbrecht

Chair of Department of Social Work

Stellenbosch University

<u>Introduction</u>

Professor Engelbrecht began his speech with an analogy describing strengths-based supervision as either a pie in the sky or a proof in the pudding. The former metaphor characterises strengths-based supervision as something pleasant to contemplate but unlikely to be realised, while the latter—which he resonates with—illustrates implementing strengths-based principles into supervision.

Professor Engelbrecht shared that recent research averred social work to be the fastest-growing profession internationally, with its positive impact ascribed to the profession's revival of strengths-based practices. However, primary proponents of strengths-based social work postulated that it is inherently a perspective but not a grounded theory. Nonetheless, the notion of strengths-based practices as a form of positive psychology increasingly finds credence among the global social work fraternity.

Empirical findings point out that there may be an oversimplified promotion of strengths-based practices in social work within a neoliberal and consequently managerial, organisational discourse to an extent where it could be metaphorically described as a pie in the sky. These findings are specifically evident in the supervisory relationship as supervision often tends to consider supervisees in the deficit with its functions intrinsically based on the traditional problem-oriented paradigm of social work practice. However, managerial, problem-oriented supervision can undermine strengths-based practices considering the parallels between supervision processes and practices.

Professor Engelbrecht then proposed that if they were to promote strengths-based social work practices, they should also apply the same perspective in supervision and social work practices for social workers to flourish. He hypothesised that the supervision of social workers may be more harmful than conducive to social workers and their practices should it be in the

absence of strengths-based principles. As such, he expressed his hope that a presentation of a range of recent interrelated qualitative research findings would help identify the variables in strengths-based supervision to provide the proof in the pudding. He stressed that while the range of his research the past decade was chiefly set in a South African context, they are still applicable within the global context.

Timeline of Professor Engelbrecht's Research on Strengths-Based Supervision

1980s

In 1982, Professor Engelbrecht embarked on his Bachelor's degree in social work and had supervisors who had no formal education in related fields to supervise him. In 1988, Professor Engelbrecht became a supervisor and similarly supervised social workers according to his past experiences as a supervisee. He focused on compliance, production, and administration. He added that it might be common for supervisors to reference their experiences as supervisees and supervise others accordingly in the similar fields.

1996

Professor Engelbrecht completed his Master's study on supervision and management based on Kadushin's (1976) work. The study was in a North American clinical context, guided by the supervision's administrative, supportive, and educational functions. It focused on the stressors of social workers and students. However, in Professor Engelbrecht's hindsight, the study appeared to focus on the deficits of the supervision functions but not investigate the elephant in the room—the supervisory relationship itself being the main stressor among practitioners.

Early 2000s

In 2002, Professor Engelbrecht completed his PhD study on supervision set within a South African social development paradigm. In 2004, he published the research titled, "Operationalising a competence model of supervision to empower social workers and students". In Professor Engelbrecht's hindsight, the research appeared to be victim-blaming and regarded supervisees as powerless and incompetent. In 2006, he published the research titled, "Plumbing the brain drain of South African social workers migrating to the UK: Challenges for social service providers". The research found the inadequacy of supervision of social workers to be a main reason for social workers to exit social work practice in South Africa.

Professor Engelbrecht published the research titled, "Yesterday, today and tomorrow: Is social work supervision in South Africa keeping up?" which sought to find out why the supervision of social workers continue to remain contentious. The research found supervision in South Africa to be unauthentic and not context-specific, focusing on one-size-fits-all solutions.

He published another research titled, "A strengths perspective on supervision of social workers as an alternative management paradigm within a social development context". The strengths perspective provides a distinctive lens for examining the world of practice. However, it may be a mere mantra to encourage positive thinking and a disguised attempt to reframe misery and victim-blaming, with the effect of becoming a managerial tool within a neoliberal discourse. Additionally, it is informed by a medical model emphasising remedial treatment, social pathology, and individual clinical practice. Such problem-solving supervision, however, undermines strengths-based practices.

Professor Engelbrecht, thus, stressed that they should not promote strengths-based intervention that is incongruent with supervision. The scope of supervision should not be crisis-driven, as doing so suggests a problem-based orientation. Instead, supervisors need to assume a facilitative role by adopting strengths-based vocabularies and have supervision undergirded by a theoretical understanding based on competencies and outcomes. This research concluded that strengths-based supervision was a crucial element in a social development paradigm in social work practice and found resonance with supervision in other contexts. The seeming simplicity of strengths-based practices should not fool practitioners. Instead, practitioners should employ the strengths perspective as a proactive response to global and local neoliberal market demands.

2013

Professor Engelbrecht published the research titled, "Social work supervision policies and frameworks: Playing notes or making music?" The research found tick-boxing exercises and the standardisation of practices do not effectively apply strengths-based practices. Instead, they cultivate a notion of counting and not judgement, measuring and not thinking, and caring about costs and not about the causes.

<u>2015</u>

Professor Engelbrecht published the research titled, "Revisiting the esoteric question: Can non-social workers manage and supervise social workers?" The research found specific tenets of some of the most salient managerial practices featured in social work internationally. These would be changes in management language, preoccupation with procedures, norms and standards, reduction in professional discretion, de-skilling of social work, diminished professional identity, and the blaming of social workers. The research concluded that the social work profession should humanise managerialism to survive in the global neoliberal discourse. The best way to engage people and structures is to address life challenges, enhance well-being, and the attempt to do more than having a strengths-based inclination.

<u>2019</u>

Professor Engelbrecht published the research titled, "Towards authentic supervision in a social development paradigm". The research found that a process of authentication by identifying specific determinants of supervision can help to compose a comprehensive, synthesised definition of supervision. These determinants of supervision would constitute the grounding theory of authentic strengths-based supervision. The research eventually defined supervision of social workers based on a process model, authentication steps, and findings from 10 relevant studies. It clustered the determinants of the definition of supervision into the brief of supervision, operationalisation of supervision, and scope of supervision. He displayed the image below to illustrate the clustering of determinants.

DETERMINANTS	BRIEF	OPERATIONALISATION	SCOPE
Mandate of supervision	X		
Agency supervision policy	X		
Supervision functions	X		
Designated authoritative and trained supervisor	X		
Goal of supervision		X	
Structured, interactional supervision sessions		X	
Adult education principles		X	
Cyclical process		X	
Associated tasks		X	
Methods		X	
Activities		X	
Predetermined time-span		X	
Theories, perspectives and practice models		X	
Values and ethical conducts		X	
Professional, constructive relationship			X
Context of the work environment			X
Roles of the supervisor			X

Clustering the Determinants of the Definition of Supervision

Professor Engelbrecht contributed to the publication of the Routledge International Handbook of Social Work Supervision as an editor and writer of its 31st chapter, "Strengths-Based Supervision". The book chapter characterised strengths-based supervision as an equal, collaborative, participatory activity between supervisors and supervisees, marked by co-responsibility and co-ownership. It should have a coherent structure devised by the supervisor and supervisee and operationalised with tangible strengths-based processes, tasks, techniques, and tools. Relevant systemic components should be identified in the supervision and assessed based on a strengths-based supervision equation.

A holistic as well as detailed supervision plan should encapsulate these systemic components. Additionally, a supervision plan's objectives should guide sessions based on specific role allocations, principles of adult education, strengths-oriented techniques, and feedback based on the supervisor's and supervisee's respective learning and supervision styles.

Professor Engelbrecht provided an equation and an example of the assessment tool below.

$$\left[C < In = (SOS)Sup \right] = (\text{Supervision plan: why, what, how, when})$$

C: challenges of service users
In: intervention strengths
SOS: service users', organisation's and supervisee's strengths
Sup: supervisor's strengths

Strengths-Based Supervision Equation

Challenges of service users	Intervention strengths	Service users' strengths	Organisation's strengths	Supervisee's strengths	Supervisor's strengths
Micro	Micro	Micro	Micro	Characteristics (enablers)	Characteristics (enablers)
Mezzo	Mezzo	Mezzo	Mezzo		
				Knowledge (know how)	Knowledge (know how)
Macro	Macro	Macro	Macro		
				Skills (Know what)	Skills (Know what)
				Attitude (know why)	Attitude (know why)

Assessment Tool for Strengths-Based Supervision

Structural Dimensions of Strengths-Based Supervision

From his past research, Professor Engelbrecht has suggested for strengths-based supervision practices to include interrelated clinical and structural dimensions. The clinical dimensions are further expounded upon in the handbook, while structural dimensions include the determinants of authentic strengths-based supervision, consisting of the brief, operationalisation, and scope of supervision. For the remaining speech, Professor Engelbrecht elaborated on the structural dimensions of strengths-based supervision.

Brief of Supervision

Professor Engelbrecht shared various areas in making up the brief of supervision and categorised what would be considered a pie in the sky and a proof in the pudding concerning authentic strengths-based supervision. The table below summarises his sharing:

	Pie in the Sky	**Proof in the Pudding**
Mandate	Informal supervision to ensure accountability	Statutory requirement to enable social workers to flourish
Organisational Policy	Focus on norms and standards	Focus on capabilities, abilities, competencies, assets, talents, resilience, and wellbeing
Supervision Functions	Primarily administrative function	Integration of administrative, supportive, and educational functions
Supervisor's Authority	Authoritarian, with supervisors relying on practice experience	Authoritative, with supervisors having academic and practice knowledge, skills, and values
Supervision's Goal	To develop social workers to work independently in the shortest time possible	To promote competent social workers and efficient professional rendering of social work services

Operationalisation of Supervision

Professor Engelbrecht then shared the different areas in making up the operationalisation of supervision. The following table summarises his sharing:

	Pie in the Sky	**Proof in the Pudding**
Supervision Sessions	On-the-run, crisis-driven	Structured according to specific objectives, reflective, and based on personal development plans
Principles	Based on 'telling', being controlling, and having inspections and documentation	Based on adult education principles, identifying learning styles and blockages, devising educational strategies
Process	Having an open-door policy	A cyclical, developmental process guided by phases
Tasks	Random and unstructured based on instinctive feelings	A cyclical progress from a personal development assessment, to developing a personal development plan, and to performance evaluation
Methods	Having group supervision for solely training and staff development	An integration of peer, individual, and group supervision to meet challenges faced within a specific context
Activities	Stagnant on the level of coaching	There is movement between providing coaching, mentoring, and consultation according to challenges faced within a specific context
Timespan	Fast-tracked towards independence	Interminable according to challenges faced within a specific context, as such, having a never complete state
Theories, Perspectives, and Models	Doing what needs to be done currently	Configuring a constellation of theories on personal identity and competencies
Values	Drawing chiefly on personal values	Finding congruence among personal, societal, organisational, professional, and personal values

<u>Scope of Supervision</u>

Professor Engelbrecht lastly shared about the various areas in making up the scope of supervision. The table below summarises his sharing:

	Pie in the Sky	**Proof in the Pudding**
Supervisory Relationship	The supervisor is the boss	The supervisor is not the boss, with anti-discriminatory relationship that is constructive and positive
Context	Looking for one-size-fits-all approaches	Having an ecological systems perspective on the supervisory relationship on organisational, micro, mezzo, and macro environmental levels
Supervisor's Roles	Administrator	Multifaceted based on the context, being a modeller to the supervisee

Closing Remarks

Professor Engelbrecht closed his speech by expressing his hopes that the identified grounded determinants for authentic strengths-based supervision will have an international impact on supervisors in adopting clinical strengths-based practices. Doing so will ensure the continuity of a scholarly, theoretical body of knowledge in succeeding generations and enable social workers to flourish. All of these are only possible, he emphasised, if the supervisory relationship infuses scientific, grounded, strengths-based theory and practice. Professor Engelbrecht then thanked the participants for the opportunity to share his insights on supervision before wishing them an insightful time for the remaining time in the seminar.

Workshop 1
How to Do Supervision Research

Associate Professor Kieran O'Donoghue

Head of School Social Work, Associate Dean Academic

College of Health, Massey University

Synopsis of Workshop

This workshop aims to provide substantial insights into supervision research. Participants will be trained to identify five key components: (1) identify research problems and questions; (2) discuss the research, as well as the evaluation methodology and methods that help to address their research problems and questions; (3) develop a research or evaluation proposal; (4) conduct analysis concerning ethical principles in terms of its strengths and limitations; and (5) develop an action plan to advance their research proposal.

Identify Research Problems and Questions

The starting point when researching social work supervision concerns identifying a research problem and research questions. The research problem can be related to the social work experience and practice, improving supervision, a macro perspective of supervision, satisfaction of supervisee in supervision, or supervision models as examples. The research problem consequently leads to a hypothesis that one seeks to prove or disprove. One example of a research problem A/P Kieran gave would be, "Does supervision improve social work practice with clients?"

As for research questions, they should be kept open. Examples of research questions that A/P Kieran gave would be, "How does supervision contribute to supervisees improving their practice with clients" or "How would you know?"

Participants were then free to discuss and share their proposed research problems in the Zoom chat. One participant A presented the problem, "How does trauma-informed supervision prevent vicarious trauma?" A/P Kieran responded that they would want to put into context what 'trauma-informed supervision' means. They would also like to know what current literature says about 'trauma-informed supervision' and its relation to what has been occurring. Another participant B also shared, "How does supervision based on deliberate practice

enhance the competencies of social workers?" A/P Kieran responded that first, they would want to put into context what 'deliberate practice' means and then look at the competencies they wish to enhance.

After identifying a research problem or question(s), one should read the research literature to put the problem and question(s) in the context of what was done before. Below is some literature that one can start with:

O'Donoghue, K., & Tsui, M. S. (2015). Social work supervision research (1970-2010): The way we were and the way ahead. *The British Journal of Social Work, 45*(2), 616-633. DOI: 10.1093/bjsw/bct115

O'Donoghue, K. (2021). Advancing the social work supervision research agenda. In K. O'Donoghue, & L. Engelbrecht (Eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Social Work Supervision.* (pp. 637-656). Routledge.

Discuss Research and Evaluation Methodology and Methods

Research and Evaluation Methodology

A/P Kieran shared that in 115 peer-reviewed research articles on social work supervision spanning from 2011 to 2020, 55 (48%) of studies used qualitative designs, with 32 using interviews and the majority being semi-structured interviews. Thirty (26%) studies were quantitative, with most of them using surveys. Thirty (26%) studies had mixed methods designs, with 18 research studies using a combination of surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Eight were evaluation studies, using pre-and post-tests, observations, rating scales, and questionnaires. At the same time, two studies were part of a programme evaluating aspects of strength-based supervision.

When deciding the research and evaluation methodology to use for research, one would have to think about the purpose of the research and what it seeks to answer. For instance, it could be leading to a discovery, having a measurement, proving a hypothesis, having an exploration, or showing change or improvement. One can use quantitative methodologies to provide a measurement and prove a hypothesis. In contrast, one would use qualitative methodologies to understand meanings and people's experiences as well as perceptions.

A/P Kieran returned to the suggested research problem regarding supervision experiences and managing secondary trauma from supervision. He questioned if one could evaluate the extent to which supervision sessions address matters of trauma for the reported client. A/P Kieran also asked if one could explore the wellbeing of the social worker doing that session. He suggested that one could consider conducting either pre-tests or post-tests. As for the other research problem proposed, A/P Kieran questioned if they are looking to measure the competencies at the start or end and if they are looking to use self-reports or narratives. He also shared that while evaluation methodologies inform learning, decision-making and action, mixed methods combine measurements and meanings. He advised that one needs to think if the methodology chosen aligns with the purpose of the selected research question.

Once again, participants were free to discuss and share the methodology that would best suit the purpose of their research. participant A suggested using mixed methods to evaluate supervision experiences and measure the wellbeing of social workers using Quality of Life scales. Participant B also suggested using mixed methods to examine the process of adopting deliberate practice and the outcomes concerning the selected competencies.

Research Methods

A/P Kieran then explained that methods are the approaches used to collect information from participants. He asked participants to think about who the most information-rich participants would be and the ways that they could maximise their participation. The following methods are some examples used in social work supervision research:

- Semi-structured interviews
- Focus groups
- Observations
- Structured reflection journals
- Surveys
- Experiments

For structured reflection journals, it may be of relevance to participant [B]'s research problem as supervisors and supervisees can complete journals that could reflect their competencies in social work practice. As for experiments, A/P Kieran shared that they could use experimental and baseline groups or pre and post-test evaluations. Otherwise, they could use single system

case study designs, such as having supervisors focus solely on deliberate practice to enhance the competencies of social workers in the case of participant [B]'s research problem.

When choosing the methods to use, one will also need to consider the participants' profile. These participants could be supervisees, supervisors, both supervisees and supervisors, even clients. However, one would need to consider how to retrieve the feedback loop to know if competencies are enhanced and to what extent are various participants involved in the triangulation of research. Another issue to consider would be the means of information gathering from participants. It could be done individually, in person, in dyads and groups, in person or via Zoom, or by using video and audio recordings, records, or journals.

One participant asked if there were any research that found critical turning points during supervision using video recordings of supervision. A/P Kieran shared that there do not exist special case, and then added that they can study it using video recordings but must first recruit dyads and conduct a critical discourse analysis after. The participant also raised if any questionnaires could guide them in observing non-verbal behaviours that are cues to turning points during supervision. A/P Kieran responded that there are none specifically. They would likely have to start deciding on one or look at David Wilkinson's work on the simulation of supervision in social work. A/P Kieran also advised participants to consider data analysis as one may need software should there be codes.

Develop a Research or Evaluation Proposal

A/P Kieran shared that a research proposal should include the following:

- Title
- Introduction and background
- Research question
- Literature review
- Theoretical framework
- Methodology
- Methods
- Ethics
- Timeline
- Budget
- References
- Appendices

A/P Kieran advised participants to start filling out a proposal as soon as possible to help them envision what would be necessary for the research.

A participant then asked if they were keen to compare the effectiveness of various supervision models informed by different paradigms and what variables to observe across them. A/P Kieran shared that it would be helpful to define the models, use an experimental or a pre and post-test approach, and compare the narratives. Some variables they could observe would be the supervisee's satisfaction with supervision, the supervisory development, and the model's contribution to the working alliance.

Conduct an Analysis Concerning Ethical Principles, Strengths and Limitations

Taking reference from Tsui's (2005) work, A/P Kieran shared that "the hierarchical power relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee and to the confidential nature of the process [can make it an] extremely delicate and difficult task to elicit information about the supervisory performance of a supervisor or a supervisee within an organisational setting" (p. 137-138). As one researches social work supervision, it would be necessary to work through delicate supervisory relations and consider critical ethical principles.

One ethical principle to abide by would be informed consent. It would mean ensuring that people participating in the research fully comprehend its nature and its implications and can freely choose to participate in the research. Another would be voluntary participation. Participants should be free from any coercion to participate. Researchers should also ensure respect for persons, ensuring the autonomy of their participants and protecting those with diminished autonomy. Other principles would concern beneficence and non-maleficence, justice, confidentiality and data protection, integrity, and the conflict of interests. Ethical issues tend to arise, particularly in recruitment, information gathering, and protecting participants' identities.

Develop an Action Plan

An action plan to advance a research proposal would concern what needs to be done next after drafting a proposal, the source and type of support and permissions one will require, and the timeframe and deadlines set for the research.

Questions and Answers

The workshop then closed with a segment where participants were free to chime their questions. One participant shared that the challenge in running quantitative studies and testing hypothesis is having control groups. They gave an example where it could be viewed as

unethical should a group not adopt trauma-informed supervision practice when supervising high-risk cases. A/P Kieran responded that it could be and that it is dependent on what the control group is.

The participant then questioned that if one already adopts deliberate practice, whether it would be unviable and unethical to halt the practice to have a comparison with non-deliberate practice. A/P Kieran responded that it would first me necessary to figure out what 'deliberate practice' would mean in relation to competence or social work supervision. Secondly, they would need to be clear on how the participants in experimental and control groups may be implicated. He also referred the participants to examine David Harkness' study where there was mixed supervision provided. While he had provided supervision that focused on improving client outcomes, it did not mean that the client outcomes suggested the study was inherently unethical.

Other participants shared that their practice research will likely be conducted within the organisation, with the researcher being a staff in the same organisation. They further shared that one of the imaginable challenges would in getting informed consent and voluntary participation, considering that the research looks at the competencies of its staff. A/P Kieran responded that the challenge often is around recruiting participants whom they are not directly connected with, and the hardest thing is to protect internal confidentiality. One possible way to navigate the challenge would be to use a go-between method. The participant then added if they would need to set up an ethical board to approve the research. A/P Kieran suggested looking to see if SASW has an ethical board or provides research guidelines as it would provide them guidance and assurance.

Another participant raised the question if there would still be value in observational studies given that people tend to act differently when they are aware that they are under observation. A/P Kieran shared that all research methods will have their limitations and the point in observational studies would be the value in having the interactions with people whom you will not have in interviews. Observational studies of dyads have also been found helpful in identifying interactional patterns in supervision.

For the last question, a participant asked if there were any resources to look at if wanting to utilise validated tools to measure the competencies of social workers or supervisors. A/P Kieran responded that they could look at the Wiley Handbook of Clinical Supervision, where there are supervisory research tools and scales which may be of help.

Topic Presentation 1
Seven-Eyed Supervision Model:
Building Resilience Using a Trauma-Informed Lens

Ms Gay Ling Fang

Senior Social Worker

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Ms Kristine Lee

Social Worker

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Synopsis of Presentation

Participants will learn to adopt a trauma-informed lens using the Seven-Eyed Supervision Model to explore the impact of trauma on the different foci of supervision. Participants will learn to (1) identify and differentiate signs and symptoms of indirect trauma and burnout, and (2) build resilience at both individual and organisational levels, to address indirect trauma and burnout experienced by supervisees during the pandemic.

Introduction

The presentation began with a video that gave a brief introduction to the Seven-eyed Supervision Model. The video introduced seven different modes Hawkins (1989) developed to focus on and explore in supervisory practice, as illustrated by Farhan Sani in the image below.
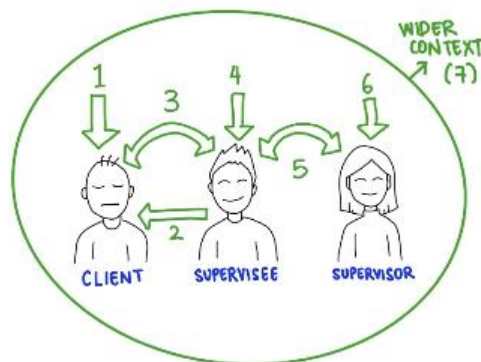
Seven-eyed Supervision Model illustrated by Farhan Sani.

The seven modes are:

Mode 1   The client
Mode 2   The supervisee's interventions
Mode 3   The therapeutic relationship between the client and the supervisee
Mode 4   The supervisee
Mode 5   The supervisory relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee
Mode 6   The supervisor
Mode 7   The wider context

3 Types of Indirect Traumas

Ms Lingfang then introduced 3 different types of indirect trauma that can be commonly identified and surfaced in the work of practitioners (Knight, 2018). She also shared on how a client's trauma can affect the social service professional working with the client.

Type 1: Secondary Traumatic Stress

The first type would be secondary traumatic stress. It is when the social service professional begins to experience high levels of stress or exhibit symptoms similar to what their client has exhibited. It could be due to the professional's preoccupation with their client's situation and experiences. Supervisors can observe and point out signs of secondary traumatic stress, such as hypervigilance or intrusive imagery and thoughts, from their supervisees. Ms Lingfang suggested that supervisors can support supervisees by understanding and tracking exhibited symptoms and exploring concrete assistance and support together with supervisees. These could be done via the use of agency resources or having conversations with supervisees.

Type 2: Vicarious Trauma

The second type of indirect trauma would be vicarious trauma. It refers to the changes in a social service professional's fundamental view of the people they interact with and the world. Ms Lingfang suggested that supervisors have conversations with supervisees to discuss the implications of such changes on their social work practice. She also emphasised that supervisors should be aware of how vicarious trauma can impact other modes of the Seven-Eyed Supervision Model.

<u>Type 3: Compassion Fatigue</u>

The third type would be compassion fatigue. It refers to the emotional and physical exhaustion which can cause shifts from compassion in practice to mistrust and resentfulness towards clients. Ms Lingfang emphasised that supervisors should have discussions with their supervisees to help them better understand the impact that traumatic experiences can have on clients. They could also encourage conversations on issues such as countertransference.

Integration of Trauma-informed Ideas into Supervisory Practice

Ms Lingfang then introduced the 5 core principles of trauma-informed practice and explained how to integrate them into reflective practice. The 5 core principles are:

1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness
3. Choice
4. Collaboration
5. Empowerment

In reflective practice, the supervisor and supervisee can select one or more principle(s) and explore how they can be more intentional in building that principle in the supervisory relationship (mode 5).

Ms Lingfang then focused on mode 6, the supervisor. She shared that it was essential for supervisors to possess trauma-informed knowledge and skills and apply them in supervisory practice. For instance, assessing indirect trauma symptoms, using regulation strategies, employing protective strategies, and conducting crisis debrief. Supervisors should also be mindful of their internal self during sessions and outside of sessions. They are encouraged to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, personal values, and beliefs, and understand how these could interact and influence supervision sessions.

In mode 7, supervisors ought to be aware of their interactions within the organisational level, of which their roles of being advocates and mediators can impact their supervisory relationship with their supervisees.

Building Resilience

Ms Kristine then took over the presentation to share about building resilience on the individual and organisational levels. She shared the importance of looking at resilience building when addressing indirect trauma experienced by supervisees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Building Resilience on the Individual Level

On the individual level, practitioners can be aware of personal qualities such as self-awareness, adaptability, resourcefulness, social competence, which can all help build resilience. Other ways that practitioners can build resilience would be to practise self-compassion, prioritise their self-care and enforce healthy boundaries between work and home. Ms Kristine also raised the importance of acknowledging and staying with the negative feelings and that effective supervision could mitigate the effects of stress at work and increase resilience. It could be done through reflective questioning, attending to supervisees' emotional needs, and making choices explicit (e.g., saying "you don't have to share if you don't wish to").

Ms Kristine also introduced the concept of vicarious resilience, which indicates practitioners experience growth in their lives through witnessing their clients' growth. The dimensions of vicarious resilience would include:

- Changes in life goals and perspectives
- Client-inspired hope
- An increased self-awareness and self-care practices
- An increased capacity for resourcefulness
- Being conscious about power and privilege relative to clients' social context
- An increased recognition of clients' spirituality as a therapeutic resource
- An increased capacity for remaining present while listening to narratives of trauma

Building Resilience on the Organisational Level

Ms Kristine further discussed the idea of building resilience at the organisational level. Some suggestions include having trauma-informed supervision in organizations, building a culture of shared responsibility, and developing a team that recognises individual strengths.

Closing Remarks

Before closing the presentation, participants shared their thoughts and questions on a Padlet board that the presenters have set up. The images below display the thoughts and questions submitted by the participants.
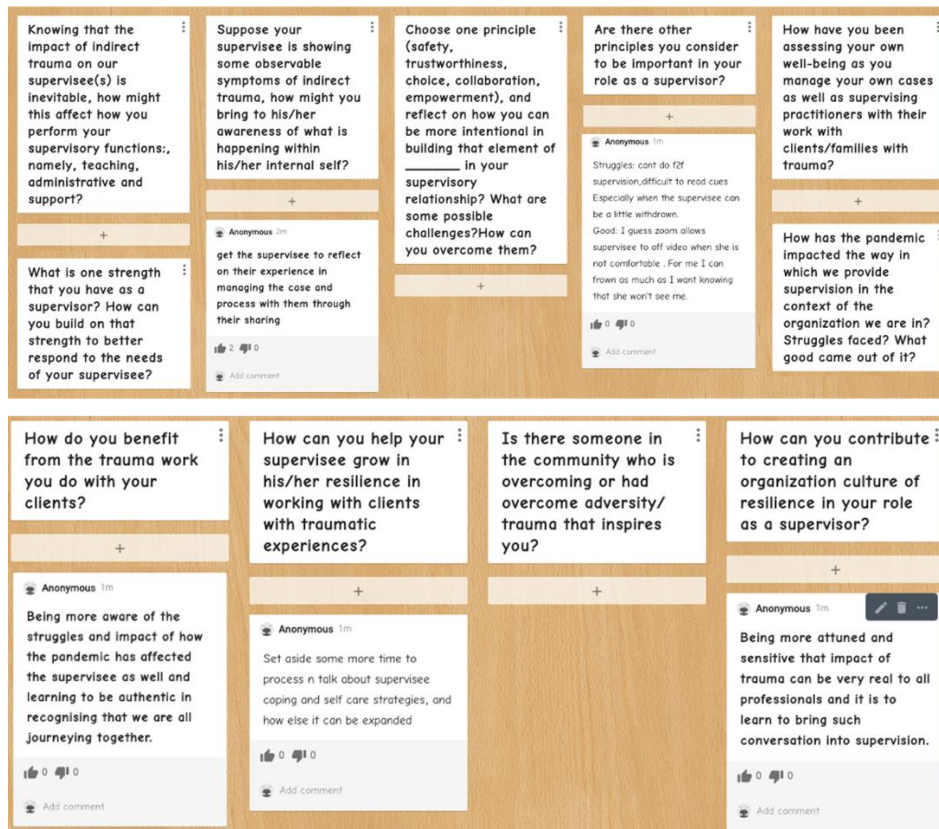
Padlet Board with Submitted Questions and Thoughts by Participants

Reference

Carolyn Knight (2018) Trauma-informed supervision: Historical antecedents, current practice, and future directions, The Clinical Supervisor, 37:1, 7-37, DOI: 10.1080/07325223.2017.1413607

Topic Presentation 2
Reflections from Conducting Social Work Fieldwork Placements in a Healthcare Setting During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ms Wong Hui Mei
Senior Medical Social Worker
Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Ms Tess Hng
Senior Medical Social Worker
Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Synopsis of Presentation

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, it did not deter Medical Social Workers from accepting social work students for fieldwork placement in the healthcare setting. The four key principles forming the CARE framework, identified during planning and conducting of fieldwork placement, are: (1) Collaboration and Coordination, (2) Appropriation of Resources, (3) Risk Management, and (4) Embrace Changes.

Introduction

The presentation began with an introduction of the CARE guiding principles used to support the planning and supervision of student placements in healthcare settings amid the COVID-19 pandemic. CARE is an acronym for:

- **C** ollective Approach (Collaboration & Coordination)
- **A** ppropriation of Resources
- **R** isk Management
- **E** mbrace Changes

Collective Approach

Ms Wong share that a collective approach was necessary for placements during the pandemic. These placements would involve various stakeholders such as universities, hospitals, allied

health departments, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education. Such an approach would involve trust in the intent of policies, processes, and stakeholders.

<u>Appropriation of Resources</u>

In a pandemic, there is a need to manage manpower by redeploying staff and redistributing the ratio of supervisors to students. Ms Wong shared that before the pandemic, each student had one main supervisor and one co-supervisor onsite. However, during the pandemic, two students were assigned to one main supervisor onsite and another co-supervisor virtually.

<u>Risk Management</u>

Ms Tess shared that implementing safety measures are necessary to control infections and can be done in two ways. The first would be to prepare the environment. It could be assigning students to low-risk settings such as satellite offices and following necessary procedures and protocols such as temperature taking and mask-fitting. The second would be to prepare the students. It could be to attend to the wellbeing of students by enhancing their resilience and addressing their family concerns.

<u>Embracing Changes</u>

Ms Tess also shared that they adopted the following innovative steps to enable student placements during the pandemic:

1. Question current supervision model's core beliefs by analysing its assumptions, strengths, and limitations.
2. Adapt the supervision model by exploring various possibilities and variations of supervision (e.g., ratio of students, having virtual supervision or peer supervision).
3. Implement helpful boundaries by testing the feasibility of a new supervision model.
4. Translate new beliefs into the new supervision model.

Sharing of Experiences from a Virtual Supervisor's Perspective

Ms Wong shared that the weekly reflection journals by students helped build connections with them. She also added that virtual supervision was beneficial as it enabled virtual supervisors like her to type notes to guide discussions.

Sharing of Experiences from an Onsite Supervisor's Perspective

As for Ms Tess, she shared students paired up to follow her around for comprehensive and protected learning. There was also the possibility of using technology to facilitate virtual home visitations.

Closing Remarks

Participants raised the question concerning the way decision is being made on the assignment of virtual and onsite supervisors. They also asked the choice of personnel who oversaw the evaluation of students and the manner in which trust was developed among stakeholders. Both presenters responded that, firstly, onsite supervisors were those in low-risk settings. Secondly, both onsite and virtual supervisors oversee the evaluation of the students. Lastly, communicating and aligning interests among stakeholders for the students' learning helped build trust.

Topic Presentation 3
Expecting the Unexpected: Rethinking Supportive Supervision in the Midst of Crisis Using Crisis Intervention Model

Ms Lee Tyan Tyan

Assistant Director

Child Protective Service

Ministry of Social and Family Development

Ms Sylvia Cheng

Senior Manager

Child Protective Service

Ministry of Social and Family Development

Synopsis of Presentation

The workshop shares presenters' insights into Child Protective Service (CPS) experience during and after the circuit breaker. While regular virtual supervision sessions may be ideal during this trying time, the presenters suggest supervisors to raise the bar by being more vigilant in responding to unexpected and potentially traumatising incidents. The SAFER-R model of crisis intervention allows supervisors to conduct crisis debrief via phone calls or WhatsApp video calls followed by regular one-on-one supervision sessions. Three key takeaways from the workshop include the ability to (1) identify traumatic stress symptoms, (2) conduct phone check-ins using the SAFER-R approach, and (3) follow through debrief using a supportive and reflective approach.

Nature of Child Protection Work

The presentation began by discussing the nature of child protection work. The scope of the work encompassed high conflict situations and confrontations. At times, Child Protection Officers (CPOs) had to face involuntary clients. They needed to juggle with many demanding works, meet high professional standards, and cope with long, unpredictable working hours and repeated exposure to trauma, abuse, and violence. This means CPOs were more prone to experiencing secondary traumatic stress.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Child Protection Workers

The presenters showcased the profound significance and necessity of Child Protective Services on local news articles as an essential service. They continued to operate during the Circuit Breaker period. Additionally, there was a sharp rise in child abuse cases reported in times of the pandemic.

During the pandemic, CPOs faced escalating work demands as an essential service. However, restrictions enforced on contact slowed down their work processes. Split teams reduced the accessibility of peer support among CPOs. In the midst of social restrictions and virtual work environment, CPOs might not easily receive support when experienced work-related stress or personal crisis. Supervisors might also have more difficulties picking up the signs of stress as well as responding promptly after a crisis.

Development of Crisis Intervention Models

Erich Lindemann (1944, 1956) and Caplan (1964) saw responses to crises shared similar behaviour patterns. They sought to restore clients from their state of grief and chaos to a state of equilibrium. In some situations, individuals might have an inadequate adaptive mechanism to recover to the state of equilibrium.

Caplan (1961) expanded the Lindemann's work to help individuals recover to a state of pre-crisis equilibrium using brief and early interventions. It focused on stabilising the person rather than providing longer term therapies. This paved the way to the development of Psychological First Aid which sought to address the immediate crisis and provide immediate relief. Practitioners should also establish safety, reduce stress-related symptoms, provide rest, and link the person to critical resources and social support systems.

16 Signs of Trauma Exposure Response

Lipsky and Burk (2007) in their book discussed the concept of Trauma Stewardship. Trauma stewardship calls for practitioners to engage oppression and trauma by caring for, attending to, and responsibly guiding other struggling individuals, be it through their careers or their personal lives. The transformation that occurs within them resulted from the exposure to the suffering of other individuals and the planet. It believes that if practitioners had to alleviate the suffering of others and the world in the long term, they need to respond to even the most urgent human and environmental conditions in sustainable and intentional ways.

There were 16 indicative signs of an exposure to trauma:

- Feeling hopeless and helpless
- Hypervigilance
- Inability to embrace complexity
- Chronic exhaustion or physical ailments
- Addictions
- Anger and cynicism
- Guilt
- Dissociative moments
- A sense that one can never do enough
- Diminished creativity
- Minimising
- Inability to listen or deliberate avoidance
- A sense of persecution
- Fear
- Inability to empathise or numbing
- Grandiosity

Supervisors might pick up these signs in their supervisees. They would need to attend to them promptly with crisis intervention, such as crisis debrief/ Psychological First Aid. They also had to discern if the supervisee required trauma interventions to restore longer term functioning and coping.

The presenters then shared Chan, Fan, and Snell's (2021) model, as shown in the following image, to illustrate the relationship between work demands and resources, their impacts on an individual, and work-life strategies.
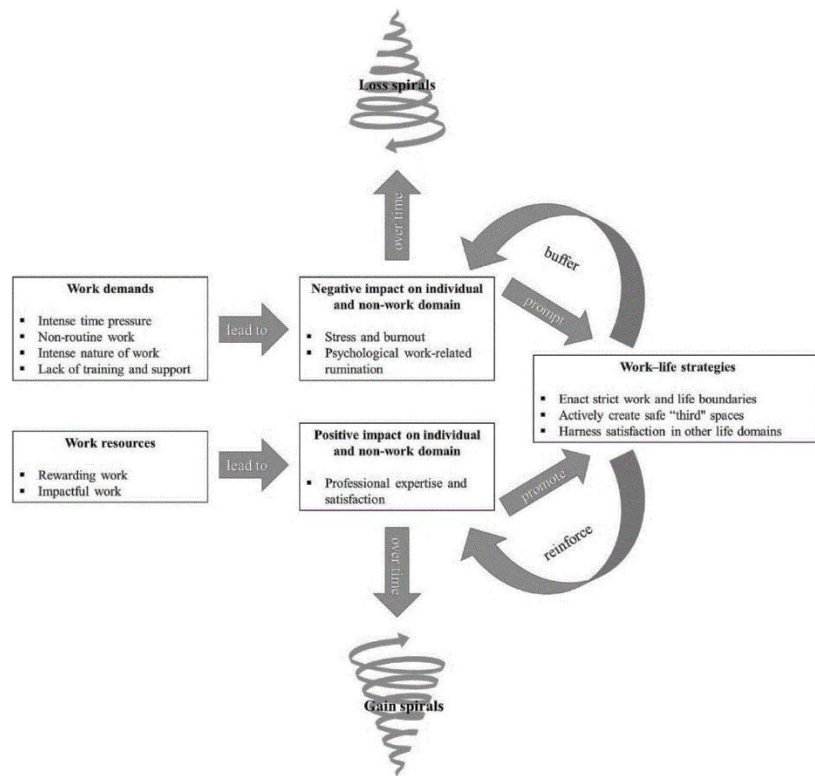
Chan, Fan, and Snell's (2021) Model

Supervision Practice in Child Protective Service (CPS)

In CPS, there were supervision policies and structures in place. The workplace culture has been one which supervisors would check in with their supervisees regularly, either physically or virtually. However, as reflective practitioners and supervisors, they were also encouraged to actively create a safe 'third' space, where workers could slow down, engaged in mindful activities, be psychologically detached from the work for their mental well-beings.

Kolb's Learning Cycle: Reflective Practice Questions

Ms Lee shared that employing David Kolb's learning cycle could be one way to help supervisees reflect after trauma exposures. Supervisors could guide their supervisees through the cycle to reinforce and apply their learning on other situations. The following image displayed the cycle she presented.
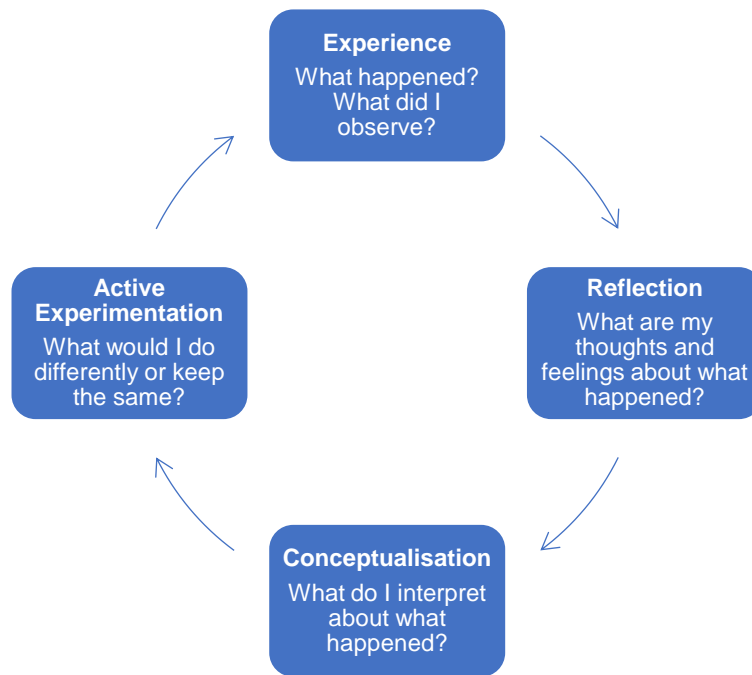
Reflective Practice Questions Within Kolb's Learning Cycle

Safer-Revised (SAFER-R) Model

Ms Sylvia continued the presentation by sharing on George S. Everly's Safer-Revised (SAFER-R) model in the context of supervision (Everly, 1995). SAFER-R is an acronym for:

S tabilise

A cknowledge the crisis

F acilitate understanding

E ncourage effective coping

R ecovery or referral

The first step, 'stabilise', concerned stabilising the supervisees through meeting their basic needs within a safe environment. The second step, 'acknowledge the crisis', concerned listening to the supervisees' stories to know what happened and how they responded. The third step, 'facilitate understanding', concerned educating the supervisees to express difficult emotions as normal stress responses, and helping them understand the events. The fourth step, 'encourage effective coping', concerned helping the supervisees to identify their own personal and external support, and stress management methods. The last step, 'recovery or referral', concerned assessing the supervisees' abilities to function safely or to make referrals for therapy where necessary.

Good Supervision Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ms Sylvia then shared a list of quality supervision practices that CPS adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic. She added that in these practices, the importance was on being responsive and systemic in approaching supervision. The list provided was stated as follows:

- Ensuring practitioners remain informed of COVID-19 mitigation strategies
- Maintaining regular contact through available means
- Setting aside dedicated uninterrupted time for supervision
- Considering the unique circumstances of every practitioner
- Enhancing remote support through technology
- Enhance peer support
- Daily and weekly team check-ins

The CPS Supervision Squad, a team of senior supervisors who drove good supervision practices in CPS, designed and circulated an infographic during Circuit Breaker which included steps to conduct remote live supervision of client sessions, and tips for supervisors to look out for during individual supervision. The infographic was shared with the seminar participants.

Ms Sylvia then closed the presentation by sharing positive feedback from CPOs who received the discussed supervision during the pandemic. CPOs shared that the frequent check-ins supported them emotionally, with their supervisors being contactable giving them the assurance they needed during crises. Occasional group supervisions as a team also allowed for intentional bonding, while the continued activity of processing difficult cases provided CPOs insight into their cases. The feedback reinforced the benefits of supportive supervisions informed by the crisis intervention model.

Topic Presentation 4
Protecting the Supervision Space:
The Quality Assurance Exercise for Clinical Supervision

Ms Doris Lim

Senior Assistant Director

Correctional Rehabilitation Services Branch (Women)

Singapore Prison Service

Ms Haslindah Bte Shonib

Assistant Director

Community Corrections, Policy & Planning

Singapore Prison Service

Ms Angeline Tay

Senior Assistant Director

Correctional Rehabilitation Services (Reformative Training)

Singapore Prison Service

Ms Karen Wong

Senior Assistant Director

Correctional Rehabilitation Services Branch (Penal)

Singapore Prison Service

Mr Chua Zhiren

Assistant Director

Professional Development & Professional Training

Singapore Prison Service

Synopsis of Presentation

Clinical supervision encompasses a process to uphold the standards of practice, ensure clients' safety and create space for supervisee to widen perspectives and enhance practice skills. The Psychological & Correctional Rehabilitation Division (PCRD) in the Singapore Prison Service operationalises this supervision framework by incorporating quality assurance exercises (QA) to facilitate implementation integrity. This interactive presentation will share

the process of QA exercises, best practices, and learnings from the QA experience and feature a live conversation with a panel of experienced QA auditors. It will also share the agency's best practices on auditing practice standards.

Background of the Quality Assurance (QA) Exercise

Ms Haslindah began the presentation with an overview of the background in conducting the QA exercise in the Singapore Prison Service (SPS). SPS saw an expansion of its correctional rehabilitation services over the years with changes in policy directions. As such, there is growth in the staff team. Starting with approximately 60 correctional rehabilitation specialists ten years ago, it has since tripled in number. The work of specialists include collaborating with internal and external stakeholders for the maximum effectiveness of rehabilitation and reintegration of incarcerated persons. They would also have to work directly with mandated clients such as incarcerated persons with multiple complex needs and persons on community supervision orders.

The QA exercise began with the objectives to establish the expectations of conducting clinical supervision, ensure practice standards of specialists, and solicit feedback to improve clinical supervision practice in SPS. The recommendations included maintaining practice standards, advocating adherence to ethical guidelines, and meeting supervision needs.

In 2015, the first QA exercise was conducted. It focused on clinical supervision standards and the documentation of clinical supervision sessions. The audit found that while there were varying interpretations of clinical supervision standards, clinical supervisors were helpful in supporting the work of supervisees. As such, there was an importance in communicating a common understanding of clinical supervision standards for all staff.

The second QA exercise took place in 2016 to follow up on the recommendations. It was heartening to see an alignment in the understanding of clinical supervision standards and improved adherence of documentation of clinical supervision sessions by the staff team.

Process of the QA Exercise

Ms Doris continued the presentation by sharing the process in conducting a QA exercise. First, they approached respective teams to identify individuals who were comfortable being on the auditing panel. Then, they informed the respective teams of the scheduled dates of the QA exercise and the names of auditors before commencement. The exercise primarily focused

on clinical supervision standards and the documentation of clinical supervision sessions. The auditing panel utilised an auditing checklist to assess the teams' provision of clinical supervision. After which, they updated the organisation's management on the findings drawn from the QA exercise before communicating the findings to the teams.

During the 2019 QA exercise, they had practitioners select the two most helpful factors in clinical supervision based on the following four factors and invited them to share the rationale for their selection.

1. Providing guidance and teaching skills
2. Encouraging reflection and insight
3. Being a safe, supportive, and structured session
4. Providing ongoing feedback on clinical skills, strengths, and limitations

From the interviews, practitioners expressed that they found "encouraging reflection and insight" and "safe, supportive, and structured sessions" most helpful. The following image displays quotes by practitioners in explaining their choices.
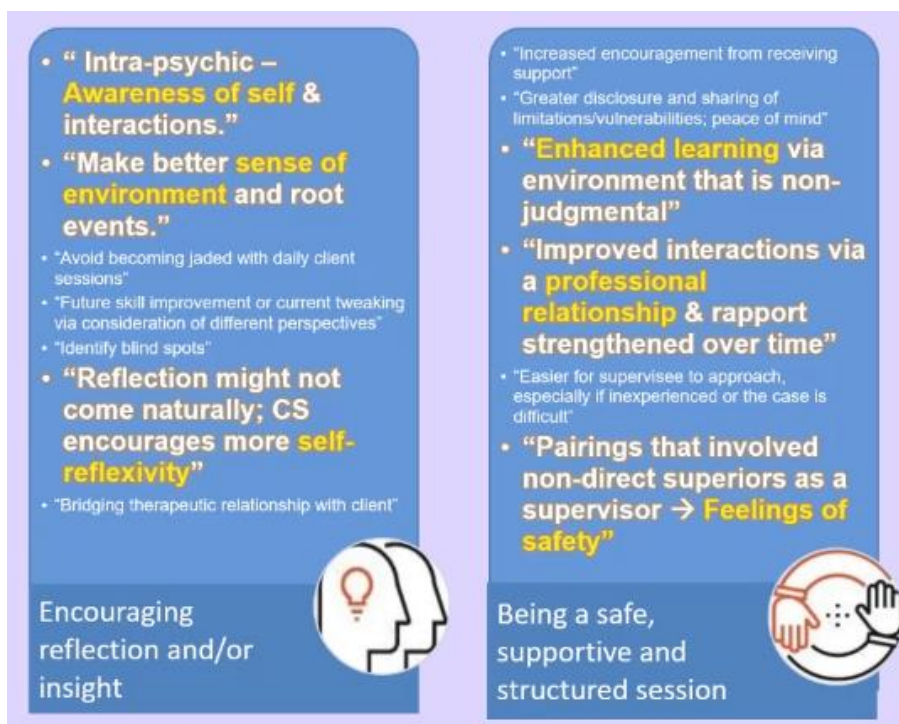
Rationale for the Selection of Factors Helpful in Clinical Supervision

Best Practices and Learning Insights

Through the QA exercises, Ms Doris shared a few practices they found helpful to the staff team. First, giving the staff advance notice of the QA exercise instead of surprising them. Second, it was helpful to have the lead interviewers of the QA exercise holding leadership positions from the department being paired with a neutral party. This was intended to create psychological safety for the participants. They should explain the purpose of the QA exercise and create a safe space for practitioners to share qualitative feedback. The organisation's management must also be supportive towards conducting a QA exercise, with findings shared openly to the staff and adopted to enhance practices.

Moving Forward

Ms Doris shared that quality clinical supervision plays a critical role in delivering good practice. Good practice would enable effective rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. She emphasised the continued need to protect the clinical supervision space and advance practice standards for quality clinical supervision.

Questions and Answers Segment

The presentation then closed with a questions and answers segment. One participant asked how supervisors could let supervisees know that they experience 'stuckness' in their work. The presenters shared that there was nothing wrong in experiencing difficulties and such instances could be used to help supervisees understand that supervisors are also learning. The openness in sharing might in fact unexpectedly help build rapport and facilitate understanding. Moreover, Ms Doris stressed that in SPS, everyone works in a team, and thus, peers and colleagues could provide their feedback towards quality clinical supervision practice.

Topic Presentation 5
Understanding the Experience of Leadership Transition in the Context of Non-Profit Human Service Organisations in Singapore

Ms Natalie Lim

Centre Head

Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centre

Family & Community Support Division

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Synopsis of Presentation

According to Bridges (2017), there is a lack of research on the adopted and adapted evolution of leadership behaviour and styles. Hence, this presentation aimed to approach the study using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to adopt the system, psychodynamic lens of understanding how the conscious and unconscious (culture, leadership behaviours, conscious and unconscious defences imposter syndromes) are experienced during the transition into leadership. Through these analyses, a coaching framework will be proposed to support the leadership transition of professional social service practitioners in Singapore.

Introduction

Ms Natalie began the presentation by sharing a quote by Danaan Parry from his essay, "The parable of the trapeze—turning the fear of transformation into the transformation of fear".

> *And so, for an eternity that can test a microsecond or a*
> *thousand lifetimes, I soar across the dark void of the "past*
> *is gone, the future is not yet here." It is called transition.*

She added that experiencing a transition is like letting go of a trapeze bar that one is holding, then swinging in mid-air without knowing for sure if they would successfully grab another trapeze bar.

Context and Background of Research

Ms Natalie then provided participants with a brief overview of the background and context of the research she undertook to understand the experiences of leadership transition. She adds that while changes are situational, transitions are psychological. As a practitioner moves to take on leadership positions, they transit from a specialist to adopt a generalist perspective. Most of the time, organisations rarely provide resources and training to enable practitioners to form their own managerial identities. Ms Natalie shared her observations where staff exhibiting high capabilities faced burnout and refused role advancement, with some leaving human services. In her conversations with practitioners, those who transitioned into leadership positions shared a disconnection with their managerial identities or felt that leadership did not fit or were unattractive to them.

Literature Review and Methodology

For the research, Ms Natalie shared that the participants were seven social service practitioners who had undergone management training. The selection criteria included being at least four months into assuming leadership and management roles, with no more than two years from their point of transition into their roles. Participants should also have minimally three years of direct practice experience and be managing a team of four or more staff.

The research took an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA), focusing on sense-making among participants and the researchers. It also adopted system psychodynamic lens, asking questions that enables one to draw inferences from the rationale, function, and value of leadership transitioning and understand to whom that value accrues and the costs of transitioning. The research also implemented the Transforming Experience Framework developed by Susan Long. The framework posits roles as scripts and persons as actors, where one incorporates their identities as they carry out their scripts. Simultaneously, the systems and context surrounding the actor also integrate elements into these scripts.

Findings

Challenges in Transitioning

There were three research questions. The first was, "What challenges do social service practitioners who are transitioning into leadership roles struggle with?" Ms Natalie found that many have placed a high value on feeling connected to their clients. However, taking

leadership would draw them away from working with clients. Additionally, there are limited opportunities to experiment with the effective use of power and authority, boundary management, delegation, directing, performance management, and decision making. These practitioners may also struggle to manage the collegial relationships with their former peers.

Identity and Values Conflict

The second research question was, "What identity conflicts and values clash are there?" Ms Natalie found identity conflicts and a clash in values among practitioners transitioning into leadership roles. They could face an incongruency between their self-identities and display rules. The participating practitioners also shared that there was a lack of clarity of what their leadership roles entailed.
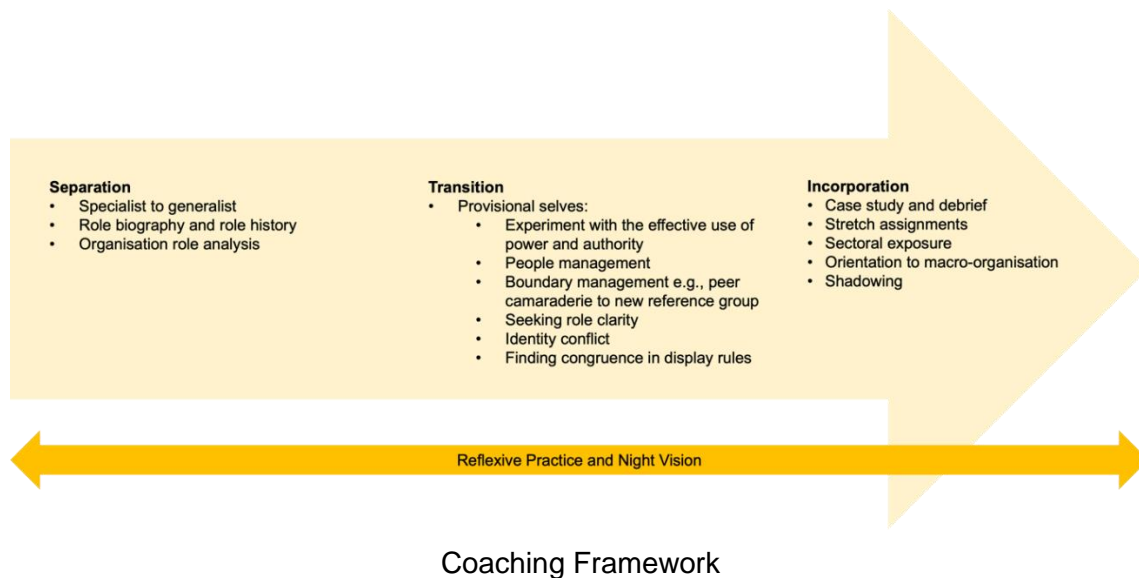
Ms Natalie then gave an illustration of an iceberg. Like the hidden bottom of an iceberg in the sea, some elements may go unnoticed in the leadership transition. One of them would be a social defence in organisations. They could come in the form of group fault lines, which are hypothetical dividing lines that split a group into relatively homogeneous subgroups based on group members' demographic alignments along with multiple attributes. For instance, a common fault line would be a divide between direct practice and management. Thus, there could be a clash in values between these subgroups, making it difficult to adapt when moved to another. Apart from an organisation's social defence, aspects such as an individual's defences, immunity to change, transference and co-transference could also be unknowingly present in the leadership transition.

Concerning a clash in values, Ms Natalie also adds that one may hold the assumption and fear that the process of leading is, by its nature, directive and authoritarian as modelled by others in previous experiences of leadership figures. They may value the importance of human relationships and be apprehensive in using power and authority to complete tasks. They may also be suspicious of authority and organisational systems in advocating against oppression and seek equality and desire to reduce role differentiation and hierarchy between different individuals.

Facilitating the Emergence of Leadership Identity

The third research question was, "How can non-profit human service organisations facilitate the emergence of leadership identity?" Ms Natalie then shared the following coaching

framework to support practitioners in adopting leadership identities. She adds that going for leadership training is insufficient. Having seniors coach new leaders would be beneficial.

Separation
- Specialist to generalist
- Role biography and role history
- Organisation role analysis

Transition
- Provisional selves:
  - Experiment with the effective use of power and authority
  - People management
  - Boundary management e.g., peer camaraderie to new reference group
  - Seeking role clarity
  - Identity conflict
  - Finding congruence in display rules

Incorporation
- Case study and debrief
- Stretch assignments
- Sectoral exposure
- Orientation to macro-organisation
- Shadowing

Reflexive Practice and Night Vision

Coaching Framework

Before closing the presentation, Ms Natalie shared two tools that organisations can use to coach practitioners transitioning into leadership roles. One of the tools would be role biography, where these practitioners will draw and depict some of the significant leadership roles they have had in their lives. They are to sketch the picture as a journey, starting from age six and going forward with ten-year intervals. At the end of the drawing, coaches can use the following questions to guide practitioners into understanding how their experiences have shaped them.

- Who are the people involved?
- What is the system?
- What is the context?
- What were the pushes and pulls on the role?
- What were the challenges in the role and how did you approach these challenges?
- What was learned in this role that you carry through to your current role?

Another tool Ms Natalie suggested would be the Organisational Role Analysis. Using this tool, practitioners can reflect on how they might describe and understand their roles within the team. They can also identify implicit and explicit expectations from their teams, clients, stakeholders, supervisees, supervisors, and peers. They can also articulate how free they are to adapt and change their roles, the evolution of their roles, how they feel towards them and their inclinations to add or remove elements from their roles. Ms Natalie then concluded her presentation.

Topic Presentation 6
Into the Deep End, and I Will Not Be Scared:
An Onboarding Framework for Becoming Supervisors

Ms Ang Kai Fen
Lead Social Worker
SHINE Children and Youth Services

Ms Cindy Koh
Senior Social Worker
SHINE Children and Youth Services

Synopsis of Presentation

Practitioners may experience a lack of competency and knowledge in performing the supervisory role. Hence, this workshop aims to share SHINE's framework relating to onboarding processes and practices to build confident and competent social work supervisors, and also develop a culture of contribution between supervisors and supervisees as well as help supervisors in one's organisation.

Introduction

The presenters began the presentation by introducing the SAIL onboarding framework for beginning supervisors. SAIL is an acronym for:

S tructure
A ttunement
I ntentional
L ife-Giving

Structure

Ms Ang shared that structure serves as the foundation for the framework. It can be divided into two levels, namely, the organisational and supervision levels. At the organisational level, structure pertains to the supervision frameworks and theories the organisation adopts. For instance, the Cyclical Model and Integrative Development Model. At the supervision level,

structure pertains to how and where supervision takes place. Supervision could be formal, and one can take reference from the SWAAB's supervision guidelines to set a suitable frequency and duration of supervision sessions in accordance with their contexts. Supervision can also be informal, such as through checking in with supervisees via text messages and other informal means.

Ms Ang then gave an example of integrating Morrison's four functions of supervision within Page and Wosket's Cyclical Model of Supervision, as shown below. In the Cyclical Model, there are five primary stages: contract, focus, space, bridge, and review. Ms Ang highlighted that these stages do not necessarily progress linearly. Providing such a framework would adequately support and guide beginning supervisors to know what to do when giving supervision.
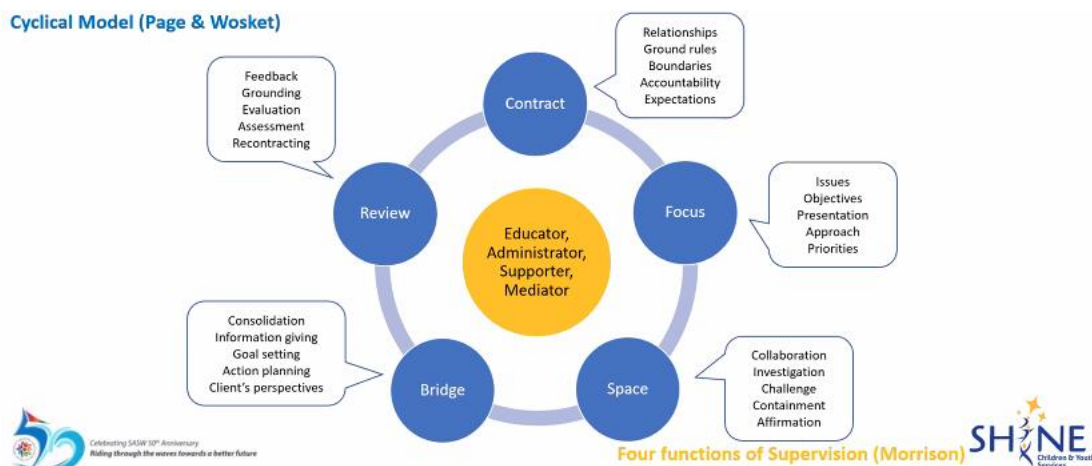
Morrison's 4 Functions of Supervision within the Cyclical Model of Supervision

Attunement

Ms Ang continued to share that attunement concerns being mindful of one's wellbeing before supervising others. It is about being aware of how systemic impact can affect us and consequently affect beginning supervisors. It is also about being physically and mentally present during supervision, entirely focused without distractions. Ms Ang suggested not bringing mobile phones into sessions if they serve as distractions. She also encouraged setting aside time to speak with beginning supervisors and being sensitive to their non-verbal cues as those could reveal how they are feeling. It would be helpful to be sensitive to the emotions of beginning supervisors and attend to them accordingly.

With regards to attunement, it may be beneficial to consider the needs on various levels. Ms Ang suggested considering what beginning supervisors need. It could be concrete support, ideas, knowledge, and skills in fulfilling their new roles. Another area would be the organisations' needs, such as the provision of support for their supervisors. Apart from these areas, one could also consider the sector's needs, such as offering more formal trainings for beginning supervisors.

Intentional

Ms. Cindy then continued to share on being intentional with onboarding processes and practices. It could be in the form of being deliberate in planning for professional development of staff, and for junior staff to step up and become supervisors. One example would be for staff to take on field supervision before providing staff supervision. It is also important to intentionally plan, facilitate and evaluate onboarding content and processes. One could also be intentional in planning the onboarding in a timely fashion, so as to give timely support to beginning supervisors.

Ms. Cindy suggested for beginning supervisors to tap on their supervisors for Supervision of Supervision. At the organisation's level, beginning supervisors could also be pulled together to exchange ideas and perspectives and strengthen their confidence and competence together as a supervisors' community.

Life-Giving

Ms Cindy expounded on the meaning of life-giving element of the onboarding framework. It refers to imparting and having the ability to give vitality. She then prompted participants to consider life-giving relationships they had in the past and to role model and cultivate such life-giving onboarding processes for beginning supervisors.

In onboarding beginning supervisors, there is a need to understand what gives life to them and to nudge them towards it. Gaining knowledge, having time for oneself, and the space for self-care are some examples of life-giving activities for beginning supervisors. Having respect and deep regard for the wellbeing of supervisor's esteem would also be needed. It would also help to create a space for reflection and compassion for beginning supervisors.

Challenges in Onboarding Beginning Supervisors

In onboarding beginning supervisors, one could face numerous challenges. One would be to coordinate with everyone's schedules. It is not easy brining everyone together, and as such, there needs to be coordination between the staff team. A strong belief in the importance of onboarding beginning supervisors would also compel perseverance through the inconvenience experienced, as doing so is worth the hassle.

Due to constraints in logistics and staffing, there could also be difficulties in facilitating onboarding processes for every batch of beginning supervisors. Likewise, with supervisors promoted at differing times, facilitating these processes can be challenging. There could also be supervisors within the organisation with contrasting theoretical foundations. It would be of interest to convince them of the necessity and benefit of onboarding processes for beginning supervisors. Ultimately, to overcome these challenges, heads of departments must support onboarding programmes and prioritise them highly.

Closing Remarks

Both Ms Ang and Ms Cindy closed the presentation by highlighting that through onboarding programmes for beginning supervisors, they would feel supported and build a community for fellow beginning supervisors. Thus, it would be of importance to develop and provide onboarding programmes to better support beginning supervisors.

Topic Presentation 7
Incorporating Self-Care as Part of Supervision Structure

Mr Chavez Ong

Student, Master's in Social Work

National University of Singapore

Ms Givon Lim

Student, Master's in Social Work

National University of Singapore

Synopsis of Presentation

Self-care is an essential ethical practice that social workers should possess. Hence, this presentation aimed to integrate the element of self-care as part of the supervision structure. In addition, it also focused on guiding supervisors to facilitate conversations on self-care and explore solutions in supporting practitioners to engage in self-care discussions both professionally and personally.

Introduction

The presentation began with a simple survey to understand participants' engagement in self-care activities and how they were coping with their work. It also surveyed supervisors on their comfort in terms of engaging in the topic of self-care with their supervisees. While practitioners understood the importance of self-care and viewed it as personal responsibilities, they often find it hard to practise self-care.

Ms Givon shared that some examples of her preferred self-care activities would be going on holidays and spending time with her family. However, these were often insufficient to prevent her from feeling burnout and compassion fatigue. She then briefly shared the characteristics of these kinds of feelings.

Social Work Survey in 2006

Ms Givon then shared a social work survey conducted by SASW in 2006. The survey found that practitioners entered the sector with a passion to contribute to the helping profession.

However, the survey also highlighted that quite a number of participants were undecided on the length of time to stay on as social workers due to possible burnout and compassion fatigue. The results show that it can be exhausting for social workers remaining long in the profession.

Self-Care and Supervision

According to the Family Service Centre Code of Social Work Practice, practitioners should take personal responsibility to engage in self-care and supervision. The role of supervisors consists of administrative, clinical, and supportive functions. Hence Ms Givon questioned if self-care could go beyond personal responsibility, and whether could practitioners engage in the topic of self-care as part of the supervision process. She believes that it takes intentional commitment to practise self-reflection and self-care regularly. She also added that supervisors must be equipped and ready to discuss self-care with their supervisees and educate them on reorganising signs and symptoms of burnout, particularly with newer social workers.

Reflective Practice in Supervision

Ms Givon highlighted that for reflection on self-care, it is the responsibility of supervisees and the intentional effort between them and their supervisors. She emphasised the need for supervisors to help supervisees make sense of their experiences and transform insights into practical strategies for their professional and personal growth. Ms Given gave an anecdote where she had to report a child to the Child Protection Services as a budding social worker. Her supervisor was prompt to support her and helped her made meaning out of her experience so that she could learn and grow.

Self-Care in Supervision

Ms Givon stressed that supportive supervision plays a pertinent role for supervisors to support their supervisees with work-related stress and help them to identify situations in which they might require self-care or external support for their personal and professional growth.

Domains of Self-Care

Ms Givon then shared that self-care was not only pertaining to practitioners who engage in activities they enjoy. Self-care could also be broken down into different domains that includes emotions, work, body, mind, spirit, and relationships.

Role Modelling

Mr Chavez then continued the presentation, sharing that he also struggled to practise self-care. He posed a question to the seminar participants, "as supervisors grow and become leaders, how often do you practise self-care and role modelled the idea of self-care to your staff?" He shared that it is important for supervisors to role-model self-care to their supervisees so that they could learn the importance of self-care.

Incorporating Self-Care into Supervision Structure

Mr Chavez highlighted the importance of intentionally incorporating self-care into the supervision structure when having supervision sessions with supervisees. One fundamental principle he learnt as a budding social worker was "do no harm" to his clients. However, it reminded him that, likewise for social workers, we should "do no harm" to ourselves during the process of helping clients. Social workers continuously absorbed their clients' issues like a sponge, and they would be harming themselves should they not receive practice self-care with the support of their organisations and supervisors. Thus, it is crucial that social workers practise self-care to prevent burn out and compassion fatigue.

Structured Tools

Structured tools, such as self-assessment and self-care tools, could be incorporated into supervision sessions by supervisors. Having a self-care plan could support supervisors to better work with their supervisees to track, review, and evaluate the effectiveness on their practice of self-care.

Organisational Structure

Another area to examine would be the organisational structure. Mr Chavez suggested including self-care as a part of our social work core competencies. He shared that this was not a new idea. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) had already stipulated self-care as an ethical responsibility of social workers in 2004 and 2008, respectively. Thus, he proposed for universities such as the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) to explore incorporating self-care into their social work curriculum. Many students might enrol into a social work course full of passion. However, without adequate support on self-care practice, they could experience burnout and eventually exit the

field due to an inability to cope with the stress. Mr Chavez also shared the importance of increasing local research on self-care as there was limited literature on this area when they were researching on this topic.

Mr Chavez further questioned participants if there was a possibility of incorporating the idea of self-care into organisational structures and provide protected time for staff to recharge. Instead of perceiving self-care as a good-to-have or a waste of resources, organisations should view self-care as an indispensable process for their employees. He then expressed his hope for senior practitioners to incorporate self-care as part of their organisation's supervision structure and processes.

Examples of Self-Care Guidelines

Some questions were put forth as examples a social work professional could use for reflection:

1. How are you coping now?
2. What do you do for self-care now?
3. How are you maintaining your personal self-care?

Practitioners were encouraged to develop their self-care plans, commit to them, share them with colleagues or loved ones, implement them, and review them accordingly.

Activity Time

The presentation introduced an activity for participants in which they had 5 minutes to draft their personal self-care plan, using the template below as an example. Participants had to pen their coping strategies according to various domains, list their top 3 strategies, and prepare an emergency self-care plan when faced with crises. The emergency self-care plan could include activities that are either helpful or harmful.

A Self-Care Plan Adapted from Homewood Health Centre

One participant asked for examples of possible activities they could include in their self-care plan, particularly for the emergency plan. Mr Chavez responded that there were no guidelines as it was dependent on individuals. He shared that personally, when he faced a crisis, he would call his supervisor while others might prefer to clear their minds. He emphasised that self-care plans are person-centred and dependent on everyone's comfort levels. Mr Chavez then invited participants to share their self-care plans.

A participant commented that it was good to have a self-care plan to be accountable to as it got her thinking when she faced difficulties completing one. She shared that she would do mindfulness activities for 25 minutes, reach out to her peers and loved ones, or have a cup of tea as means to practise self-care. Another participant related the difficulties completing her self-care plan because it was not a concept she had thought about conscientiously. She shared that she would smile and greet others energetically when she felt tired as doing so lightens up her work atmosphere. In response, another participant added that she thought of parallel processes in which a supervisor's mood and state of mind could impact their supervisees. She shared that there were times she overheard budding social workers asking, "What was the temperature check of the boss today?" and highlighted the importance for supervisors to make conscious effort to ensure personal feelings did not influence their interactions with their supervisees.

Closing Remarks

Mr Chavez closed the presentation by reiterating that in the simple survey done at the start of the presentation, a large proportion of participants indicated that they were experiencing fatigue. He stressed that practitioners should practise self-care and integrate self-care as part of both supervision and organisational structures. Mr Chavez then ended the presentation with the quote by Eleanor Brown: "Self-care is not selfish; you cannot serve from an empty vessel."

Topic Presentation 8

Investigating the Construct and Experiences of Good Supervision of Entry-Level Social Workers in Singapore Family Service Centres

Dr Peace Yuh Ju Wong

Senior Lecturer

Department of Social Work

National University of Singapore

Mr Dominic Soh

Social Worker

Kampong Kapor Community Services

Synopsis of Presentation

This study investigated the way in which entry-level social workers experience good supervision in Singapore Family Service Centres (FSCs). The study used the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to examine the construction of good supervision and the experience of good supervision. Based on O'Donoghue, Wong, and Tsui's (2018) evidence-informed social work supervision model, the research aimed to investigate: (1) elements in good supervision; (2) formation of good supervision; (3) experiences within good supervision; and (4) outcome of good supervision. Subsequently, the Amalgamated Construct-Experience Supervision (ACES) model was integrated with findings from the evidence-informed social work supervision model to suggest a new supervision model focusing on the construction, and the process of supervision which highlights good supervision for entry-level social workers working in FSCs in Singapore.

Context of Research

Mr Dominic began the presentation by sharing the context of his research. He shared that he was curious about what to look for regarding supervision as an entry-level social worker transitioning into work. He also wanted to contribute to Singapore's literature on social work supervision and illustrate how good supervision would appear in Singapore. As such, Mr Dominic's research focused primarily on the supervision experiences of entry-level social workers.

Research Methods

Mr Dominic shared that his qualitative research adopted the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach. He had seven participants for his research. These participants were entry-level social workers from four different Family Service Centres (FSCs), with no more than two years of social work experience at the time of the interviews. The interviews were semi-structured, and the questions primed upon the evidence-informed social work supervision model developed by Professor Kieran O'Donoghue, Dr Peace Wong, and Dr Tsui to encapsulate the heritage of supervision literature that preceded this research.

Research Questions

Mr Dominic mentioned that his research sought to answer the following three questions:

1. What are the elements that construct good supervision of entry-level social workers in Singapore FSCs?
2. How is good supervision experienced by entry-level social workers in Singapore FSCs?
3. What are the outcomes of good supervision among entry-level social workers in Singapore FSCs?

Evidence-Informed Model

Mr Dominic then invited Dr Peace Wong to elaborate on the evidence-informed social work supervision model. Dr Peace Wong shared that the model highlights five apparent constructs concerning supervision, as shown in the following image.
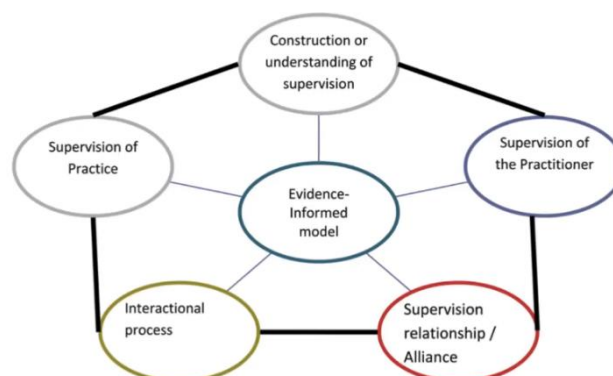

Evidence-informed social work supervision model

First, there is the construction of supervision that posits supervision to be socially and personally constructed. Second, there is the supervision of the practitioner. Supervisees are more likely to be satisfied and effective in their work, committed to their agencies, and psychologically healthy should they be supported in their work and professional development and also be provided with social and emotional support.

Third, there is the supervision relationship. Supervisees prefer supervisory relationships that provide them with a secure foundation. They also like relationships characterised by trust, support, honesty, openness, the ability to navigate power relations collaboratively, and respect for social and cultural differences to feel safe and participate fully in supervision. Fourth, there is the interactional process between supervisors and supervisees. The supervision session has a structure and engages the supervisee in an interactive, reflective problem-solving process. Lastly, there is the supervision of practice. There is likely to be better client outcomes when supervision focuses on the clients' problems.

Construct of the ACES Model

Mr Dominic then continued to share his research's findings as illustrated through an Amalgamated Construct-Experience Supervision (ACES) Model that he developed. He first shared the construction of the ACES model, as shown in the following image.
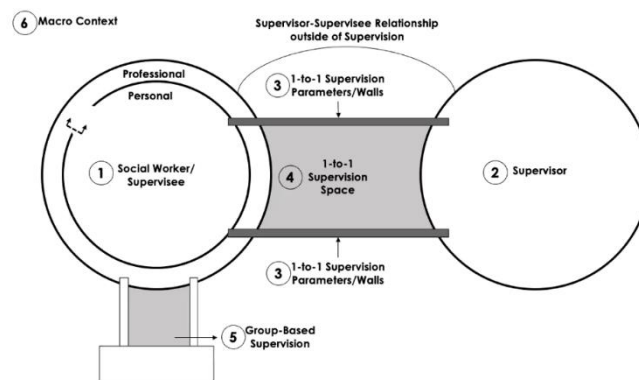
Amalgamated Construct-Experience Supervision (ACES) Model

There are six components to the model. The first component would be the social worker, in other words, the supervisee. The model presents the social worker by using two layers of concentric circles. The outer circle represents the professional domain, while the inner circle stands for the personal domain. The model assumes that the personal self and professional self are delineated yet mutually influences one another.

The fourth component, the one-to-one supervision space, connects the supervisee with the supervisor, which is the second component. The third component, which are the parameters of the supervision space, guard the supervision space. Mr Dominic asserted that these parameters must form first before there can be any forms of supervision.

While group-based supervision, the fifth component, arose during the interviews, he will not discuss it due to time constraints. He then mentioned that nothing occurs within a vacuum but takes place within a context. As such, the sixth component—the macro context—is incorporated into the model. The macro context could include social work policies, local supervision guidelines, organisational policies, and the degree of emphasis on social work supervision.

Process of the ACES Model

Mr Dominic elaborated on how these six components come together through three core matters as shown in the following image.
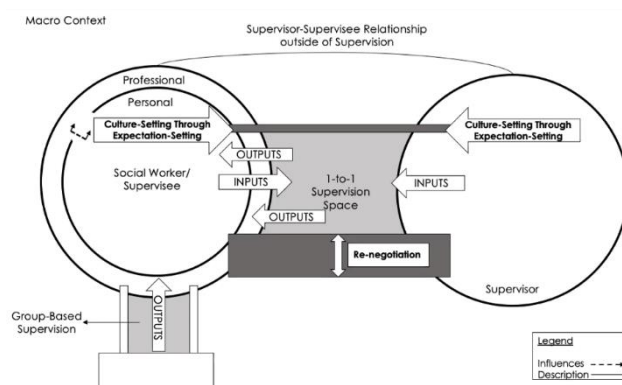

The Process of the ACES Model

Firstly, before supervision occurs, supervisors and supervisees negotiate expectations and understand how they each envision supervision. Good supervision is then a result of having clear expectations agreed between both parties. Renegotiation may also occur as a form of acknowledgement that there is an evolution of the culture and expectations of supervision space over time.

Secondly, there are inputs from both supervisors and supervisees. Social work impacts the practitioner, and these impacts then translate into cognitive or affective material that may present itself during supervision. For example, practitioners could feel uncertain regarding case direction, experience negative emotions, or have disagreements with organisational

policies and processes. On the other hand, supervisors could bring supervision to their educational, administrative, and managerial inputs. Thirdly, there are outputs from the supervision space into the supervisee's personal and professional domains.

Co-Construction of One-to-One Supervision Space

Mr Dominic proceeded to discuss how the one-to-one supervision space is co-constructed as demonstrated in the following image.
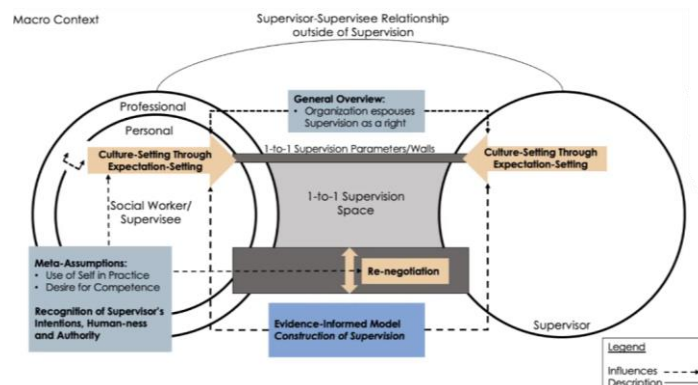

Co-Construction of One-to-One Supervision Space

Culture setting first takes place by setting expectations of supervision. Both supervisors and supervisees surface their conception of supervision and work collectively to develop something within agreeable parameters. Mr Dominic elaborated that some factors influence the co-construction of these parameters.

There is the general overview where the organisation espouses supervision as a practitioner's right. There are also meta-assumptions. There may be an assumption that a practitioner's personal values positively or negatively affect practice. Thus, supervisees may wish for the use of self in their practice and have supervision process the effect of practice on themselves. Supervisees may also desire competence and recognise that their supervisors have good intentions, have authority, and are human. These elements would then contribute to what constructs good supervision. Seeking to integrate the evidence-informed model, the *Construction of Supervision* domain also influences the construction of supervision.

Quality of the One-to-One Supervision Parameters

Mr Dominic proceeded to share about the factors that determined the quality of the supervision parameters.
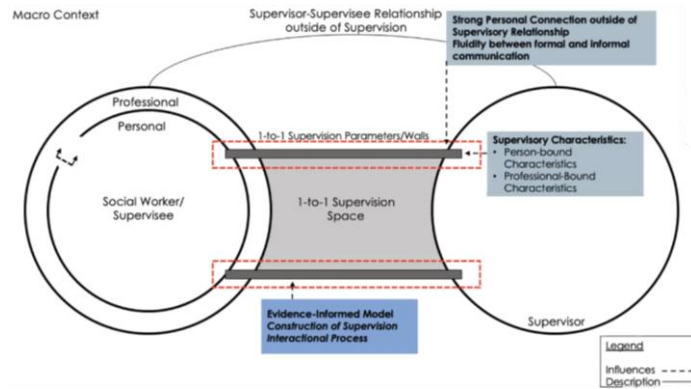
Quality of One-to-One Supervision Parameters

Personal Connection Outside of Supervisory Relationship

One factor would be the strong, personal connections between supervisors and supervisees outside of the supervisory relationship. The research participants expressed their appreciation for informality and having fluidity between formal and informal communication in the supervisory relationship. Mr Dominic extended that having a personal connection in supervision creates a comfortable environment for self-disclosure to occur. Informality often served to moderate the atmosphere in de-escalating heavier content during supervision.
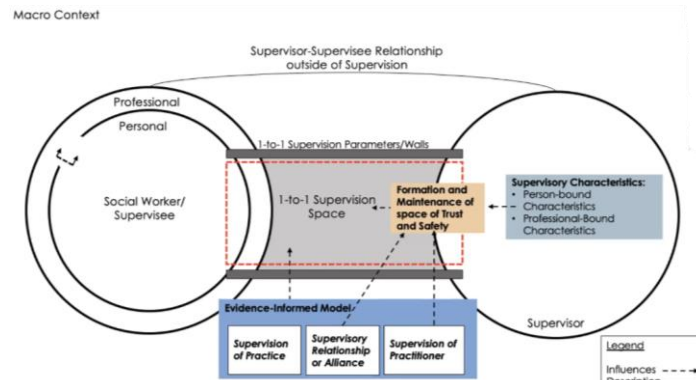
Supervisory Characteristics

Supervisory characteristics also influence the quality of the supervision parameters. The research participants explicitly mentioned some characteristics, which Mr Dominic tabulated and categorised into person-bound and professional-bound characteristics as shown in the following table:

Person-Bound Characteristics		Professional-Bound Characteristics	
• Openness	• Humorous	• Availability	• Willing to listen and understand concerns and train of thoughts before responding
• Non-judgmental	• Patience	• Credible	
• Non-dismissive	• Calm	• Collaborative	
• Affirming	• Empathetic	• Perceptive	
• Approachable	• Encouraging	• Facilitative	
• Curious	• Flexible		
• Easy-going	• Gentle		
• Honest	• Genuine		

Supervisory Characteristics

Quality of the One-to-One Supervision Space

Mr Dominic then shared about factors influencing the quality of the one-to-one supervision space as shown in the following image.


Quality of the One-to-One Supervision Space

Good supervision sees a formation and maintenance of space that is fundamentally characterized by trust and safety. The earlier supervisory characteristics influence the formation and maintenance of this space. Additionally, the 3 domains of supervision, namely, *Supervision of Practice, Supervisory Relationship or Alliance and the Supervision of practitioner* from the evidence-informed social work supervision model also provide insights into what can positively influence a good supervision space.

Formation of Supervisee's Inputs

Mr Dominic continued the presentation to discuss what and how good supervision occurs. He presented the following image to illustrate the formation of inputs from supervisees.
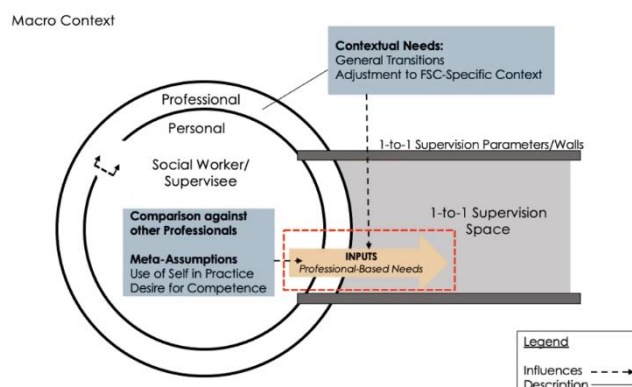

Formation of Supervisee's Inputs

Mr Dominic found that supervisees could make comparisons against other practitioners, bringing about feelings of uncertainty and a lack of confidence. Additionally, supervisees could introduce meta-assumptions as previously mentioned into the supervision space. He adds that it is essential to note that contextual needs from a supervisee's professional domains could also influence what they bring into supervision. These contextual needs could be the general transitions that supervisees face or the transitions specific to the context of FSCs.

General Transitions	FSCs-Specific Context
• Assimilating into the workplace culture (e.g., norms and workplace dynamics) • The shift in pace from being a student to a full-time employee • Feelings of unpreparedness due to perception of undergraduate education being insufficient	• Administrative processes in FSCs • Demographic variance due to multiple types of clients and their needs • Meeting explicit and implicit expectations of FSCs and clients • Lack of field experience in FSC service modalities of case, group, and community work

Contextual Needs of Supervisees

Experience within the One-to-One Supervision Parameters

Mr Dominic also shared the experiences within the one-to-one supervision parameters, as shown in the following image. He posed the question of how one might experience good supervision.
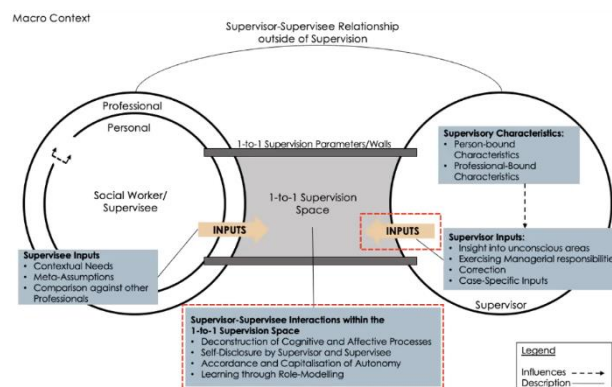
Experiences within the One-to-One Supervision Parameters

Supervisors introduce insights into the supervision space regarding the supervisees' unconscious areas. Research participants shared that their supervisors were often perceptive and helped them make meaning out of their experiences and perspectives. Their supervisors also provided hypotheses of them based on observations made. Supervisors also exercised their managerial responsibilities, such as ensuring accountability in meeting standards held at FSCs. When corrected, supervisees recognise the good intentions of their supervisors and acknowledge that constructive feedback came from a good place. Supervisors also provide case-specific inputs, such as providing alternative perspectives of cases or immediate direction for cases and reviewing recordings.

In the supervision space, supervisors and supervisees may experience a deconstruction of cognitive and affective processes. Supervisors seek to understand and walk through the thought processes of supervisees. They give good feedback and identify areas of change that the supervisees can explore. Mr Dominic also added that in the supervision space, there might be self-disclosure by supervisors and supervisees. It often comes in the form of disclosing struggles each may face that impact their work. He highlighted that the extent of disclosure is contingent on supervisees' perceived level of safety and trust in the supervision space.

There is also the accordance and capitalisation of autonomy given to supervisees to make decisions for their cases in the supervision space. The research participants also expressed that they felt secure falling back on their supervisors. Mr Dominic shared that the level of autonomy given to supervisees should be primed according to their learning phases and adjusted accordingly through thorough discussions. Supervisees may also learn through role-modelling as they mimic how their supervisees respond at work.

Outcomes of the One-to-One Supervision Parameters

Mr Dominic went on to discuss the outcomes of having good supervision within the one-to-one supervision parameters as shown in the following image.
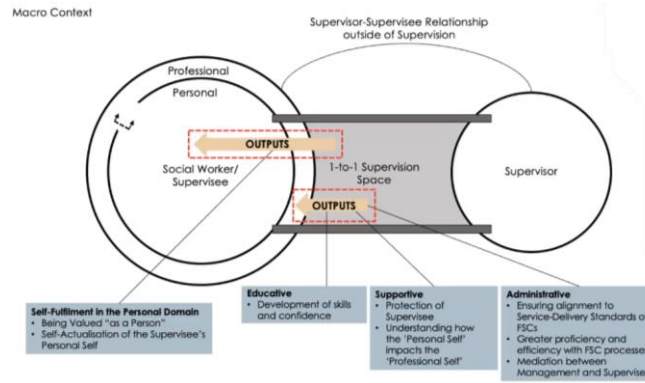
Outcomes of the One-to-One Supervision Parameters

There are, first, outputs to supervisees' personal and professional domains. To their professional domain, the supervision space contributes its educational, supportive, and administrative functions. Mr Dominic then expounded on the outputs to a supervisee's personal domain. Good supervision makes supervisees feel valued as a person; they feel valued and known as a whole to their supervisors. Good supervision also enabled the self-actualisation of the supervisees' personal self. A research participant expressed that supervision is precious because a supervisee has the space to discuss matters with a supervisor interested in nurturing them as a person. Mr Dominic highlighted that there is greater depth to the roles that supervisors play; they influence the formation and maintenance of their supervisees' wellbeing. He presented the following quotation to suggest what good supervision might be in a FSC context in Singapore:

> *"Good supervision for entry-level social workers in Singapore FSCs is the meeting of professional-based needs through a process that values and esteems the personal and professional self of the supervisee within a supervision space characterised by trust and safety. In doing so, the competency and confidence of the social worker is enhanced to provide overall effectiveness and efficient services."*

Key Takeaways

Mr Dominic proceeded to share key takeaways from the research he conducted. Firstly, social work is deeply personal, where personal and professional identities overlap and integrate. Secondly, there is an intricate interplay of supervisees and supervisors' selves in supervision. Thirdly, there is a need to recognise and esteem supervisees and supervisors' personal and professional selves for good supervision to happen. Fourthly, good supervision impacts supervisees' personal self, even to the extent of contributing to their sense of self-actualisation.

Lastly, supervisors are in a role critical in harmonising entry-level social workers' personal and professional identities.

Questions and Answers Segment

The presentation closed with a time of questions and answers. One of the participants asked if the research referred to supervision as solely clinical supervision or as inclusive of general supervision. Mr Dominic responded that for his research, the term supervision encompasses both clinical and general supervision. Another participant asked about the extent of personal disclosure that would be ideal for supervisors in informal settings. Dr Peace Wong responded that the extent is contingent on the intent and effects of disclosure and whether a different means can create a similar outcome. She stressed that supervisors are not to engage in personal therapy for their supervisees and that supervisors must be mindful of their boundaries given their responsibilities to ensure professional accountability.

One participant asked what guided the assignment of supervisory characteristics into their respective person-bound and profession-bound categories. Mr Dominic shared that he had explored literature in psychology to understand the characteristics. The most optimal means to assign characteristics would be to evaluate whether one could learn from them. Some would contend that while one exhibits person-bound characteristics naturally, one can learn profession-bound characteristics through practice. Additionally, profession-bound characteristics are supervision-centric, while person-bound characteristics are supervisor-centric.

A participant asked what would be the person-bound and profession-bound characteristics of supervisees that contribute to good supervision. Mr Dominic replied that further development in the research would be needed to respond to the question adequately. Another participant asked if there were any interesting findings of supervisors' personal and professional domains and their effect on supervisees' positive supervision experiences. Mr Dominic responded that he could only assume, based on the current responses, that supervisees will value supervision more should supervisors practise their use of self more often.

The last question sought Dr Peace Wong and Mr Dominic's opinions and advice on the ideal type of supervisors and supervisees. Dr Peace Wong responded that a perfect supervisor does not exist, and she would rather have supervisors who are open to learning, even if they are in their infancy stages. Additionally, they should also be willing to uphold the professional standards and mission of the social work profession. For supervisees, she commented that it

would be ideal to be open, honest, and reflective. Mr Dominic responded that what is the most important is supervisors and supervisees' willingness to renegotiate the supervision space transparently. For social service organisations, he questioned if they espouse supervision as a practitioner's right, then to what extent is it good and defined? Additionally, how might their practitioners experience good supervision? He adds that it would be helpful for supervisees if they came to the supervision space with openness and willingness to take ownership of the learning process.

Mr Dominic closed the presentation by expressing his hopes that the ACES model will not simply remain as an academic model but one that practitioners can actively use in their practice and supervision.

Reference

O'Donoghue, K., Wong, P. Y. J., & Tsui, M. S. (2017). Constructing an evidence-informed social work supervision model. *European Journal of Social Work*.

Self-Care Activity

Mr. Mohamad Farid bin Jaaffar

Lead Social Worker

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Mr Farid began with an emphasis that having self-care strategies is essential. Supervisors need to know how to care for themselves and release any negativity they may have. Mr Farid shared that for him, playing board games was his self-care strategy. He currently has a collection of more than 200 board games. There were three reasons for having board games as his self-care strategy. Firstly, play board games provided him with face-to-face interactions—which he enjoys—with his peers and with new people whom he gets to meet. Secondly, playing board games stimulates his brain, given that games he played were often competitive and required problem-solving skills. Lastly, board games were, as Mr Farid described, "good, clean fun".

Thus, Mr Farid prepared a game called 'Zoom Patchwork' as a self-care activity to close the first day of the supervision seminar. The game took inspiration from Uwe Rosenberg's roll-and-write board game, 'Patchwork Doodle'. Before the activity, Mr Farid sent 'Zoom Patchwork' handouts to the participants. They were to print the handout and prepare a pen for the self-care activity. The image below shows the handout prepared for the participants.
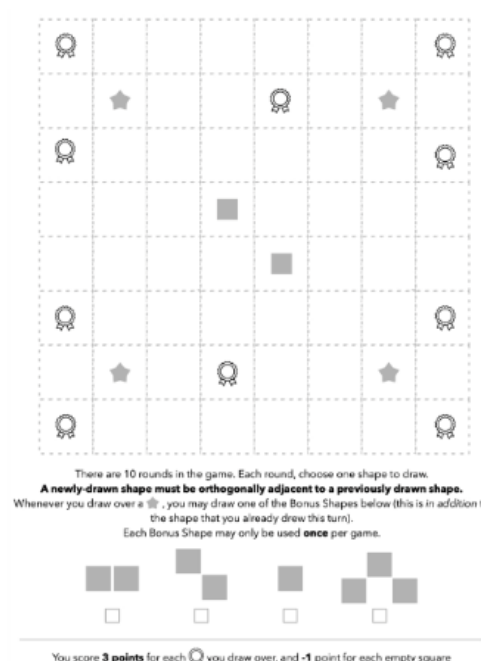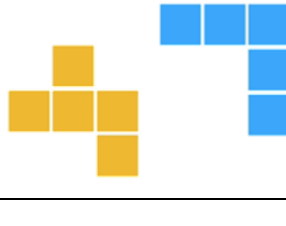
'Zoom Patchwork' Handout

The rules of the game were:

1. There are ten rounds in the game.
2. For each round, participants must choose one shape shown on the screen to shade onto the 8-by-8 grid diagram on the handout.
3. The first shape chosen must cover any of the two squares in the middle.
4. For subsequent shapes, participants must shade them orthogonally adjacent to a previously shaded shape.
5. Throughout the game, should participants shade over one of the stars, they can choose one bonus shape to shade onto their diagrams.
6. Each bonus shape provided, however, can only be used once throughout the game.
7. Participants are free to flip or rotate the shapes provided however they want.
8. At the game's end, participants will score 3 points for every medal they shaded over and minus 1 point for every unshaded grid.

The table below displays the shapes provided.

Bonus	
Round 1	
Round 2	
Round 3	

Shapes Provided Throughout 'Zoom Patchwork'

After the tenth round, Mr Farid had the participants tally their scores. He shared that having 15 points would be a good score while having anything above 20 would be considered a high score. Mr Farid added that it was statistically unlikely for any of them to shade the grids entirely as there were insufficient shapes. Mr Farid then concluded the activity and hoped that the game provided some form of fun to the participants to end their day at the seminar.

Video Highlights of Rethinking Supervision
Sharing by Different Country Representatives

<u>Presenters</u>

Mr Brian Donnelly (Ireland)

Senior Mental Health Social Worker

Dublin North City Mental Health Service

Health Service Executive

Professor Mei-Kuei Yu (Taiwan)

Professor, Graduate Institute of Social Work

National Taiwan Normal University

President, Taiwan Association of Social Workers

Ms Debra Faria (USA)

Director of the NASW Board

Executive Committee Member

National Association of Social Workers

Ms Ang Bee Lian (Singapore)

Director-General of Social Welfare

Ministry of Social and Family Development

Four representatives from Ireland, Taiwan, the USA, and Singapore were interviewed to share their thoughts on social work supervision from their context's perspectives.

Question 1: How would you describe social work supervision in your country?

Mr Brian shared that in Ireland, prominent social service employers would be Tusla, who works primarily with children and their families, and the Health Service Executive, which provides public health and social care services in Ireland. Both organisations use Morrison's model of supervision for their supervision policies.

Professor Yu shared that for Taiwan, the government has made much efforts to advance supervision. They also established local standards for supervision, with the Taiwan

Association of Social Workers ensuring that every social worker receives regular, adequate supervision.

Ms Debra shared that for the United States, supervision and social work licensing requirements are different across various states. However, the Association of Social Work Boards, the National Association of Social Workers, and the Council of Social Work Education collaborate frequently to lend support to deliver supervision related projects and tactics.

Ms Ang shared that for Singapore, there is a supervision framework developed to guide social workers on the purpose and frequency of supervision and the qualifications required of a supervisor. The framework served to promote consistency concerning supervision across the social work profession and ensure good practices. In Singapore, the profession understands supervision as integral to professional development, with social workers needing at least 1,000 hours of supervised practice to be eligible for accreditation.

Question 2: During the COVID-19 pandemic, how did your country rethink supervision?

Mr Brian responded that what happened to supervision in Ireland reflected the implications the pandemic had on their social work practice. Supervision remained stuck initially with social workers attempting to manage the crisis. Gradually, social workers had supervision over telephone calls or via teleconference. Eventually, they began using online platforms such as Microsoft Teams and WebEx.

Professor Yu responded that the Taiwan government managed the COVID-19 pandemic situation exceptionally and, thus, there was minimal impact locally. Hence, social work supervision did not see many changes. Nonetheless, a few organisations have gradually implemented online supervision, particularly for external supervision.

Ms Debra responded that in the United States, many social workers had to work from home. Governors of various states had to issue executive orders to enable technology, such as Zoom or telehealth, for supervision and service delivery. These executive orders have a stipulated timeframe. However, they have been extended in various settings to ensure continuity of services and supervision for clients and social workers.

Ms Ang responded that in Singapore, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of online and telephone supervision. She views them as constructive means to hone social workers' ability to listen attentively. While the pandemic had social workers rethink supervision, it also

had supervisors reflect on the purpose of supervision, which could include their use of self. The pandemic also helped the social work profession recognise technology as a complementary tool to face-to-face interactions.

Question 3: Concerning supervision, what are three focus areas your country is working on for the next two years?

Mr Brian shared that Ireland hopes to hold the three aspects of supervision in union: case management, reflective practice, and continuous professional development. They also hope to enforce annual supervision reviews to show evidence for case management and the amassing of social work competencies among social workers. Lastly, they hope to establish learning and development plans concerning supervision.

Professor Yu shared that Taiwan hopes to have continual partnerships between agencies and fortify a community to work on supervision. Additionally, they hope to formulate and strengthen their local training certification system for supervision.

Ms Debra shared that the United States hopes to have national licensing protocols and standards that can work across state lines. Doing so would recognise social workers as licensed practitioners and supervisors even if they move across states. She added that they are looking forward to the impending approval of the revisions on social education standards in 2022. The modifications will cover the supervision of field placement for students who receive external supervision from their placement agencies.

For Singapore, Ms Ang shared their hopes of implementing tiered training for supervisors, as well as cementing support for supervision of supervisory practice. Additionally, they hope to document good supervision practices and have them be readily available and accessible, such as organising supervision seminars and having a competency framework.

Panel Discussion
Rethinking Social Work Supervision
— Macro & Micro Perspectives

<u>Panellists</u>

Associate Professor Kieran O'Donoghue

Head of School Social Work, Associate Dean Academic

College of Health, Massey University

Ms Long Chey May

President

Singapore Association of Social Workers

Ms Lim Boon Chee

Senior Principal Medical Social Worker

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital & Jurong Community Hospital

Ms Lyon Koh Lin Lu

Manager (Sun Ray Scheme)

National Council of Social Service

Mr Dominic Soh

Social Worker

Kampong Kapor Community Services

<u>Moderator</u>

Mr Paulus Sutjipto

Senior Social Worker

Office of the Director-General of Social Welfare

Ministry of Social and Family Development

Mr Paulus greeted the participants and introduced the panel discussion's focus on rethinking supervision from micro and macro perspectives. He shared that for the panel discussion, there

would be no segment for questions and answers. He then invited A/P Kieran to share his thoughts on rethinking supervision.

A/P Kieran shared an overview of a piece of his work, "Advancing the social work supervision agenda". It reviewed 115 peer-reviewed, international research articles on social work supervision published between 2011 and 2020. From his review emerged a few areas in which the social work profession can look to rethink supervision. They are:

1. The evaluation of supervision practices
2. The development of empirically supported supervision approaches and models
3. The link between supervision and client outcomes
4. The development of an international understanding of social work supervision
5. The influence of cultural and social differences, the decolonisation of supervision, and the development of indigenous supervision models
6. The role of supervision in supporting the personal well-being and safety of practitioners
7. The impact of work and a trauma-informed approach on supervision
8. The support and supervision for supervisors
9. Emerging areas of supervision research, e.g., newly qualified practitioners, interprofessional supervision, rural and distant supervision, cyber-supervision, ethics and values in supervision, and power dynamics in supervision

Below is the reference to his work:

O'Donoghue, K. (2021). Advancing the social work supervision research agenda. In K. O'Donoghue & L. Engelbrecht (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of social work supervision* (pp. 541-556). Routledge.

Ms Long shared that she has taken on multiple roles and positions in various settings over the course of her time in the social work profession. She has observed an evolving social work landscape, including an evolving understanding of supervision. Ms Long mentioned that she had poor supervision experiences but encouraged practitioners to continue to grow and that it is learning process. She added that local practitioners are privileged to have a skills framework for their reference and that the local profession invests heavily in practitioners' growth and learning.

Ms Long highlighted that Dr. Peace Wong had done a study in 2019 on the state of social work supervision in Singapore. However, she comments that there was currently limited

literature on client outcomes and the inclusion of their voices concerning supervision. It There is imperative to think about client outcomes as harnessing clients' view of practitioner's work will enable the profession to better support junior social workers in their professional development. Ms Long also added that the profession needs to be more aware of the models of care and be open to learning from other disciplines, such as pharmacists, clinicians, and doctors.

Moving forward, Ms Long stresses that integrating the life course perspective into the profession's understanding of supervision would be imperative. It would be necessary to consider social-health integration and its implication on supervision. Ms Long adds that there is undergoing effort to develop supervision of supervisors, with support from counterparts abroad. Ms Long also highlighted the emerging focus areas she observed in the profession, such as maternal and child health, mental health, frailty care, and population health. These emerging areas will have implications on the types of models the profession will adopt. It would be crucial to ensure continuous learning among supervisors to prepare themselves for these emerging areas.

Ms Lim continued the discussion to share her experiences in the healthcare setting. She narrated that the priority was to survive in her earlier years as a budding medical social worker and that there was no structure in supervision, with case discussions done spontaneously. However, as Ms Lim reflected on her journey as a supervisor, she learned four lessons. These lessons were:

1. From doing to being—creating a place and space to reflect as a supervisor.
2. From ad-hoc supervision to intentional supervision—being prepared for supervision.
3. Having an attitude shift towards believing supervision as valuable.
4. Supervisors need training.

Concerning training, Ms Lim shared that at her current organisation, they implemented Clinical Supervision of Supervisors. Supervisors would record their supervision sessions with their supervisees and review the recordings with a group of supervisors to draw insights for their professional development. There are also efforts made to mentor new supervisors. Ms Lim also stressed the importance for practitioners to understand that supervisors do not know everything. As such, the supervisory relationship should be a platform for learning for supervisors and supervisees alike.

Ms Lyon reflected on what helped her in the significant shift in her professional identity in her transition from a practitioner to a supervisor. Ms Lyon shared that in the initial stages of transition, she focused her energy on increasing her knowledge and skills and sought to build every supervisory relationship at a one-to-one, individual level. She also saw the importance of having supportive macro-level structures, such as having agency guidelines, training, and a local framework on supervision. Yet, what helped Ms Lyon most in her transition was the gradual construction of her identity as a budding supervisor. This came about when she could make meaning of her role as a supervisor from both the micro and macro perspectives.
Ms Lyon had asked herself multiple questions. Some of these questions were:

- Why did she take this role?
- What kind of supervision did she benefit from and struggle under?
- How could those experiences influence the way she supervised?
- How did she see herself as a supervisor?
- What does the role mean for her in the context of the agency, the profession, and client outcomes?

Ms Lyon continued that through a micro perspective, she reflected that she benefited the most under supervisors who educated her on the way to perform as a practitioner and demonstrated the way to be a good practitioner. Likewise, she expressed her hopes of wanting to be a role model to her supervisees. From a macro perspective, Ms Lyon saw herself supervising potential future supervisors for the agency and the profession. Ms Lyon then prompted the participants to think further on how the profession could intentionally facilitate meaning-making in the role transition process for supervisors-to-be and new supervisors.

Mr Dominic introduced himself as an entry-level practitioner. He drew four questions regarding supervision as he forecast his future role as a supervisor. The questions were:

1. What are the parameters of understanding supervision as a social service sector?
2. What and how can the profession determine the quality of supervision?
3. How is supervision calibrated to develop the mental stages of practitioner?
4. What would the local research direction regarding supervision?

Mr Paulus then closed the discussion as he thanked the panellists for sharing their respective insights and reflections.

Workshop 2
Therapeutic Supervision

Dr Nicki Weld

Social Work Advisor, Child and Family

NGO New Zealand

Director, CNZN Ltd

Synopsis of Workshop

As an expansion of the restorative function of professional reflective supervision, therapeutic supervision is a toolset that enables professionals to respond to emotional impacts and indirect trauma. Drawing on the work of Miller (2018), this workshop provided an overview of therapeutic supervision by expanding the concepts of the Indirect Trauma Sensitive Supervision framework. The workshop objectives include: (1) differentiate between emotion labour and indirect trauma impacts; (2) define therapeutic supervision; (3) assist workers to develop a coherent narrative; (4) give a solution to support emotional processing, (5) assist workers to hold a compassionate frame of mind; and (6) identify ways to support wellbeing and the parasympathetic nervous systems.

Introduction

Dr Nicki began her presentation by outlining her workshop's objectives. She then introduced the following terms.

Stress

Stress refers to one's response to an event or stressor, where one experience physical, emotional, or psychological strain. It could come in the form of acute stress, episodic acute stress, or chronic stress. Dr Nicki emphasised that stress is not trauma and added that when one expresses their stress, it could indicate unmet needs in the workplace. People need to feel significant, find meaning, have a sense of belonging and security, freedom, and structure (Brady Wilson, TED talk, 2018) Hence, stress could indicate the lack in one of these areas.

Emotional Labour

Emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) concerns inducement or suppression of feelings. As part of fulfilling the emotional requirements of a social worker, practitioners may do surface acting, which can, over time, become exhausting. They may experience dissonance and incongruence within themselves, which can impact their mental health and emotional reserves. One can easily experience emotional labour when faced with clients we do not have a natural empathy for or with 'difficult' clients.

Trauma

One can develop a response of trauma when exposed to highly frightening, harmful, or threatening events that impact physical or psychological safety. Trauma can result from an overwhelming stressor that overwhelms a person's usual ability to cope. Resulting impacts may include intrusive memories, heightened arousal, avoidance and distress. Trauma also disrupts one's normal functioning. It is more accurately defined as a response and not a trigger, as trauma can result from different events for different individuals.

Indirect Trauma

Dr Nicki also expounded on indirect trauma. One domain of indirect trauma would be vicarious trauma. It impacts practitioners as they consequently experience cumulative cognitive changes in their belief systems in areas of trust, spirituality, safety, control, self-esteem, and intimacy. Another domain would be compassion fatigue, a form of chronic stress that often results from being in a caring role and exposure to clients who experienced trauma. There is also a secondary traumatic stress. It has a more rapid onset than vicarious trauma and can occur when exposed to traumatic details. It has clearer symptomology that can mirror the arousal, intrusion, avoidance, and distress symptoms indicative of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Types of Supervision

According to Miller (2018), reflective supervision is the most fundamental and feasible way to put trauma knowledge into practice. Trauma-informed supervision focuses on how trauma affects clients, the practitioner, the helping relationship, and the context in which work is happening. Dr Nicki proceeded to share three types of supervision.

First, there is line management or otherwise known as administrative supervision. It serves to provide oversight and accountability for an organisation's outcomes, activities, and standards to ensure quality service. It focuses on managing team resources, delegation and workload management, performance appraisal, the duty of care, and other management processes.

There is also clinical supervision. It serves to develop practitioners' skills and techniques, enable them to meet practice standards, and provide them with clinical direction and support. Non-social workers can provide clinical supervision to social workers, such as psychologists.

Lastly, there is professional supervision. Professional (reflective) supervision is an activity that engages practitioners throughout the duration of their career regardless of their level of experience or qualifications. It is a protected time for practitioners to engage in critical, in-depth reflection that supports integrating their experiences into professional and personal learning. It is a platform for focused support and development, where one can explore their roles and relationships, their practice, and individual as well as contextual factors that impact their work. Ultimately, it ensures quality service delivery and enables practitioners to achieve and sustain a high quality of professional and personal development (Beddoe & Davys, 2020)

'Therapeutic' Verses 'Therapy'

Dr Nicki then shared that professional supervision is not about providing therapy but supporting supervisees in their work. She adds that professional supervision, however, has a therapeutic function. The therapeutic function serves to restore and strengthen the well-being of practitioners as one consciously attends to the emotional labour, stress, distress, trauma, and indirect trauma that can be inherent in social service. It provides a platform to consider individual and contextual factors that could impact professional practice. Therapeutic supervision supports supervisees' self-awareness and emotional management skills and contributes to their professional and personal growth by enabling emotionally aware, safe, and professional practice.

Developing a Coherent Narrative

In therapeutic supervision, Dr Nicki shared the importance of helping supervisees to develop a coherent narrative, drawing on the concepts of Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Supervisors can enable their supervisees to provide a verbal description of what had happened to promote and consolidate their learning and promote awareness. Doing so allows

the narrative to provide a sense of meaning when supervisees remember them and encourages mastery and compassion satisfaction in supervisees.

<u>Using Reflective Questions</u>

Dr Nicki suggested supervisors to use the following Kolb's reflective practice questions to support developing a coherent narrative adapted from Knapman and Morrison (1998). Below are the questions:

- Tell me what happened?
- How do you feel about what happened, both at that time and now?
- What do you think about what happened and why?
- What did you do well or alright?
- Is there anything you would do differently?
- Is there anything that still challenges you?
- What is the new or reinforced learning you are taking away from this experience and will put into action?

Dr Nicki also provided emotion-based questions for supervisors to use. Below are some questions:

- What emotions were you aware of when you were in this situation?
- What informed you that these emotions were present?
- What emotions have stayed with you from this situation?
- What would another person have noticed if they had been watching or listening to you?
- What is most present for you right now talking about this?
- Were there any ways that the other person's behaviour triggered any emotions for you?
- What were/are these emotions?

Concerning secondary traumatic stress, Dr Nicki shared the following questions adapted from Brian and Bride (1999, 2004) for supervisors' use:

- Do you find yourself getting easily irritated or having trouble concentrating? (Arousal)
- Do you feel nervous, reactive, or jumpy during the day? (Arousal)
- Are you experiencing any sleep disturbances such as unsettling or stressful dreams? (Intrusion)

- Do you find yourself re-living or constantly thinking about client situations or having thoughts about clients at unexpected times? (Intrusion)
- Are there any clients or work situations you are finding yourself avoiding? (Avoidance)
- Have you found yourself disengaging from daily activities you normally enjoy or social situations? (Avoidance)

<u>Having Compassion</u>

Compassion begins with self-awareness of one's reactions, beliefs, and values. Practitioners will need to emotionally regulate and anchor themselves to core motivations that uphold their integrity. Doing so would enable them to demonstrate acceptance and develop understanding, and also reduces the risk of compassion fatigue.

<u>Applying Radical Compassion to Others</u>

To apply radical compassion, practitioners need to recognise the emotional affect required to maintain a position of unconditional, positive regard and understanding for others. Supervisors will need to notice, acknowledge, and help practitioners to express their feelings of effort. They would need to guide practitioners to a position of radical compassion, where they can offer non-judgmental empathy for their clients regardless of the behaviours they exhibit. There is effort involved when suppressing unexpressed feelings about clients, which inevitably culminates in experiencing emotional labour and compassion fatigue. Thus, supervisors could normalise these feelings and provide practitioners with the platform to express and accept them.

Practitioners could also focus on clients' cognitive skills instead of their motivations. Helping clients acquire skills will contribute to solving problems. For instance, instead of thinking that a client is more interested in substance use than getting her children back, a practitioner could reframe substance use as the only way the client knows to manage distress (Miller, Sprang, 2018). Practitioners could also identify ways based on clients' preferences, so as to avoid making hasty judgments.

<u>Supporting Self-Compassion</u>

To have self-compassion, practitioners will need to notice their harsh self-criticisms, reduce their negative biases held by themselves, identify their inner critics, and reframe their perspectives positively. Doing so would encourage emotional regulation among practitioners

in ways that promote composure and contentment and ease their stresses. It is also essential for practitioners to normalise their responses as part of the human condition and demonstrate loving kindness toward themselves

Supporting Well-being of Practitioners

Dr Nicki encouraged supervisors to bear witness to any distress in their supervisees and regularly assess themselves as supervisors. They need to promote self-care, self-awareness, and mutual support in supporting their supervisees. In analysing and supporting worker wellbeing, this needs to be considered holistically. She also shared the SPHERE Model, as shown below, that comprises various areas of well-being (Spiritual, Physical, sense of Hope, Emotional, Relational, sense of Engagement)
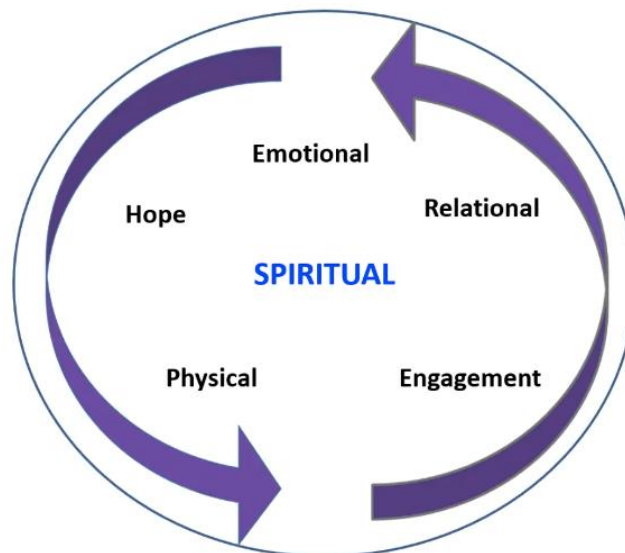
The SPHERE Model

Wellbeing is also supported by consciously attending to the central nervous system. She shared a simple overview of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. The table below expounds on these systems further.

Sympathetic Nervous System	Parasympathetic Nervous System
Stress Response Revs you up, preparing you to fight, take flight, or freeze	Relaxation Response Calms you down, preparing you to rest, think, and restore
Signs • Heart beats fast • Breath is fast and shallow • Pupils of eyes expand (can make you sensitive to light) • Gut becomes inactive (difficult to digest) • Blood rushes to your skeletal muscles and away from your brain, making it hard to think clearly • Hormones rush through your body, making you feel anxious • Expends your energy	Signs • Heart beats in slow, rhythmic pattern • Breath is full and slow • Pupils of eyes shrink • Gut is active (helps you digest and absorb the nutrients from your food) • Increased blood flow to gut, lungs, and brain • Hormones rush in, lifting your mood and helping you to relax • Conserves your energy

Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Nervous Systems
(Information adapted from Zensational Kids)

Achieving Vicarious Transformation and Compassion Satisfaction

Dr Nicki concluded the workshop by noting that engaging the therapeutic function in supervision can enable practitioners to experience vicarious transformation and have compassion satisfaction. Vicarious transformation is when one undergoes a change in their experience of vicarious trauma and, consequently, spiritual growth. It is a process where practitioners engage the negative implications of their trauma work actively and achieve growth through this Signs of vicarious transformation would include having a deepened sense of connection with all living beings, a broader sense of moral inclusion, a greater appreciation of the gifts in one's life, and a greater sense of meaning and hope. This draws on the theory of Post Traumatic Growth.

Compassion satisfaction, on the other hand, is positive feelings derived from performing competently. It is characterised by positive relationships with colleagues and conviction that one's work makes a meaningful contribution to their clients and society.

Topic Presentation 9
Faci-Drawing: A Visual Approach to Conversations during Supervision

Mr. Mohamad Farid bin Jaaffar

Lead Social Worker

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Synopsis of Presentation

Faci-Drawing is a useful approach to increase supervisees' attention spans by incorporating a combination of the written word and simple hand-drawn pictures into conversations. The objectives of the Faci-Drawing framework would be to increase clarity during discussions, process memorable big-picture views of the conversations, and generate pathways and solutions. The components of Faci-Drawing include three Drawing Toolsets, three Drawing Principles, and three Approaches. The steps include setting the context of the conversation, choosing the Thinking Structure used for drawing, and empowering supervisees to draw during the session.

Introduction

Mr Farid began the presentation by introducing the Faci-Drawing Framework, a visual approach to supervision that could improve clarity during discussions to help supervisees process conversations and generate solutions. He shared that he had been adopting the Faci-Drawing approach for the past two years, which fused his love for drawing and sketching into his therapeutic work. Before detailing the framework, he encouraged participants to get a hold of minimally three sheets of paper and writing materials to draw alongside him during the presentation. Participants were free to draw on their digital tablets if they preferred doing so.

Goals of Faci-Drawing

Faci-Drawing, also known as facilitator-led drawing, is a way to conduct counselling, coaching, or supervision sessions using simple drawings. These drawings seek to increase clarity as pictures can help internalise meanings from the visuals and graphics. They become clear for the person drawing and to the person the facilitator is illustrating. The drawings also make supervision notes appear more memorable and intriguing to view. Studies have shown that

the more memorable notes are, the more likely an individual would return to the notes for reference. The drawings also generate solutions and ideas for change.

The Ideation of Faci-Drawing

Mr Farid shared that the inspiration for Faci-Drawing from three of Dan Roam's books, which served as the cornerstone for his drawing techniques. Books by Willemien Brand and Mike Rohde have also inspired his Faci-Drawing ideation journey. Below are the books he took inspiration from.
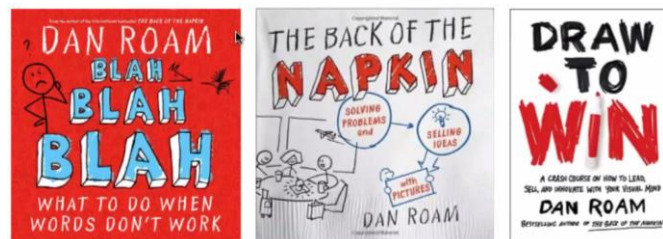
Books by Dan Roam
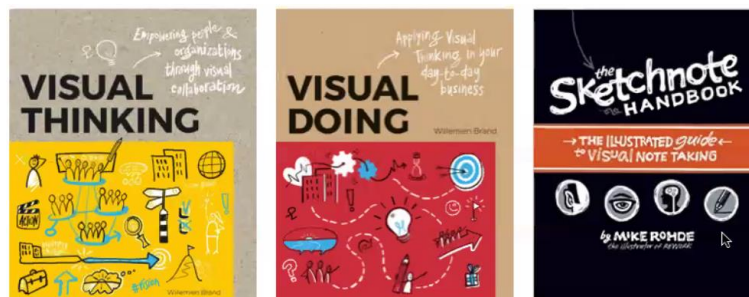
Books by Willemien Brand and Mike Rohde

Benefits of Faci-Drawing

Mr Farid shared that Faci-Drawing had taught him to simplify conceptual processes, to conduct motivational interviewing, and to explore ambivalence experienced by his clients. Simple mind-maps aid him to process and clarify matters for his students, colleagues, and clients. He then shared with the participants some Faci-Drawing attempts he made, as shown below:
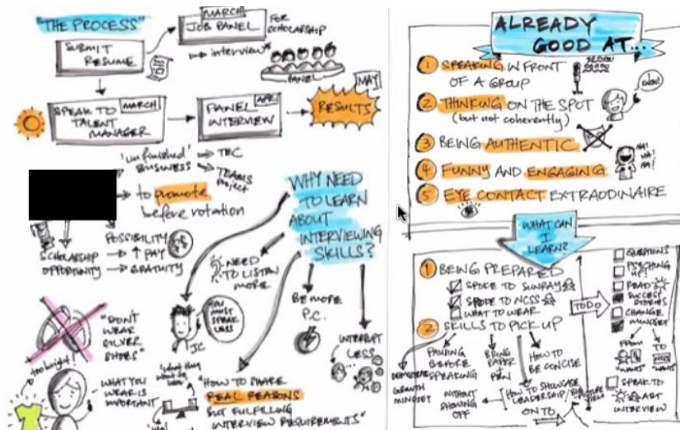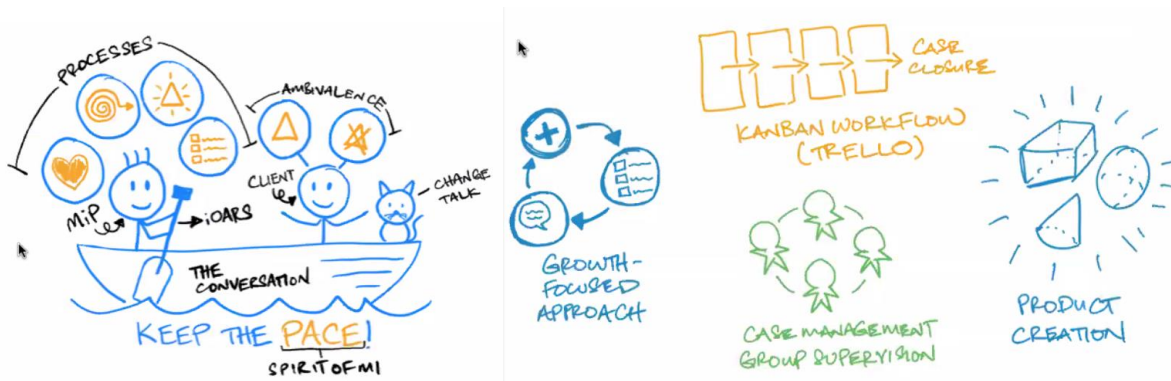
Faci-Drawing Attempts

Drawing Activity

After sharing his Faci-Drawing attempts, Mr Farid had the participants draw simple pictures such as faces and characters. He encouraged participants that it would become more comfortable as they draw more frequently.

One participant raised a question about the tools Mr Farid use for Faci-Drawing. Mr Farid responded that he uses the application, Concepts, on his iPad. With face-to-face sessions, he would use A3-sized sheets of paper for his drawings so that he can share them with his supervisees.

The participants were asked to draw their response to the question, "What are your challenges as supervisors?" Mr Farid had the participants draw a line, with one end labelled 'easy' and the other end 'hard'. He then got them to think of a challenge they had as a supervisor, express it loudly to themselves, and place an illustration of it on the scale with minimal words possible.

3 Principles of Faci-Drawing

Mr Farid then introduced participants to the three principles of Faci-Drawing as shown below.
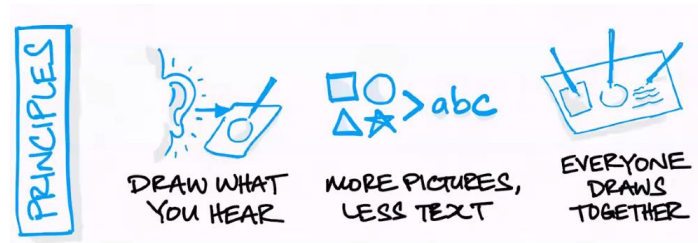
The 3 Principles of Faci-Drawing

Principle 1: Draw What You Hear

The first would be to draw what one hears and not draw what one thinks. If one continually draws what one thinks, the illustration may grow very complex. One of the things that help in Faci-Drawing is to think of a metaphor of what one wants to draw. One example that Mr Farid gave was where his supervisee and he were on different wavelengths. Thus, the metaphor that came to mind was "signals" and drew it as shown below.
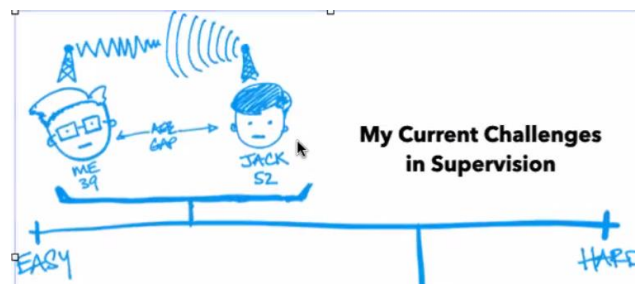
Current Challenges in Supervision by Mr Farid

Principle 2: More Pictures, Less Text

Mr Farid shared that if there were too much text on a paper, it would defeat the purpose of Faci-Drawing. Hence, it is important to hold back from adding more words into the paper.

Principle 3: Everyone Draws Together

Mr Farid shared drawings cannot be done alone. Interpreting issues and ideas also cannot be done alone and supervisees must play a part in the Faci-Drawing process.

A participant then asked how they could ensure engagement with clients or supervisees as they draw? Mr Farid responded that it would be best not to do many things at once and to not use the Faci-Drawing approach for intensive discussions. Another participant asked what they could do if supervisees do not agree with their drawings. Mr Farid responded that he would allow for his supervisees to draw whatever they wanted or help to edit the drawings by correcting or adding any missing information.

The Use of Metaphors

Like in Symbolic Interaction Therapy, Art Therapy and Narrative Therapy, metaphors assist one in drawing interesting pictures to process ideas. Drawings are not a mere recording of concepts but something viewable and usable to expound on subjects further with supervisees.

Generate Solutions Using Drawings

Pictures could present opportunities to help facilitators and supervisees find solutions or generate pathways. Facilitators can look at various elements of the picture or take a part of it and redraw them numerous times to process specific issues with supervisees. Mr Farid gave the example below to position the issue he faced as a prompt to brainstorm solutions:

Possible Solutioning: What can each party do to narrow the gap?
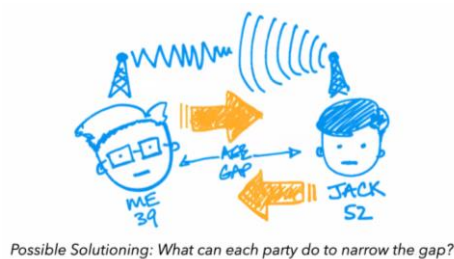
An Example of Generating Solutions to an Issue

Thinking Structures and Stances

In Faci-Drawing, one should not begin by drawing on a blank sheet of paper as it could be overwhelming. Hence, templates such as patterns, timelines, Venn diagrams can help guide facilitators to think systematically. Such thinking structures fill up the paper and serve as a framework for the overall drawing. They also help facilitators systematically guide conversations and ask questions.
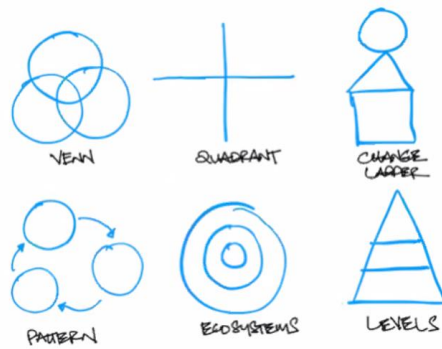
Examples of Thinking Structures

Apart from thinking structures, there are also three stances of Faci-Drawing that can be integrated into drawings:

1. Exploratory Approach
2. Meaning Making Approach
3. Strategic Approach

If the chosen stance is more strategic, the questions asked during sessions would adopt a more problem-solving approach. However, if the chosen stance takes a more meaning making approach, the facilitator will talk more about experiences, feelings, values, and beliefs with supervisees.

Closing Remarks

As Mr Farid closed the presentation, he shared that he is still working on the proposed framework, even though he has been practising Faci-Drawing for the last two years. He then provided an overview of the entire framework that shown in the following image:
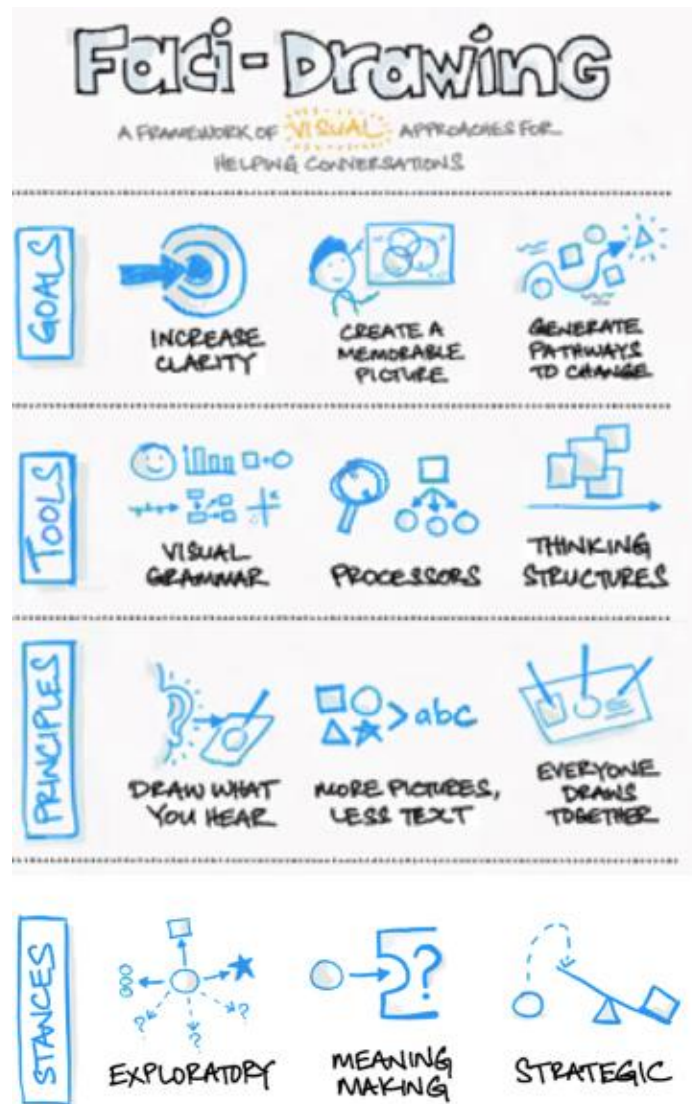
Overview of Faci-Drawing

Mr Farid highlighted that the templates and framework given are only for the facilitators to guide and process issues with their supervisees. Facilitators are responsible for managing the thinking process during the conversation, leaving the supervisees more mental bandwidth to explore issues and work out their own solutions.

Topic Presentation 10

Peer Group Supervision Approach: An Innovative Way to Look at Social Work Supervision Structures in Singapore

Ms Tan Yi Ying

Head, Youth Infinity

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Ms Moagana Rani D/O Rajagopal

Deputy Head, Youth Infinity

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Synopsis of Presentation

Peer group supervision models are an alternative supervising approach for Singapore's social service practitioners. According to Wagner and Smith (1979), interactions using relationships and professional skills can potentially enhance effectiveness. With various access to supervision resources, social workers can therefore congregate for more support to benefit their professional practice. Additionally, these models encourage equality among practitioners as it is non-hierarchical (Counselman & Webner, 2004) and professional growth without formal evaluation (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). In this workshop, we will discuss various models of peer group supervision processes as well as their advantages, limitations, and implications.

Introduction

Ms Tan began the presentation by introducing herself and Ms Moagana. She then asked participants to think about what the current supervision structures and modes were in Singapore. Some examples would be individual supervision, group supervision, and external supervision. Ms Tan also shared the current challenges observed in the supervision landscape. For her agency, she observed limited senior supervisors and the lack of clinical supervision for their senior practitioners and management staff. She, thus, thought that peer group supervision could be an avenue leading to resolve these issues.

Peer Group Supervision

Peer group supervision is a process by which practitioners help one another become more effective and skilful helpers using their professional relationships and skills. Groups delivering such supervision often comprised of 4 to 6 members. They tend to be leaderless, with members having non-hierarchical professional relationships with one another. They would also have comparable needs and levels of practice experience and expertise.

These groups could work within an organisation or comprising cross-sector members. Peer group supervision also does not have a formal evaluation process. It also allows for a creative exploration of different supervision modalities such as case discussions, theoretical framework discussions, roleplays, debates, and more. Ms Tan adds that it would be more effective to adopt a structure for peer group supervision than to have none.

Advantages of Peer Group Supervision

There are numerous advantages to having peer group supervision. For one, where there is a lack of suitable supervisors, peer group supervision provides resources and time for experienced practitioners. It also minimises hierarchical differences, enabling practitioners to learn from one another while maintaining autonomy and having freedom as well as equality in the groups. Through peer group supervision, practitioners are also able to get involved in a community where they can experience collegiality and connect to other practitioners in their groups. The groups also provide a platform for practitioners to receive feedback which can help them to be more reflexive.

Peer group supervision also ensures professional accountability among the group members, which consequently prevents malpractice. As practitioners teach and impart their knowledge to their peers, they will also experience professional growth. The groups also provide opportunities for positive self-appraisal, friendships, and negotiations for competition and aggression. Additionally, they are therapeutic as they encourage acceptance, a sense of belonging, mutual aid, normalisation, and feedback for learning.

A Good Peer Group Supervision

Ms Tan continued to share factors which would help to develop a good peer group supervision. She shared that it would be helpful to adhere firmly to contracts, ensure gatekeeping and boundaries among members. Members will need to have a solid commitment to the group and, manage resistance well. Every session could also have a leader to lead the discussion, and

sessions need to address emotions concerning shame and vulnerability as they arise when members share about their work. There should also be ongoing feedbacks about running the supervision. However, Ms Tan stressed that peer group supervision should never be a therapy group or a mere social event.

Adapting Borders' (1991) Model into Peer Group Supervision

Ms Tan discussed two models that practitioners could adopt for peer group supervision. The first model she introduced was Borders' (1991) model, which her agency adapted into their peer group supervision. One practitioner would formulate and present questions and concerns regarding their recorded counselling work for every session for feedback. The rest of the members will be assigned roles, perspectives, or tasks when reviewing the presenter's recorded session. Depending on their assignments, they would observe nonverbal behaviours and communication skills and adopt clients' perspectives and their family members. After watching the recorded session, the members would provide feedback according to their assigned roles, perspectives, or tasks. The presenter then facilitates the discussion and summarises the session to indicate if their needs were met during the supervision.

Ms Tan added that the model could incorporate multicultural considerations such as having a member assigned to identify and provide feedback on cultural issues observed in the recording. this effort would encourage an increased multicultural focus throughout the helping process. The model could also incorporate other supervision frameworks, such as the seven-eyed model of supervision.

Peer Coaching Model

Ms Tan also discussed the peer coaching model, where there are six phases to the supervision session. First, it would be to develop a statement requesting assistance. At this phase, a practitioner selects an issue and presents it to the group. The issue could be a complex case, a challenging event, or a critical incident from a work experience. For the second phase, it would be a period of questioning in order to better identify the focus. Members will ask the practitioner questions using the round-robin technique to obtain more comprehensive information. The practitioner then actively provides the necessary information to facilitate the members' understanding of the issues. At this phase, there should not be any suggestions given.

In the third phase, members will also use the round-robin technique to provide suggestions and insights to the practitioner. The practitioner is not allowed to respond to minimise the effects of defensive responding. In the fourth phase, the practitioner will pause to reflect on the suggestions and insights given by the members. The members, then, will also remain quiet during this phase. In the fifth phase, the practitioner responds to the suggestions and insights given by discussing which were helpful and likely to be used and their rationale for saying so. The sixth phase is optional, where members will reflect upon and discuss the process of working collaboratively on the case.

Incorporating Reflective Supervision Tools

Ms Moagana continued the presentation by sharing reflective tools that practitioners could incorporate into peer group supervision.

Role Reversal

One tool would be role reversals. It is where the presenter plays the role of the client while another member plays the role of the social worker. Role reversals help practitioners understand their clients' thoughts, feelings, and context better. They also let practitioners realise their clients' expectations and hopes of social workers when they approach to them.

Psychodrama

Another tool would be psychodrama. It provides practitioners with an in-depth exploration of their relationships with clients. The presenter invites members to each represent a character in the unfolding dramatization of the client's situation. These participants may be people known to the presenter, to the client, or both. They could also represent abstract concepts involved, such as discomfort and grief. Members then demonstrate how they would deal and relate with the client. At the end of the dramatization, members will share their experiences, often conveying a realistic illustration of the client and their reactions to the presenter. The members' sharing may also provide alternative perspectives or strategies to work with the client.

Surplus Reality

Another tool would be surplus reality. It offers a way of addressing what has yet to occur but is nevertheless wished for, feared, or questioned. In other words, it addresses the unknown,

unspoken, unfulfilled, and the unborn dreams, hopes, déjà vu experiences, fears, disappointments, wishes, and expectations of practitioners. Surplus reality can be applied to peer group supervision through discussing unfinished business that practitioners may have.

<u>Found Poetry and Journals</u>

Poetry can be a tool in supervision to increase empathy and self-support and facilitate self-care among practitioners. In peer group supervision, members will construct a poem between supervision sessions using notes taken of significant words and phrases spoken by their clients. They will then present their poems during sessions and have other members comment on them.

Journaling can also be a tool in supervision to encourage reflection, and it includes two parts. First, it would be to encourage consciousness of actions among practitioners. Practitioners who journaled their experiences described themselves as stepping away from being immersed in their actions and gaining a greater sense of awareness. Through journaling, practitioners can grow more aware of their actions and the rationale behind their actions. They are also more likely to grow aware of different working styles. Second, journaling encourages the consciousness of feelings in particular situations among practitioners. When members read aloud their daily journals in peer groups, it promotes reflective engagement among members. Members can affirm, learn, and build trust with one another through this exercise.

<u>Expressive Therapies</u>

Expressive therapies are other tools that practitioners can use in peer group supervision. Play therapy would be one example. Practitioners can present themselves or their clients using toys to create a metaphoric representation of what they desire out of the supervisory experience. After processing the visual and tactile representations, associative thoughts and feelings, practitioners can therefore include other toys to represent other relationships shared between significant characters in the situation. Apart from play therapy, there are other expressive modalities with similar functions, such as sand-tray miniatures, puppets, and storytelling.

<u>Challenges in Peer Group Supervision</u>

Ms Tan closed the presentation by sharing that while peer group supervision has its benefits, there are numerous challenges that it could face. Peer groups can unknowingly reinforce

helplessness and negativity towards authority and systems. Members may only offer positive praises with little to no criticisms, which can threaten the equilibrium in the group. There may also be a lack of commitment as time passes. As such, members would need to take more personal responsibility for their learning and work harder to stay on task for the sessions.

Furthermore, a leaderless group may also lead to a lack of focus and structure. Members may stray away from discussing clinical issues instead of focusing on group processes or one another's personal lives. There are also concerns about whether a peer group should remain closed or actively recruit new members, where either option could influence the group's dynamics. With that said, the formation of subgroups may occur, and there may also be a potential threat for leadership. These challenges would be necessary for practitioners to ponder about should they be interested in conducting peer group supervision.

Topic Presentation 11
Narrative Tools in Social Work Supervision:
The Supervisor Life Certificate and Supervisee's Journey Tools

Mr Mohamed Fareez

Senior Assistant Director

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd

Mr K Shantasaravanan

Manager & Senior Social Worker

Ministry of Social and Family Development

Synopsis of Presentation

The presentation will discuss the use of two tools in the supervision of social workers—the Supervisor "Life Certificate" and the Supervisee's Journey Template, which will enable social workers to reflect on social work values and document their skills through scaffolding questions. While a narrative perspective acknowledges that social workers have skills and knowledge to support their work, a combination of these tools can further equip social workers with essential skillsets in their profession.

Introduction

Mr Fareez began the presentation by introducing the narrative perspective. It is about being aware and mindful of the dominant stories in our lives as supervisors and supervisees. These stories can be strengthened or weakened by the stories of others, as individuals influence one another in one way or another. Adopting the narrative perspective also draws one from directing others on what to do and, instead, to being curious about oneself and others. The core of narrative perspective holds the belief that everyone is an expert of their respective lives.

Narrative Tool: Supervision "Life Certificate"

Mr Fareez then elaborated on the Supervision "Life Certificate", a narrative tool that supervisors can utilise to return into their rich histories to define the values and beliefs they

practise and also their subsequent stories. Below is a template of the Supervision "Life Certificate".

Supervisor "Life Certificate"

Name: _____

The values and beliefs I hold as a Supervisor			Images that represent my role as a Supervisor
People/Ideas that have contributed to me being the Supervisor that I am today			What others might appreciate about my Supervision/ What resources can I bring into Supervision
Quotes or Self Talk that support me as a Supervisor			Things I do to support myself in being a Supervisor

Template of the Supervisor "Life Certificate"

Johari Window Model

Mr Fareez brought up the Johari Window to illustrate how supervisors may have areas they are unaware of themselves or remained unknown to others. However, through having conversations with supervisees, peers, and colleagues, supervisors can broaden what they know of themselves and understand how others perceive them. The image below shows the Johari Window model shared during the presentation.

Johari Window: The Basic Model

Known to Self / Known to Others

Known to Others

Feedback

Public

Blind Spot
(Consciously controlled boundaries)

Disclosure

Relational Coaching

Known to Self

Private
(Consciously controlled boundaries)

Unknown
(Disavowed, unconscious, unintegrated)
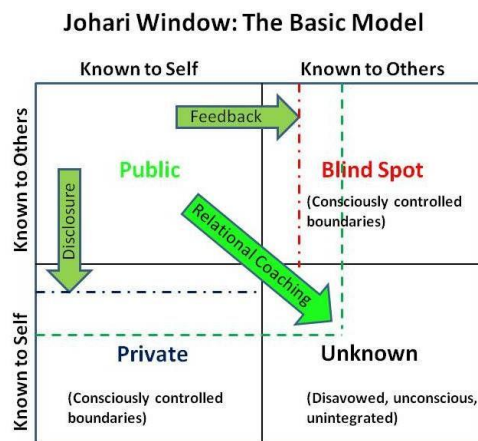
The Johari Window Model by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, 1955

<u>Life Transitions</u>

Before introducing the Supervisee's Journey Metaphor, Mr Fareez introduced the concept of life transitions. He took reference from Michael White, who used Victor Turner's ideas to describe life transitions through stages and drew on Arnold Van Gennep's ideas of a journey metaphor and concept of liminality.

The term 'liminality' derives from the Latin word for 'threshold', to refer to the middle stage of transition where individuals have separated from their previous identities but have yet to reach the new identities. As a result, this stage could involve a sense of disorientation and social ambiguity. Likewise, for supervisors and supervisees, they may be unable to realise the lessons learnt from their previous periods of challenge. It would be helpful then to slow down during transitions and reflect on what they have learnt.

<u>Narrative Tool: Supervisee's Journey Metaphor</u>

<u>"Man-in-Hole" Story</u>

Drawing from Kurt Vonnegut's Hero's Journey, Mr Fareez shared how supervisors and supervisees can see their journey taking a "man-in-hole" structure. Below is a diagram depicting the Hero's Journey.
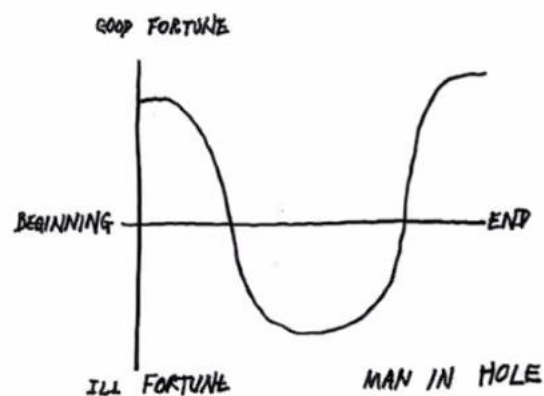
Kurt Vonnegut's Hero's Journey

In the diagram, a protagonist moves from experiencing good fortune to ill-fortune before ending with a state of resolution. However, Mr Fareez stressed that this might not necessarily be the template for all stories. There could be different outcomes and journeys for every unique story. He highlighted that what matters are the questions a supervisor asks their supervisees

to help them move towards a state of resolution. Mr Fareez gave a template below which supervisors can use during supervision sessions with new interns and supervisees.
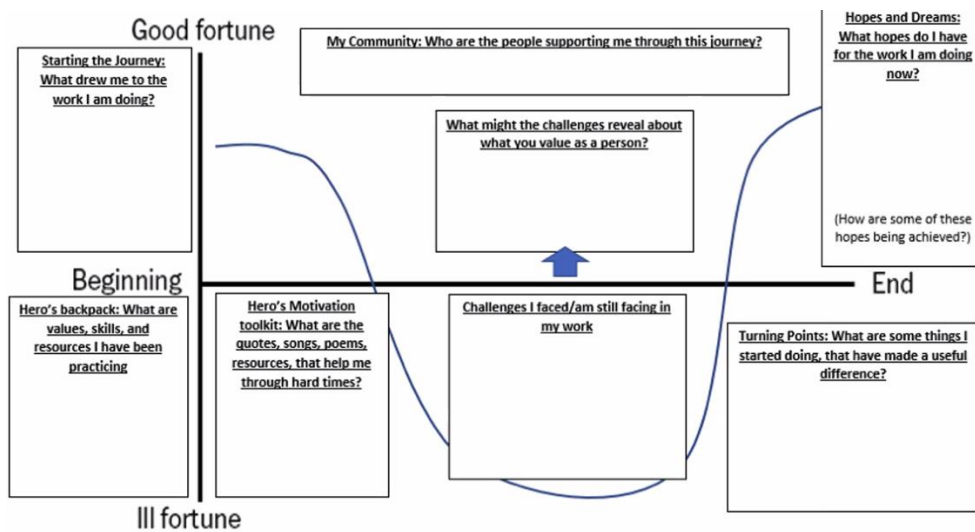
Adapted Hero's Journey for Supervision

Using the Journey Metaphor during Supervision

Mr Shantasaravanan continued the presentation to share another narrative tool, the Supervisee's Journey Metaphor, which facilitates an understanding of where individuals are and the directions they wish to take.

Life is like a journey. Supervisees bring themselves in with skills and previous experiences. Hence, supervision does not start from zero. In viewing supervisees as being on a journey, there is the notion of movement and acknowledgement that there can be highs and lows during the journey, instead of having a mere focal point on goals and destinations.

Mr Shantasaravanan highlighted the importance of supporting supervisees in their journeys, particularly those who may experience transitions as they exit from their previous careers and enter the social services. He then shared how he implements the journey metaphor during supervisions with his supervisees.

First, he would draw a winding road on an A3-sized sheet of paper. At the end of the road, he would ask his supervisees about what they hoped to see when they complete their journeys. He would then ask his supervisees to pick and draw a vehicle of their choice as they begin their journeys.

Second, he would get his supervisees to reflect and articulate their hopes, commitments, wishes, intentions, values, and principles. Some questions he would ask his supervisees are:

- What type of social worker do you want to become?
- What do you hope your client or colleague would say about you as a social worker?
- What values do you want to hold on to as they start this journey?
- What let you know that the time was right to start this journey?
- When you think of this journey, does a metaphor come to mind?
- What skills or knowledge did you possess that turned out to be helpful in taking the first steps of the journey?

Third, titled the liminal stage, Mr Shantasaravanan gets his supervisees to share obstacles they have faced during their journeys and the support they would need to overcome the obstacles. He would also emphasise the strengths of his supervisees at this stage. Some questions he would ask his supervisees are:

- What are some of the obstacles that you find in the way of your journey?
- What are some of the things that pull you away from the things you want to do?
- What effects can these obstacles have on you and your work?
- What sustained you?
- Who was significant in keeping you going?
- How did they assist?
- What are the skills, knowledge, abilities, or know-hows you already possessed in overcoming these obstacles?

Questions and Answers

The presentation then closed with a segment where participants were free to chime their questions. One participant asked if the narrative tools would be helpful for mid-careerists or social workers who have been in the sector for a long time. The presenters responded that these individuals have a wealth of experiences and resources from their field, presenting as a narrative. Questions can be adapted to the person's experiences.

Another participant asked if they could use the narrative tools at the beginning stages of a supervisory relationship. The presenters encouraged supervisors to use these tools

throughout the journey as they continually explore supervisees' narratives. They could also use it for performance reviews or during transitions in a professional journey.

The narrative tools shared appear to be led by questions posed by supervisors. A participant then raised a concern on utilising these tools with supervisees who preferred to lead the conversation. The presenters highlighted the idea of centring—who is at the centre of the conversation? They proposed asking these supervisees if they would prefer their supervisors to be directive or listen to what they have to say before given any input. They also emphasised that the narrative perspective is not just about diagnosing a problem but how one can craft their questions to influence the directions of the discussion.

Topic Presentation 12
A Relational Approach to Supervision

Ms Kek Seow Ling

Principal Social Worker

Lutheran Community Care Services

Ms Li Enci

Senior Social Worker

Lutheran Community Care Services

Synopsis of Presentation

The relational approach to supervision aims to promote reflective practice and a reflexive stance in practitioners. This approach enables practitioners to appreciate and recognise their influences while interacting with people they journey with. The presentation will share practice principles for supervision based on the concepts of restorative practice. These principles seek to provide practitioners with a positive experience through building a healthy supervisor-practitioner relationship to achieve supervision goals.

Introduction

Ms Li began the presentation with an activity, sharing various supervision scenarios and possible responses to them. She then had participants indicate their choices among the options she provided. The activity aimed to highlight the concept of shame, as espoused by Nathanson (1992) on how shame can impact interpersonal relationships.

Compass of Shame

According to Nathanson (1992), there are four possible ways individuals can respond to shame. The first is withdrawal, such as isolating oneself. The second is attacking oneself, such as self-putdown and self-harm. The third is avoidance, for instance, abusing drugs and alcohol, being in denial, or distracting oneself through thrill-seeking behaviours. The last is attacking others by blaming.

What is Shame?

Ms Li explained what shame is. Feeling of shame can culminate any time and naturally when there is a disruption of one's experiences of positive affect, such as excitement or enjoyment. An individual does not need to commit wrong to feel a sense of shame. Understanding shame allows supervisors to better appreciate supervisory relationships with supervisees from another perspective. They can understand the disconnect or rapture of the supervisor-supervisee relationship arising from shame, thereby hindering engagements. Therefore, it is necessary to recognise how individuals manage the feelings of shame, in order to help supervisors to create a safe environment and foster a better learning experience.

Ms Li then had participants reflect on a time when they experienced feelings of shame and how they manifested in them. She also had them reflected on how these feelings affected their engagements with practitioners.

Restorative Practice

Ms Kek shared the purpose of practice and clinical supervision. She described it as a process between the supervisors and supervisees, based on a contractual relationship that served to develop the latter's competencies in maintaining good and ethical practices. She added that supervisors are to promote reflective practice and a reflexive stance in their supervisees. Doing so can enable them to appreciate their influences in terms of the interactions with people they are journeying with, and in turn, continually inform and enhance their practices.

Purpose

Ms Kek explained how restorative practices, being a way of being, can help supervisors to take relational approach to supervision. The use of principles based on restorative practices can minimise the effects of shame on connection and engagement with their supervisees. By modelling the relational stance during supervision, supervisees can learn and grow their relational capacity as they journey with individuals as well as families through promoting positive and healthy relationships.

<u>Relational Capacity</u>

Ms Kek further elaborated on relational capacity:

1. It is about responsiveness where one is physically and emotionally present, listening without judgment, and displaying empathy.
2. It is about authenticity where one acknowledges others' feelings and gives permission to the other to have genuine conversations about emotions.
3. It is about having mutual engagement where one attunes to the other's thoughts and feelings, thereby focusing on the process of engagement, rather than merely on assigned tasks.
4. It is about harnessing the ability to appreciate complexity and ambiguity by embracing uncertainties and risks.
5. It is about one's ability to manage conflicts by acknowledging and accepting differences in perspectives and feelings.

<u>Seven Principles of Restorative Practice</u>

There are seven principles for restorative practice informed supervision. They are:

1. **Willing Participation**: Creating conditions for supervisees to make an informed decision to participate in a supervisory relationship to work on personal and professional development.
2. **Respect Each Individual's 'Voice Space'**: Creating conditions for a safe environment to provide each person the opportunity to speak and be heard with focused attentiveness.
3. **Relational Inclusion**: Widening the support network and building connectedness in the organisation and the social service fraternity.
4. **Cultivate Empathy with Engagement**: Facilitating critical self-reflection and encouraging the exchange of perspectives, courses of actions or emotions, which nurture practitioners' capacity for empathy.
5. **Leverage on Individuals' Innate Gifts**: Leveraging on practitioners' capacity for change and their innate gifts to collaboratively contribute to the generation of solutions to solve issues and build the community.
6. **Active Responsibility**: Guiding practitioners to demonstrate responsibility and accountability through engagement in good and ethical practices for the community's wellbeing; including making efforts to repair any harm with the community's support.

7. **Build Positive Affective Experience**: Engaging practitioners in a process that maximises positive affect and facilitating emotional shifts from negative to positive affect to facilitate learning in supervision.

Closing Remarks

Ms Kek concluded the presentation with the question, "How do the principles for restorative practice informed practice supervision fit into your current supervision model?" for participants to ponder.

Topic Presentation 13
Using Simulation-Based Learning in Social Work Field Education and Training During a Pandemic

Dr Chung You Jin

Senior Lecturer

SR Nathan School of Human Development, Social Work

Singapore University of Social Sciences

Associate Professor Teo Poh Leng

Associate Professor

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Synopsis of Presentation

This study aimed to identify the effectiveness of simulation-based learning (SBL), covering field education and training for social work students and practitioners respectively during the COVID-19 pandemic. The result of learning through 60 simulated sessions reflected a significant difference in the answers provided by social work students and practitioners. The study also collected qualitative data such as feedbacks on length of session, balance between face-to-face, virtual SBL and quality of SBL. The implementation of SBL was timely and can potentially be incorporated into various settings.

Introduction

Dr Chung began the presentation by sharing on Simulation-Based Learning (SBL) in social work practice. Conceptualised by Professor Mario Bogo from the University of Toronto, SBL uses various assessment and training methods in social work education. SBL is implemented in various forms according to the training/learning purpose. For example, it can also take the form of the five-way experiential learning model, where students can have five different roles during the simulation process—the social worker, client, clinical supervisor, case owner, and the students themselves.

Research has found that SBL can be used to evaluate students' and practitioners' performances in two ways. One would be to quantify interviewing skills. SBL allows individual

to monitor how many, how well, and how confidently one has demonstrated interviewing skills. Another would be to measure the quality of the SBL using reflection. One can ask students and practitioners how well they performed in terms of their usage of self during the SBL and their feelings during and after the SBL. They can also conceptualise their practice by reflecting on what they have learned and how they have grown as practitioners.

Genesis of the Simulation-Based Learning Project

Dr Chung shared that the SBL project was conceived in April 2020. It was a ground-up initiative by social work educators, practitioners and trainers concerned about providing social work students and practitioners with opportunities to practise their skills during the pandemic, where direct practice with clients may be limited. The project involved social workers across different settings with shared goals, consultation, and collaboration with stakeholders.

Subsets of the Simulation-Based Learning Project

There are a few subsets in developing and administering SBL.

Framework of Case Studies

Case studies were written and then classified into different levels of learning in terms of their complexity, degree of difficulty, the engagement and depth of tasks, and use of specific knowledge and skills. Each student and practitioner were matched to a case study that best suits their level of experience. For example, a student on their first placement will be given a relatively simple case. Dr Chung provided a diagram of the case study classification framework as shown below.

Case study (Case scenario) Classification Framework
: to categorize the different level of learning

Understanding of the case

Complexity: *How many major issues/problems are presented*
: There are multiple issues in a case. Complex problems/issues originate from a cause that can be individually distinguished. They can be addressed piece by piece. For each input to the system, there is a proportionate output.

Low (1~2)	Medium (3~4)	High (5 and above)

Complicatedness: *How many systems are interwound and involved in*
: It means the level of difficulty to resolve each issue. Complex problems and systems result from networks of multiple interacting causes that cannot be individually distinguished. It must be addressed as entire systems. They are such that small inputs may result in disproportionate effects. The problems they present cannot be solved once and forever, but require to be systematically managed.

Low	Medium	High

Professional decision

Urgency: *Need for action*

Need for monitoring	Need for action	Action immediately

Competency (1): *Practice experiences and Knowledge*
- ✓ **Basic** – ecological system theory, BPSS framework, geogram and ecomap
- ✓ **Specific knowledge** – particular model and theory applied
- ✓ **Specific (practice) knowledge and experiences** – specific tools used in individual practice sector (SSA)

Basic	Specific knowledge	Specific (practice) experiences

Competency (2): *Microskills (interviewing skills)*
- ✓ **Basic** – Opening remarks and closure skills, asking open and closed questions paraphrasing, reflecting feelings, summarizing, providing factual information using body language and facial expression
- ✓ **Advanced** – Reframing, interpreting, giving advice (cautiously), constructively confronting, purposeful self-disclosure
- ✓ **Specific interviewing skills** – interviewing clients with special needs (physically or mentally)

Basic	Advanced	Specific skills needed

Overall

Vulnerability: *Risk and Resources*

Risk < Resource	Risk = Resource	Risk > Resource

Case Study Classification Framework

A validity test was carried out to determine the difficulty of the case study using elements such as:

1. **Understanding of the case**: The complexity and complications of the case.
2. **Professional decision**: The case's level of urgency and level of competency required.
3. **Overall level of vulnerability**: The number of risks and resources in the case.

Social Actors

The SBL project hired professional and novice actors who were given the roles as a social actor. These social actors were provided with the case studies so that they could be better prepared for their roles. They were free to act flexibly with the case information details given. Dr Chung added that auditions were held to select the actors.

<u>Manual</u>

The SBL team had also developed a manual on how SBL could be used in field education for teaching and evaluating students' and practitioners' competencies.

<u>Assessment and Evaluation</u>

Dr Chung shared that the team was still working on concretising SBL as a tool, to assess its effectiveness for teaching and training, and in evaluating among students and practitioners.

<u>Feedback and Evaluation</u>

A/P Teo continued the presentation to share their findings of the SBL project. The SBL project took place from September 2020 to April 2021. The SBL sessions were conducted using Zoom platform as in person sessions could not be carried out, especially given the national safety measures.

Feedbacks were collected from three groups of students and practitioners using a feedback form comprising 10 questions using a five-point Likert scale (0~4 points) and four open-ended questions. A/P Teo then offered insights into the findings obtained from each group.

<u>Group 1: Social Work Students on Practicum</u>

There were 13 students in this group. The students' field work supervisors observed the students during the SBL sessions. The overall mean score was 3.21, The students expressed that the SBL was realistic, and it was a valuable tool in terms of assisting them to become helping professionals. However, they also felt that SBL did not train them sufficiently for sessions with real clients. The students' mean score for this item was the lowest compared to the other 9 items and was also the lowest compared to the two groups of practitioners. The students gave the highest score on 'being well-oriented to the SBL experience'. They also expressed being able to practise their micro skills and use of theories, and also found the use of the SBL conducted over Zoom platform is useful. Overall, the students' ratings were lower than the two groups of social work practitioners.

Group 2: Social Workers at Management of Family Violence Course

There were 127 social workers in this group. The overall mean score for this group was 3.46. The mean score was highest, at 3.51 for two items, "I was able to utilize relevant skills in the simulation" and "I plan to use what I learned in SBL in further trainings/clinical practice" respectively. The lowest rating was 3.42 on the item "I felt safe to respond during SBL."

Group 3: Social Workers at Social Work Field Education Course

There were 18 social workers in this group. They gave the highest ratings regarding SBL provided a realistic experience on client engagement and that it helped them to apply their knowledge. These social workers also expressed that they felt safe to respond during the simulation session.

Groups 2 and 3 had their peers observe their SBL experience, and some expressed that the use of Zoom functions was distracting. For instance, some of their peers used the chat function to give feedback. However, it distracted students as they conducted the session concurrently.

Areas of Improvement

A/P Teo proceeded to highlight suggestions given by SBL participants.

1. **Zoom**: There were technical concerns and challenges faced in the use of Zoom functions.
2. **Duration of SBL Sessions**: Currently, for each SBL, sessions were capped to run no more than 30 minutes. However, some participants have asked for a longer duration.
3. **Case Studies**: Some participants wanted more case studies that covered broader practices or with clients situated to be on their second or third sessions. They also suggested to have clients with diverse backgrounds and the inclusion of various cultural elements.
4. **Actors**: Participants commented that the social actors were generally realistic in their acting, but some could act even more realistically. Some participants expressed their interest in receiving feedback from these actors on how they performed during the sessions.
5. **Face-to-Face Sessions**: Some participants still preferred face-to-face sessions.

Nonetheless, overall, the responses towards SBL were generally positive across the three groups. The team behind the SBL project reflected that SBL could be widely adopted in various contexts for teaching and learning, and as part of the assessment of a practitioner's competencies. However, more research can be done to discuss how to improve the existing SBL projects.

<u>Questions and Answers</u>

The presentation then closed with a question-and-answer segment. One participant asked if the lower ratings among students could be due to anxiety arising from their imagination of actual case situations as they have limited real-time experiences and the nature of the issue. Dr Chung responded that students might be more anxious because SBL was a part of their social work practicum. The team gave students' case studies of a lower difficulty level that would best match their levels of training. A/P Teo added that students were matched with the clientele they would mainly work with during their practicums. Dr Chung also expressed the team's plans to hold focus group discussions to explore these findings further.

Another participant queried about the possibility of extending the study to understand the efficacy of using augmented reality and virtual reality. Dr Chung responded that the Zoom sessions for SBL were recorded. Thus, the taped simulations could be reviewed, commented, and discussed with other practitioners for teaching purposes.

One participant raised another question on where the actors drew their inspiration from and whether they were open to receive feedback from experienced social workers to make the case studies more realistic in their acting. A/P Teo shared that the case studies were contributions from social workers and were written based on cases they had experienced. The actors were selected through an audition, with some of them being social workers working in this field.

Another participant also expressed his curiosity in terms of the study's research design and methodology. They asked if the mean scores generated for the three groups used standard deviation and compared them across time. Dr Chung explained that the study's rationale was to gain simple insights into the SBL project's outcomes. The focus was less on the comparative scores but more on the qualitative results at the beginning stage of the project. However, should the project continue for the next few years, there are possibilities to consider conducting a deeper statistical analysis.

Topic Presentation 14
Supervision of Supervisory Practice Training
in a Mental Health Institution—A Pilot Programme

Ms Teo Ginn Yueh
Principal Medical Social Worker
Institute of Mental Health

Ms Chan Lay Lin
Principal Medical Social Worker
Institute of Mental Health

Synopsis of Presentation

A programme providing supervision of supervisory practice training conducted monthly over 16 months was mooted to help young supervisors integrate theory and practice. As a corollary to this programme, senior supervisors who facilitated this training honed their supervisory skills. The presentation covered the programme details and its processes amid working around the limitations posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

History of Institute of Mental Health (IMH)

Ms Teo began the presentation sharing the history of the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). IMH was established in 1928 as "The Mental Hospital", before undergoing a name change to "Woodbridge Hospital" in 1951. In 1993, the hospital shifted to its current site at Buangkok and is now known as the "Institute of Mental Health". To date, IMH remains Singapore's only tertiary psychiatric institution.

Over the years, IMH has shifted the focus of its services from providing custodial care to giving therapeutic and recovery-focused care. There is also heavier emphasis given to mental health education and research. Currently, IMH has a capacity of 2,000 beds, operating with approximately 2,000 staff who serves close to 48,000 outpatients. It primarily focuses on six areas: psychosis, mood and anxiety, addiction medicine, developmental psychiatry, geriatric psychiatry, and forensic psychiatry.

For the presentation, Ms Teo shared that they would provide the context for their pilot supervision programme, followed by sharing on the programme, the preliminary feedback received, and the challenges faced before concluding.

Setting the Context

Supervision Practices

Ms Teo provided the participants an overview of the supervision practices at IMH MSW Department. The department has a structured supervision framework for all medical social workers (MSWs) that stipulated the number of supervision hours expected, focal points for supervisors, and proposed supervision format. Team supervisors would have ad-hoc consultations with senior team supervisors and monthly supervision with their Head of Department. During these consultations, they can discuss challenging cases, and issues regarding services, and the development and manpower needs of their respective units. There is also an audit system in place to enhance the accountability and quality of casework management. Supervisors can use the information gathered through the system to affirm their supervisees' strengths and explore potential areas for growth.

Recent Re-organization of MSW Units in IMH

In the past two to three years, IMH MSW Department has seen changes and refinement in the organisation of MSW units. They have also established new units such as their recovery centre and channelling more resources into the emergency service. The department has established staff development plans such as having a competency checklist to make known to MSWs about IMH's expectations of them. It also implemented a 2-year induction programme for new MSWs to familiarise them with social work knowledge in the psychiatric setting. As the staff strength increased, there was a greater need for succession planning and developing a structure to nurture leaders. This gave impetus to provide training for the younger supervisors.

The mental health and institutional landscape have also seen shifts. Progressively, there is a move towards a population health understanding of mental health care and being more client-centric in the community. There are now mental health teams organised in regions that conduct outreach and collaboration with community partners.

<u>Impact on Medical Social Work Supervisors</u>

With shifts observed in the landscape, greater demand is now placed on administrative accountability and ensuring standardised operational procedures in reporting outcomes. Simultaneously, supervisors need to provide a balance between fulfilling the administrative, educational, and supportive functions of supervision.

There are also greater demands on collaboration with internal and external systems as mental health teams adopt a transdisciplinary approach. The increasing trend of matrix-reporting to non-social work supervisors also challenges social workers as they seek to align their professional goals within these teams. These call for the need for social work supervisors to enhance their leadership skills in negotiating competing personal, organisational, and professional agendas.

<u>Rationale for the Pilot Training Programme</u>

There was a critical need for supervision training for an emerging team of younger MSW supervisors. The provision of training would enable them to navigate, manage, and leverage their influence at the macro-level on matters regarding their professional identity, interventions, and commitment to professional values.

The Pilot Programme

<u>Live Supervisory Sessions</u>

The programme involved the following participants:

> (i) Eight supervisors-in-learning took turns to conduct bimonthly sessions where they would engage a supervisee in a live supervision session. The other seven supervisors-in-learning learnt through observation, reflection and providing their feedback about the session.
>
> (ii) A total of eight senior supervisors were rostered to facilitate each supervision session in dyads.

The live supervisory session comprised three segments:

(i) <u>Pre-session brief</u>. Two senior supervisors dialogued with the supervisor-in-learning who was scheduled to conduct the live session, on their supervisory challenges and learning outcome for the session. The entire team collaborated to support this supervisor-in-learning for the live session.

(ii) <u>During the live session.</u> While a supervisor-in-learning engages her supervisee in the live session, the other seven observing supervisors-in-learning provided their feedback of the session using the following template at Table One:

<u>Table One: Template for Supervisors-in –Learning During Live Sessions</u>

S/N	Group's Responses
1	If you were the supervisee, which particular points in the session did the supervisor say or do that was helpful or therapeutic for you, in that you felt safe, validated, affirmed, understood? Provide relevant quotes where applicable.
2	If you were the supervisor, which parts of the session might you respond differently? How might you do it; or say or ask the questions differently?
3	Which particular moment in the session that you observed brought about a positive shift in the supervisee's stance or session?
4	Other comments and curiosities

(iii) <u>Post-session debrief</u>. All observing supervisors-in-learning shared their feedback for the live session. Senior supervisors processed this feedback and refined them into learning points for the group. In total, there were seven live sessions held.

Figure One below shows the dynamics of the live supervision session.

<u>Figure One: Dynamics of the Live Supervision Session</u>
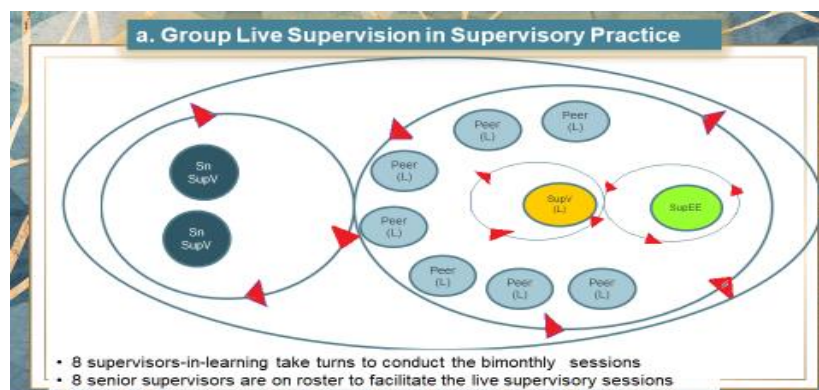
<u>Journal Clubs</u>

Seven journal club sessions were held in alternate months of the live supervisory sessions. They provided supervisors-in-learning a thematic approach in their learning. The seven sessions conducted covered the following themes:

1. Roles and functions of supervision
2. Seven-eyed model of supervision in clinical supervision
3. Contextual approach to supervision
4. Self-reflexivity in supervision
5. Ethical issues in supervision
6. Matrix management and its implications
7. Supervising field educators

For each journal club session, a supervisor-in-learning presented an article focusing on one of these themes and facilitated a discussion on the theme's relevance to their supervisory practice. Two regular senior supervisors provided consultation in these sessions.

Preliminary Feedback

<u>Profile of Participating Supervisors</u>

At the end of the pilot programme, there was a collation of feedback from the supervisors-in-learning. Among the eight of them, seven had been social workers for more than nine years. Among the eight, half of them had five or more years of experience in conducting supervision. Six of the supervisors-in-learning had four or more supervisees.

On average, the supervisors-in-learning rated the live supervision an 8.4 and a 7.6 for the journal club sessions in meeting their learning expectations. They commented that they did not expect themselves to be open in their self-disclosures during the sessions and looked forward to attending them despite their hectic work.

<u>Relevance of Journal Club Sessions</u>

The supervisors-in-learning also shared that the themes covered in the journal club sessions were relevant. They commented that the seven-eyed model was helpful and relevant, with some inspired to share the articles with their team for learning purposes. The articles shared

during the sessions also served as good reminders to move away from approaching supervision linearly. The topics also enabled them to nurture supervisees into future supervisors.

<u>Learning Insights</u>

The supervisors-in-learning gave their feedback on applying what they have learnt through the programme into their work. The live supervision sessions enabled them to review their blind spots, convey feedback received in follow-up sessions with their supervisees, and introduce new communication skills in their supervisory practice

<u>Sense of Safety Among Participating Supervisors</u>

Prior to the programme, the supervisors-in-learning rated their envisioned sense of safety to share openly in the group a 5.5 on average. However, the ratings increased to 7.5 on average at the end of the programme. There were a few factors the supervisors-in-learning suggested that helped them feel safe within the group. They were:

- The group members' willingness to share their struggles and humility to receiving feedback from one another
- The trust in the learning process and appreciation of feedback received.
- Broaching the topic of safety with senior colleagues.
- The awareness that the posiitve energy they brought into the group enhanced the group's dynamics.
- Commitment to learn and grow.

While different senior supervisors were facilitating each session, the supervisors-in-learning perceived them as resource, and thus, they did not negatively impact the group's sense of safety.

<u>Unintended Outcomes</u>

While the programme has had benefitted the supervisors-in-learning, it also brought about unintended outcomes. For instance, the safety and support provided by the group normalised the struggles faced by supervisors-in-learning, and affirmed them in their supervision journey. The group also evolved into an informal support group where the supervisors-in-learning

bonded. The programme also provided a platform for senior supervisors to sharpen their supervision skills and contribute to growth of the younger supervisors in the organisation.

Recommendations for the Pilot Programme

A few recommendations for the programme surfaced. Supervisors-in-learning proposed for the inclusion of different themes that could be shared during the journal club sessions. Some themes suggested relates toconducting group supervision, holding difficult conversations with supervisees, developing supervisees into supervisors, and supporting supervisees at various stages of their professional development. The programme also strengthened the connection between the theoretical knowledge learnt from the journal club and 'live' supervision sessions. Supervisors-in-learning also expressed their hopes of refresher training following the end of the programme, but at a reduced frequency of the live supervision and journal club sessions.

Challenges Faced

In running the programme, there were some challenges faced. In virtual sessions, technical issues surfaced. There were also concerns regarding psychological safety for the supervisors-in-learning. . However, there were efforts to obtain feedback from them and, where possible, implement changes to the programme. Both senior and supervisors-in-learning also took a humble and open stance throughout the programme.

Conclusion

Ms Teo closed the presentation by sharing that clinical supervision has its distinct professional competencies and accountability. The team at IMH also reflected the need to develop supervisory training as part of the department's overall core training for staff development. Doing so would promote a culture of supervision.

Questions and Answers

Participants were then free to posed questions to the presenters. One participant asked how they went about selecting the supervisors to participate in the programme. Ms Teo responded that they had a group of supervisors who did not have a chance to undergo supervisory training. Thus, without excluding anyone, they made no deliberate effort to incorporate an inclusion or exclusion criteria. Ms Chan chimed that every supervisor in IMH who supervises a team would be sent to attend the diploma in clinical supervision with Counselling and Care

Centre. However, as there were limited vacancies, the department decided to provide supervisory support while waiting for available vacancies.

Another participant asked the presenters for advice for practitioners seeking to embark on the training on the supervision of supervisors. Ms Teo shared that they were fortunate to have senior supervisors who facilitated and made an effort to contribute to the programme. Ms Chan added that piloting the programme would still be possible in agencies with a smaller team, albeit rostering of facilitators may be less feasible. Agencies would thus have to make adjustments according to their given resources. Ms Teo suggested that agencies can kickstart with a small-sized journal club and allow it to grow progressively.

Another participant queried about how supervisors could found time to organise and attend the programme. Ms Teo responded that the programme did not run after work hours but on the third Wednesday of every month. Every participating supervisor and rostered senior supervisor made the effort to attend the sessions out of their need to learn and grow.

Topic Presentation 15
Supervision of Mature Social Work Students
Who are Mid-Career Switchers

Ms Tess Hng

Senior Medical Social Worker

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Dr Ivan Woo

Principal Medical Social Worker

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Synopsis of Presentation

This presentation aims to recommend ways that supervisors can help mid-career social work students to ease into their new discipline. According to research, mid-career social work students learn efficiently by incorporating life experiences into their learning techniques. This observation aligns with the adult learning theory, which highlights the importance of adult learners' learning process in which linking new knowledge with life experiences enhances the cognition process in learning. In addition, with the guidance of this theory, it can potentially help mid-career social work students to learn the "why" (ethics and values) and "how" (theories and framework) of social work effectively.

Introduction

Dr Ivan kickstarted the presentation by sharing the need to show interests in helping mid-career social work students ease into the social work profession. Singapore has a rapidly ageing population, with the proportion of citizens aged 65 years and over increasing from 9.0% in 2010 to 15.2% in 2020 (Department of Statistics Singapore, 2020). The age dependency ratio per 100 residents aged 20 to 64 years for this proportion also rose from 13.5 per 100 residents in 2010 to 23.4 per 100 residents in 2020 (Department of Statistics Singapore, 2020). As such, caregiving support sees a decline along with the ageing population. However, social workers are best positioned to address the issue of caregiving support.

There is also the impact of disruptive technology. Due to disruptive technology, those who have turned unemployed will need assistance to transition well into the social service sector,

which could also be meeting increasingly complex social needs. Furthermore, Dr Ivan posits that the COVID-19 pandemic may have played a role in accelerating the adoption of disruptive technology.

Data Sources and Early Thoughts

Dr Ivan went on to explain how the presenters collected the data for their presentation. They made personal observations of mature social work students and obtained feedback from them. Additionally, they also conducted interviews with supervisors of these students.

Dr Ivan also shared some of the thoughts which the presenters had at the earlier stages of their study. In terms of engagement, they thought that mature social work students would utilise their life experiences while young social work students would adopt frameworks more. Discussions with mature social work students would be more task-oriented and discussions would be more theoretically oriented with young social work students. Regarding motivations, young social work students would have more time to explore within the profession while their mature counterparts would be in a survival mode.

Defining Pedagogy and Andragogy

Ms Tess continued the presentation as she shared the concepts of pedagogy and andragogy. In pedagogy, supervisors take on the role of an expert and decide on the learning goals and content of supervision. Students are generally externally motivated, such as being driven by grades and words of affirmation. While in andragogy, supervisors play a more facilitative role for learning, and students can therefore identify their learning gaps and goals. Students are generally intrinsically motivated and seek self-actualisation.

Assumptions of Andragogy

Ms Tess shared on five assumptions of andragogy theorised by Malcolm Knowles. They are:

1. **Students' Need to Know**: Adult learners need to be kept aware of the usefulness of what they are learning. Unlike children who absorb teaching content without discretion, adult learners do think critically about the rationale behind what they are learning and how it can be of use.

2. **Learning Orientation**: Adult learners are oriented to learning content that can solve their problems and such learning can bring about a positive outcome. For young learners, their learning tends to be more subject based.

3. **Students Have Varied Experiences and Background**: Compared to young learners, adult learners have extensive experiences to serve as a resource for their learning.

4. **Students are Ready to Learn**: Adult learners are self-directed and ready to learn if they see the relevance of their learning to their lives. They are deeply involved in the planning of their learning goals.

5. **Students are Responsible for Their Learning**: Adult learners not only take responsibility for their learning, but they also consider the delivery and evaluation of the learning process.

The Andragogical Process Model of Learning

Ms Tess then expounded on the andragogical process model of learning. She explains that this model focuses on a set of processes to facilitate learning and does not focus primarily on content, knowledge, and skills. The processes involved in the andragogical approach are as follows:

- Preparing the learner
- Establishing a conducive climate for learning
- Creating a mechanism for mutual planning
- Identifying needs
- Formulating programme objectives
- Designing learning plans
- Doing learning activities
- Evaluating learning

Reflections on the Current Practices at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH)

The presenters then shared current practices at TTSH concerning the pedagogical and andragogical approaches to learning. They also shared their reflections and proposed suggestions to enhance mature social work students' learning processes.

Preparing the Learning and Environment

In the pedagogical approach to learning, there is minimal preparation. Learning is formal and authoritative. Whereas in an andragogical approach, supervisors must prepare more to encourage participation and help develop realistic expectations. Currently, there is an efficient administrative process implemented in TTSH. They conduct a comprehensive two-week induction programme and organise daily debrief supervision sessions for mature social work students. One feedback received from these students was,

> *"The orientation was very important as it sets the stage for the whole placement. However, it was content-heavy without much context. (I would like to) see how various funding schemes and subsidies are discussed with patients in real life."*

Ms Tess shared that there was a need for shifts in the mental model of learning. Instead of focusing on controlling content, supervisors should focus on controlling the learning process. Mature social work students should also move away from passive learning and be more equipped for self-directed learning. She recommends that supervisors prepare these students and explore leveraging their strengths for their learning. Supervisors can also help to build the resilience of these students as they live with uncertainties.

Creating a Mechanism for Mutual Planning, Identifying Needs, and Setting Objectives

In the pedagogical approach to learning, supervisors and instructors decide the pedagogy for learning. Whereas in an andragogical approach, the focus is on facilitating learning, having mutual assessment and negotiation. Currently, in TTSH, there is joint planning between instructors and mature social work students, with additional guidance should topics be unfamiliar or new.

Ms Tess reflected that there was a need to be flexible in catering to every student's learning needs and provide didactic coaching and facilitation in supervision. She recommended understanding mature social work students' learning needs in supervision and using pedagogical and andragogical approaches flexibly when broaching new content. When covering familiar topics, supervision should encourage facilitation and the use of critical thinking skills, and when looking to enhance students' skills, adopt a coaching approach.

Ms Tess shares that with a young social work student, the focus could be on micro-skills. However, a mature social work student has less time for exploration, and there is less of a

need to focus on micro interviewing skills with them. Supervision with mature social work students can have an added element of career coaching to understand the fit between them and their new career as social workers and build their resilience.

Designing Learning Plans and Learning Activities (Dr Ivan)

In the pedagogical approach to learning, designing learning plans and activities is content based using transmittal techniques. Whereas in an andragogical approach, it is problem-based learning using experiential techniques. Problem-based learning allows mature social work students to draw on their life experiences while the supervisor incorporates theoretical frameworks into the learning process. Currently, in TTSH, learning is structured based on task complexity to help students build on small successes. Students begin with more straightforward, simple tasks before progressively going into complex settings with more challenging tasks. There was also a need for a balance between pedagogical and andragogical approaches. Hence, after teaching the students, supervisors facilitate a discussion with them before conducting observations, and after that, they provide the students hands-on practice with the supervisors monitoring them.

Dr Ivan reflected a need to define the problem units that would contribute to the complexity of cases. He recommended using a complexity stratification tool to determine case complexity. According to the Cynefin Framework, using a framework or a tool that could help one make sense of systems and emergent practices is more valuable than good practices in complex situations. There is also a need to shift from controlling content to pacing students' learning.

Closing Remarks

Before proceeding to a segment for questions and answers, the presenters concluded with three key points from the presentation. Firstly, in preparing the learner, supervisors must seek to understand. Second, in preparing the learning mechanism, supervisors must be mindful of being flexible. Lastly, supervisors should work to shift from controlling to pacing students' learning in designing learning plans.

Questions and Answers

One participant asked whether the presenters had encountered a mature social work student who was trained in social work but was away from practice due to caregiving. They followed up to ask how supervision was like for these students as they fall between being a social work

graduate and a mature learner. Dr Ivan responded with an example of his supervisee, who had halted her practice after becoming a mother. When this supervisee returned to practice, her perspectives changed and shared that learning happens as she reflected daily as a professional alongside her role as a mother.

Another participant expressed interest in knowing if there was an induction programme for supervisors at TTSH. Dr Ivan emphasized adopting emergent practices, in other words, allowing things to emerge. Supervisees take ownership of their personal growth while their supervisors journey alongside them. He added that the process was more important than the outcomes.

A participant also asked whether the presenters faced any challenges in supporting mature students from different disciplines. Dr Ivan shared some tips on hiring mature career switchers, such as assessing how their past careers fit them nicely into the social work profession, their attitude, and teachability. He gave some examples. Students from client-fronting roles like retail tend to be more resilient, and previous engineers were good problem solvers. Students from human resources were structured, and those from the finance industries were adept with money matters. Dr Ivan also advised having mature students play social work assistant roles for one to two years as doing so assimilates them into the full function of social workers.

A participant queried on nurturing mature workers who decided on the social work profession as their retirement job. Dr Ivan responded that these workers are new to the field and require much training but may have lower energy and motivation to grow professionally to take complex cases. He then suggested using available resources, such as professional appraisal and the human resource system, to evaluate the mature workers fairly and have honest conversations with them.

A participant followed up, asking how the presenters would work with mature workers who do not believe there is a need to use theoretical frameworks and work based on their past experiences. Dr Ivan responded that at TTSH, all students and interns must go through an interview before hiring them. He emphasised the importance of gatekeeping in that one needs to ensure the goodness of fit in screening these students and interns.

Closing Speech
The Future of Social Work Supervision

Professor Peter Hawkins

Professor of Leadership, Henley Business School

Founder & Chairman, Renewal Associates

Introduction

Professor Peter Hawkins began his speech by inviting participants to take a pause and have a moment of reflection. He prompted the participants to close their eyes with their feet firmly placed on the ground, their arms on their sides, and to take deep breaths in. Peter then had the participants focus their minds on every individual in their life and work they serve, particularly those they serve in their supervisory relationships. He prompted them to visualise their supervisees, their supervisee's clients and colleagues, the organisations their supervisees work with and the communities where their clients live. Peter then asked, "How does supervision serve these nested systems?" for participants to reflect on before getting them to exhale deeply.

Who Does Supervision Serve?

Peter listed various systems that supervision seeks to serve:

- The supervisee
- The supervisee's clients
- The related families and organisations of these clients
- The stakeholders of those organisations
- The organisation the supervisee works for
- Future clients
- The social work profession
- The supervisor

Defining Supervision

Peter proceeded to define supervision. He defined supervision as "a joint endeavour in which a practitioner with the help of a supervisor, attends to their clients, themselves as part of their client practitioner relationships and the wider systemic context, and by so doing improves the

quality of their work, transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves, their practice and the wider profession" (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020).

Peter adds that early writers such as Alfred Kadushin would propose supervision comprise managerial, educational, and supportive functions. Brigid Proctor framed supervision as having normative, formative, and restorative aspects. However, he suggested that participants view supervision as have qualitative, developmental, and resourcing aspects. Peter stressed that practitioners are constantly learning throughout their careers, that should they stop learning, they would be unable to become fully adequate professionals. The qualitative aspect of supervision concerns enhancing the quality of practitioners' work, while the developmental aspect concerns developing supervisees, supervisors, and the work of organisations. Resourcing is crucial where supervisors enable supervisees to examine their resources and nurture their capacity to overcome a broader range of challenging situations.

Peter shared that supervision would serve various functions such as:

- Keeping practitioners honest and courageous, attending to what they are not seeing or hearing, or not allowing themselves to feel or say
- Looking at where and how to refer clients for more specialised support
- Enabling practitioners to develop their 'internal supervisor' and grow more reflective
- Ensuring continuous professional development and action learning
- Providing a supportive space for practitioners to process what they have received from their clients and their systems

CLEAR Model

Peter briefly elaborated on the CLEAR model that supervisors and supervisees can utilise to guide supervision. The image below summarises the CLEAR model.

Contract	Clarity over desired outcomes from this session
Listen	Help develop their understanding of situation
Explore	Feelings and facts What they have already done? What else they might try, more options?
Action	Choose a way forward and rehearse first steps
Review	Review actions and get feedback

The CLEAR Model of Supervision (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020)

The Seven-Eyed Model

Peter continued to share on the Seven-Eyed Model of supervision which he developed in 1985 that continues to evolve to date. The image below summarises the model's conceptualisation of systems involved in supervision.
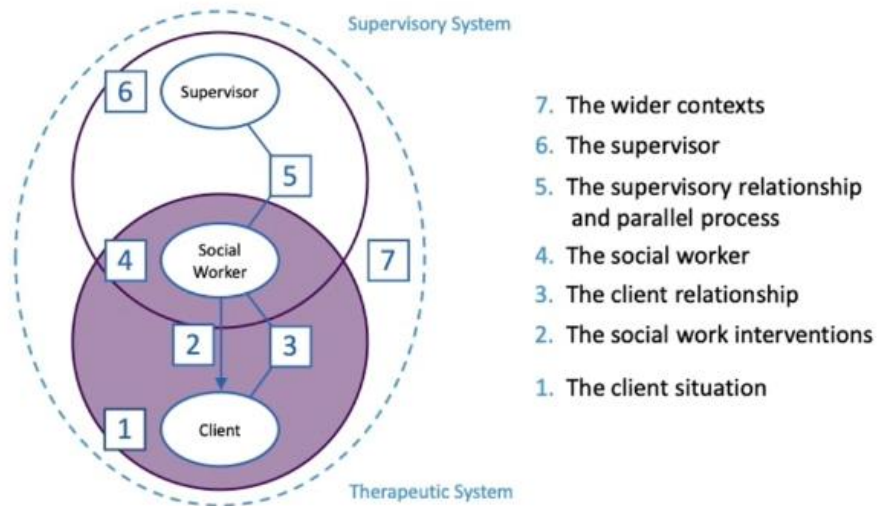
The Seven-Eyed Model of Supervision (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020)

Global Challenges

Peter adds that in today's contexts, the challenges posed to humanity remains interconnected and interdependent. He further listed seven interconnected global challenges that mankind and practitioners will face today. They are:

1. Widening inequality
2. Climate emergency
3. Air, sea, and soil degradation
4. Loss of biodiversity
5. Monoculture and control
6. Increasing mental distress
7. Human prejudice

Supervision is, thus, part of a much wider world. At the crux of these challenges would be human consciousness. Peter highlights the importance of questioning how supervision can shape human consciousness (i.e., the way people think and interact) so that individuals can

develop a new consciousness necessary to face today's challenges. He foresaw that there would be five tasks essential to embrace today's challenges in the next forty years. They are:

1. Understand who supervision seeks to serve
2. Embrace paradigm shifts in supervision
3. Deliver the 'Shift in the Room'
4. Embed supervision into the culture, closing gaps between the rhetoric and reality
5. Include wider systems that are present

Paradigm Shift in Supervision

Peter elaborated on paradigm shifts in supervision. Initially, one may view the person they are supervising as their client. Gradually, they should come to view them as partners with whom they can jointly face the demands posed by the world of tomorrow. Moving forward, supervisors and supervisees join in serving the needs of the wider organisation and its stakeholders, enabling personal development and a shared value for multiple stakeholders. He then expanded the dimensions in the Seven-Eyed Mode to reflect the wider contexts of supervision more accurately. Below is an image of the revised model.
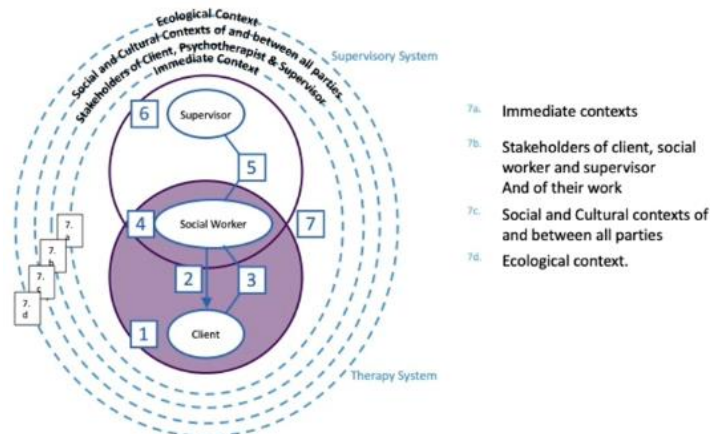

Wider Dimensions of the Seven-Eyed Model of Supervision (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020)

Levels of Engagement

Peter shared four levels of engagement that one can partake to create shifts in their fundamental assumptions. Firstly, it would be to draw on facts on situations. Secondly, it would be to elicit habitual patterns of behaviour observed from these facts. Next, it would be to

examine any reactive personal feelings that culminate before exploring the assumptions, values, and narratives one reinforces in themselves. The image below displays the process of engagement.
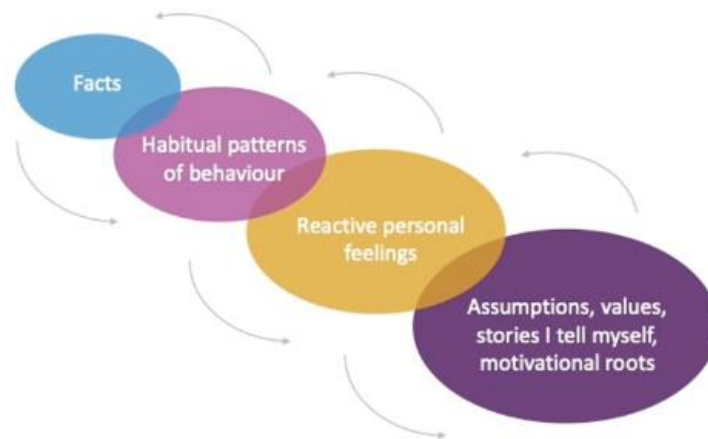
Four Levels of Engagement (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020)

The Ten-Eyed Model of Supervision

Peter further expanded his supervision model into a Ten-Eyed Model, where he included three other modes: the supervisee's clients, interventions, and their relationships with their clients. The new modes detail the additional relationships that the previous Seven-Eyed Model did not encapsulate. The image below displays the evolved Ten-Eyed Supervision Model.
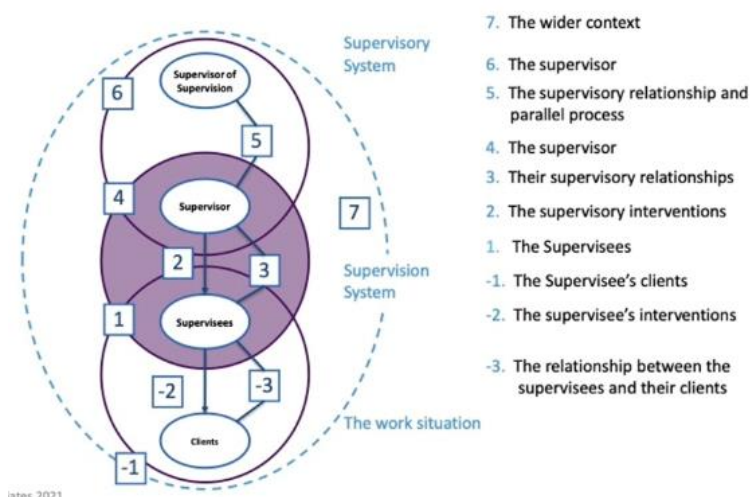
The Ten-Eyed Model of Supervision (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020)

Systemic and Ethical Maturity

Supervision is not just about thinking and doing differently or more systemically. It is also about nurturing systemic and ethical maturity. Peter defined ethical maturity as "the increasing capacity to embrace ethical complexity and deal with appropriate respect and fairness to all parties involved in a situation" (Hawkins & Smith, 2013).

Closing Remarks

To close and summarise his sharing on supervision, Peter offered seven essential elements of supervision to consider for the future. They are:

1. Start each supervisory relationship by asking, "Who is the supervision in service of?"
2. Ask supervisees how they inform their clients about their supervision, particularly in relation to confidentiality
3. Ask which stakeholders have a stake in the work with the clients
4. Have methods for addressing stakeholder perspectives
5. Involve the wider elements of the seventh mode in the Ten-Eyed Model
6. Expand the systemic and ethical maturity of all parties involved
7. Attend to the deeper elements of engagement

Reference

Hawkins, P. and McMahon. (2020). *Supervision in the Helping Professions* (5th edition). Maidenhead: Open University Press/McGraw Hill.

Closing Remarks
Idea of 'Fit' in the Development of
Social Work Supervision in Singapore"

Dr Peace Yuh Ju Wong

Chairperson

SWAAB Social Work Supervision Organising Committee

It is indeed heartening to have the 2 days seminar where we get to listen to various interesting topics on supervision across sectors and countries.

I want to take the opportunity to just briefly share with you the supervision journey that we took since 2015, when we had the 1st supervision seminar. I am not sure how many of you had been with us since we had the 1st seminar. Since it was the 1st seminar, we were thinking of the various challenges and advances of social work supervision and hence, the suggested topic.

We decided that it would be helpful to have a supervision guidelines to provide a sense of direction and standards, hence in 2017, we launched the supervision guidelines and get supervisors to share about the various creative ways to do supervision.

To have a more evidenced- informed understanding about the social work supervision scene, I have completed the state of social work supervision study and presented that in the 3rd supervision seminar. At the same time, we got different sector champions to share their supervisory work and dreams as we involve more people in this piece of work.

In 2021, we see that social work practice and supervision have somewhat been impacted by covid and we took a curious stance to ask our counterparts in Taiwan, USA, and Dublin about how they rethink supervision. To ensure that there is tiered training that is targeted at sups with different development, we have added the social work competency domains to the 2nd edition of the social work supervision guidelines.

This is the summary of the different seminar themes over the years:

2015: Social Work Supervision: Challenges and Advances
2017: Social Work Supervision in Singapore: Innovative ways to Chart the Bare Essentials

2019: Intentional Supervision: Impacting Singapore Social Work Supervision Landscape

2021: Riding the Waves and Rethinking Social Work Supervision

You may ask, what is the connection between the journey and the topic on the idea of 'FIT' in the development of social work supervision?

Well, apart from the impact of Covid-19 that makes work from home a common feature and hence us eating too well and needing to be fit, I guess the idea of goodness-of-fit is a familiar term for social workers. We talked about it in various ways, such as how do we create and maintain goodness-of-fit for our clients and even for our supervisees.

Hence, I decide to use the acronym **FIT** for us to think about the development of social work supervision at the personal, organization and sectoral levels.

Find your anchor and sources of support in your supervision journey

All of us are at different supervision journey, with some at the beginning journey as supervisors, whereas others may have supervised social work students and social workers for many years. Regardless, we need to find a group of people whom we can support us as supervisors. At a personal level, we need to also find our anchors that can keep us going as supervisors. For me, my anchor is my faith and good friends that keep me going. What about you?

Impart the spirit of supervision and not just the form and structure alone

What is the spirit of supervision? Wouldn't it be connected to our social work mission and what makes many of us join the profession?

When I teach the masters course on social work supervision, I think my students would know that I repeatedly say that it is easy to teach the supervision content, but it is the spirit of supervision, which I cannot quantify and cannot teach and they have to catch it, like catching a ghost. The one person I can think of is Anthony Yeo, whom many remember fondly. As a good mentor to many, I think one of the things I appreciate about him is about the "being". He takes time to listen and challenge, with respect. I often come out of my sessions with him feeling confused, because he asked even more questions for the many questions that I have prepared.

That said, it is still critical to have supervision structure and process but more importantly, we need to know why structure and process exist. It is meant for people that we serve and not to make us become servants to the system.

(Trace &) Think TOGETHER

I guess the trace together is a good token for us to know the places which we have been. We need to trace our development and document our progress too as a supervisor community. I think for the different pieces that we do on supervision, it is heartening to note that we have a group a like-minded people who are not just doers, but thinkers.

Hence, may I suggest that we continue to document our work on supervision through sharing platforms like this. In addition, we may also want to think about what we would like to see for the sector, in terms of supervision development. My dream would be to see that we have a group of accredited supervisors in time to come, in impacting and inspiring the younger generation of social workers. The following are some questions for us to think about our level of fitness:

- Personal
    - If we can have a supervisory meter to measure your health and well-being as a supervisor in terms of your anchor and sources of support, what would be your reading on a scale of 100?
- Organisational
    - How can we as supervisors impart the spirit of supervision as we build supervision structures and processes?
- Sectoral
    - How can we begin to document (trace) our work and think about ways to advance social work supervision as a community of supervisors?

Apart from traveling which we hope to resume soon, I wonder how would the supervision journey be like for you as an individual and for our sector. I leave you to ponder and think further over the questions posed.

Instead of "have you had your jab?" which we tend to ask each other nowadays, perhaps one good question for check in could be "How FIT are you?"

With that, I thank you and wish you a good and restful weekend.