

THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

To think about what is meant by the “supervisory relationship”?

Professional responsibility to create safe spaces to discuss power and diversity

To consider issues of power, privilege and difference in the relationship

To reflect upon and practice ways of being in supervision.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Our patterns of relating, especially our more personal and informal ones, are based on procedural knowledge and ways of reciprocating, laid down in our earliest years of life
- In every relationship we play out relational patterns, some of which may be more or less helpful at different times and with different people
- Relational patterns are influenced by societal discourses, class, ethnicity (Brown, 2010).
- Important also to acknowledge and develop relationships with people that keep them connected to what they value.

THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

- Core conditions for a supervisory relationship – what do we want to provide?
- Importance of provision of a secure base – precondition for all other aspects.
- Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (Palomo et al 2004) 6 Factors
- Engaging with feelings and relationships - connection with clinical supervision and therapeutic alliance (O’Leary 2020 - unpublished)
- What do we bring to the relationship as supervisors? What do trainees bring? Each of us have our own attachment and relationship history/patterns that need to be negotiated. Awareness and attention to these is important.
- Developmental and situational

EXERCISE 1: THE HELPERS DANCE

- *On your own* - please complete the exercise considering yourself in the role of supervisor.
- *Wider group discussion* – share as much or as little as you feel comfortable with about the process of this

POWER, DIFFERENCE AND PRIVILEGE IN RELATIONSHIPS

Social Constructionist lens – Taken for granted knowledge and experience of relationships, power and privilege

More likely to spend time with people perceived as being similar – values, culture, beliefs – provides safety and sense of belonging

Differences and similarity in all relationships – seek out both in our relationships which can be inaccurate or accurate/helpful or unhelpful to a relationship

Only a few human differences are neutral with respect to power - gender, ethnicity, class, age, income, sexuality, ability are signifiers of rank.

POWER, DIFFERENCE AND PRIVILEGE IN RELATIONSHIPS

Difference in rank affects people – re-enacted and reinforced in future relationships

Whether rank is earned or inherited your rank, it organises our communication behaviour

Visual information about, for example, gender or ethnicity enables people to quickly consciously or unconsciously, read each other's relative rank with all its implications for relative power, e.g. majority and minority groups/empowered and disempowered groups

If in empowered group may be unconscious of rank and privilege which can affect relationships – transformative effects of awareness (Totton, 2006)

Complexity of different types and levels of privilege - intersectionality

POWER, DIFFERENCE AND PRIVILEGE IN THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

Importance of paying attention to difference and similarity in the supervisory relationship

Role of supervisor to model talking about this safely

Power intrinsic in the supervisory relationship with trainee Ryde, 2000 identified:

Role Power – inherent power differential between supervisor and supervisee

Cultural Power – power specific to a perceived dominant ethnic grouping

Individual Power – associated with the characteristics / “personality” of the supervisor

WHY? RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NOTICING DIFFERENCE AND LEARNING

Attending to power and diversity in supervision led to higher satisfaction and better learning outcomes for trainees (Green and Dekkers, 2010)

Supervisory Relationships with multi - culturally competent supervisors who pay attention to power and difference led to beneficial changes in therapy, recognition of personal limitations and improved self awareness and empathy for clients (Soheilian et al, 2014)

Discussion of multi cultural identity (gender, race, sexual orientation) was significantly positively correlated with supervisory working alliance, multicultural intervention self-efficacy, and general counselling self-efficacy, and negatively correlated with role ambiguity and role conflict. (Phillips et al, 2017)

Culturally/racially different dyads more likely to discuss difference than similar dyads (Hird et al, 2004)

Self-awareness allows supervisees to identify racial and cultural groups that influence their value systems leading to self-identification and an understanding of normative and desirable behavioral patterns in comparison to other racial and cultural groups (Hays and Chang, 2003)

WHY? CONT..

All issues of social difference are continuously important and influential in the co-creation of contexts for therapy and learning

Burnham (2008) Visible and voiced/ Visible and unvoiced/ Invisible and voiced/ Invisible and unvoiced

All are comfortable with certain social differences or privileges - might feel more skilled or more passionate about. Those that are less comfortable can become unconsciously subjugated

Risk that not voicing may reinforce or maintain unhelpful power and privilege in the relationship especially if experience of disempowerment.

What are we not attending to in the therapeutic work if no language in supervisory relationship to think about this

Assumption of privilege and dominance

Providing language or voicing difference and power can help to prevent or repair ruptures in supervisory relationship

Allows accountability

EXERCISE 2 - PAIR WORK

Think of a situation in supervision where you were aware of privilege?

- What did you notice?
- What was the impact?
- Were you able to talk about it with your supervisor/supervisee?
And what was that like?
- What was the consequence of talking / not talking about it?
- Were there any privileges that you were blind to?

THE CONCEPT OF “PRIVILEGE” AND RESTRAINTS IN TALKING ABOUT IT (RAHEIM ET AL, 2004)

“unless we routinely examine the operations of power and our place within these operations, we fail to notice how we are liable to inadvertently impose our expectations, our cultural ways, our ways of thinking, on the people with whom we work.”

- Making things equivalent: conversations that imply that there is equivalence can contribute to mystification of power relations.
- Confusing experiences of individual hardship with considerations of privilege: some hardships may not be about privilege, e.g. loss, injury. This can obscure how we live with privilege – class, race, gender.
- Dividing from others: somebody else is worse at this than us, dominant group may find it easier to identify others than focus on own privilege.
- Avoiding talking about it: Talking about this issue is divisive: not talking about something does not make it disappear and means we can not take action.
- Talking isn't enough: All talk, no action.

THE CONCEPT OF “PRIVILEGE” RESTRAINTS IN AND TALKING ABOUT IT (RAHEIM ET AL, 2004)

Competition/comparison – getting caught up in it needing to be right or we’ve done it better.

Changing the focus of the conversation: it’s gender not race

Debating the terms of the discussion: This isn’t the right conversation to be having, as a dominant group we may debate the terms of the discussion not the discussion.

Undermining the messenger: I’m not sure if you are doing this the right way – sometimes when invited to discuss privilege people may criticise the facilitator’s presentation style or undermine their credibility.

Having to pretend you know – unspoken assumption that we are meant to know and this can get in the way of a conversation.

THE CONCEPT OF “PRIVILEGE” AND TALKING ABOUT IT (RAHEIM ET AL, 2004)

Shame, guilt, sadness: these emotions can get in the way of meaningful conversation and action.

Lack of awareness of the effects of the conversation on others: this needs to be held in mind in conversations

Individualism: I'm not connected to this, can be difficult to consider ourselves as in dominant groups if not used to thinking about ourselves in this way or to consider ourselves in collective groups.

Heroic accounts: we may tell stories that put us in a good light especially in responding to other people's unhelpful behavior.

Obscuring personal prejudice with relations of power and privilege, e.g when a woman may speak out against all men – this is not equivalent to sexism as sexism shapes institutional practice, economic and legal systems. Everyone can be prejudiced but not all prejudice is supported by broader institutions and discriminatory discourses.

EXERCISE 3 - IDENTIFYING OUR OWN PRIVILEGES

(group work - 20 mins)

Some helpful questions to ask ourselves:

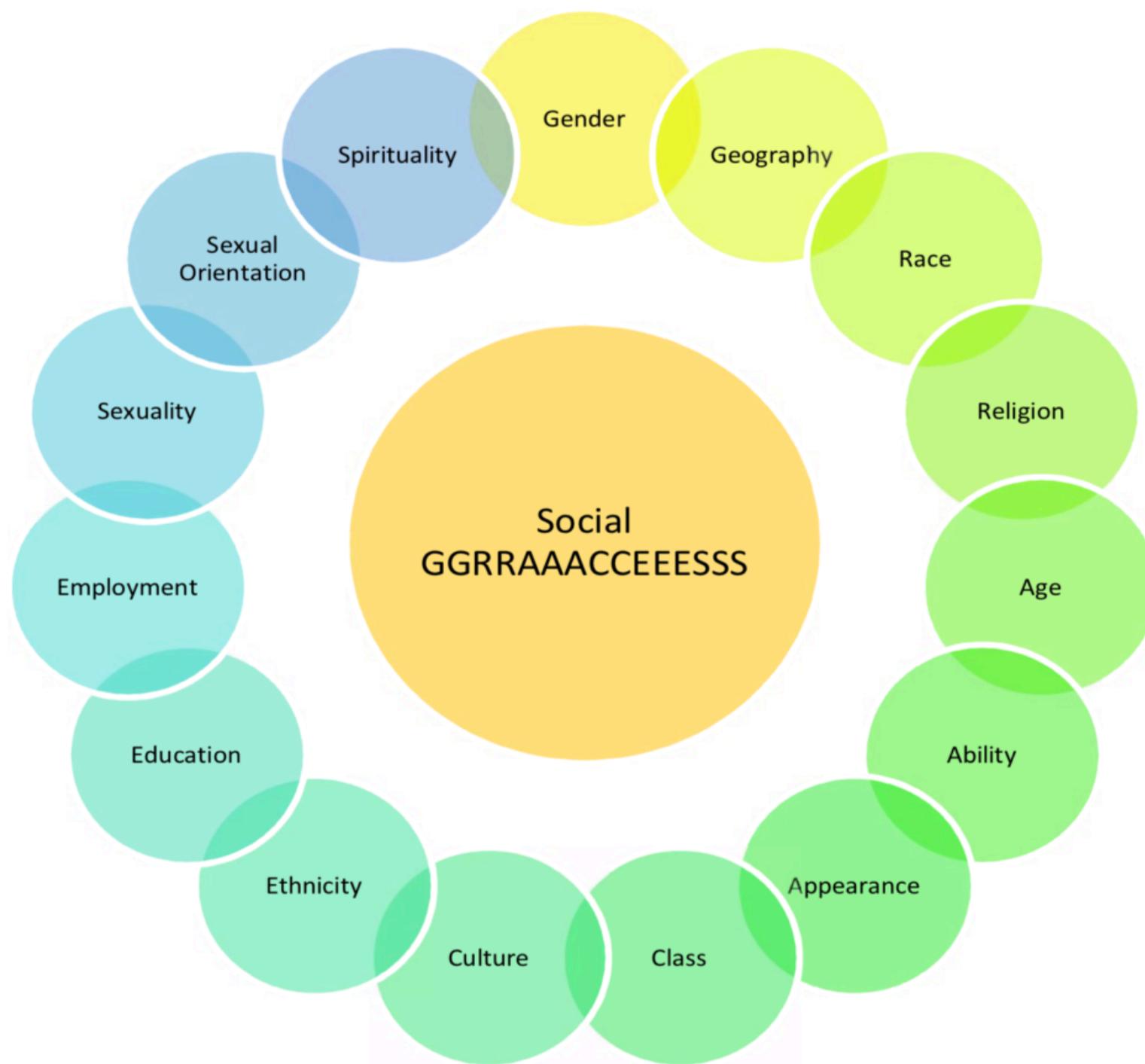
- How might your experience as a heterosexual person differ from the experience of a LGBTQ+ person in, for example, expressing affection in public, or introducing your partner to your family of origin or at a work's social event.
- How might your experience as a white person differ from the experience of a Black, Asian or minority ethnic person in, for example, applying for a job, passing police in the street.
- How might your experience as an able bodied person differ from the experience of a person with a disability in, for example, getting yourself to work each day, how people interpret any expression of anger or frustration.
- How might your experience as a male therapist differ from the experience of a female therapist in for example, running therapeutic groups in a men's prison, working with female survivors of sexual abuse.
- There are other questions related to religion, language, citizenship status, gender identity

HOW?

Social GRRRAACCCEESSS - John Burnham

Originally developed for the supervisory relationship (2008) and allows us to be reflexive about power

Can be used as a framework to discuss thinking about power, privilege, advantage and disadvantage in relation to.....



SOCIAL GRRRAACCEESSS

Socially produced differences that are interwoven – COLLIDE-OSCOPE

Complex experiences within the supervisory triad

Be aware of assumptions

Different ways of utilizing model in supervision:

eg Video 'line of privilege'

Grace cards - where is it in quadrant of voiced/unvoiced matrix? What look like what does it mean on the 4 dimensions? Move it around

Exploratory questions - What grabs you the most? What aspects do you least understand?

EXERCISE 4 — PAIR WORK

In pairs - Choose one social difference from the GRRACCEESS that you might be **less comfortable** or aware of and practice how you might provide space for them in supervision as a supervisor.

Briefly describe why you might be less comfortable talking about this as a supervisor

Take turns to be the supervisor

Reflect together on what this was like?

HOW?

Narrative Practice recognises how powerful gender, race, sexuality is and places emphasis on setting a context in supervision that can shape these conversations.

How do we hold an awareness of difference especially when this may be invisible and we may assume similarity.

How will I know that this is challenging?

Using the Statement of Position Map 1

STATEMENT OF POSITION MAP 1 (SOP1)

ROLE PLAY – FACILITATORS Start from bottom and work up:

Values – *Locate this experience and position within your wider values*

Position on/experience of problem/connections – *Describe the experience of and position on the effects of the problem.*

Effects of the problem/connections – *Connect the problem to its antecedents, effects, links with others*

Naming the problem or the characteristic – *finding a shared word/s that doesn't locate problem in person and is close to the experience of the individual*

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

Consider the ZPD of your supervisee when setting the culture in supervision
(Contracting session)

How do you hold onto the relational during ISW training and pay attention to the unvoiced visible and invisible in your supervisory practice?

How do you create a safe space to be able to discuss issues of diversity and unconscious bias?

Identity is multi – faceted – taking a “both/and” position – or
“both/and/and/and”

What internal/external reminders will you use to hold this in mind through this year and beyond?

Jot some ideas to keep you in this position

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