

Teambuilding with your inner Supervisor

Connecting with your inner dialogue is a guide for working as a therapist or supervisor. Our Inner supervisor is our greatest Sparring-partner, and my aim here is to call for Teambuilding with the part of our inner dialogue, the Inner Supervisor, that is engaged in professional questions and processes.

Having a supervisor means having someone to guide, lead and pace you professionally. Someone to exchange ideas with and enter the mutual dance of dialogue, get inspiration and get on in the development of our personality and skills in the working process.

Though you may attend regular courses and meetings with a supervisor, we are all on our own, when we are working. We have to rely on our own skills and ideas in entering the shared process of therapy or of supervision with our client or supervisee.

We are on our own and yet not alone. The supervisor always at hand is "The Inner Supervisor" build of many elements: internalised others, supervisor models, inspiration from literature, films and everyday life.

It sounds very obvious and simple, and yet it is common knowledge that it can be challenging to believe in your own inner voice, and that it is a never-ending dance to stay in contact with your inner Core Energies. When it happens, the energy you get is as high, as when they dance the forbidden steps in the movie "Strictly Ballroom".

Supervision comes from Latin, Super Videre meaning to see from above. Some call it Helicopter-perspective or Bird's-eye-view. Other metaphors could be talking of a Panorama-vision, taking a ride on a Flying Carpet or taking the Elevator to the level, you need to see from.

Some like to see supervision as a mutual exchange process.

In the sense of meeting our Inner Supervisor one could define supervision as seeing from different angles, creating the possibility of new perspectives to emerge.

Peggy Penn and Marilyn Frankfurt talks about the Inner Monolog, often being negative and repeating the negative message over and over : "I am no good" " I do not know what to say or what to do " "I am stuck, when will the client see through me" "I am a failure, when will people stop seeing me ".

The repetitive monolog can only turn into a dialog or even into a play for voices, if new angles can emerge.

Peter Levine uses a technique from Akther Ahsen, when he is doing therapy, and the client is stuck in a picture of a situation. He will ask for the opposite picture.

A woman client told me she felt like a Baby-seal stripped of her skin, lying naked on the ice. The opposite picture was that of a huge white Polar Bear jog-trotting along the ice. We got access to

both the experience of the victim's position and to her huge inner resources, and the integration-or balancing process could begin.

When you feel stuck in your therapeutic – or supervision work, as a tool for yourself, you can ask for the opposite picture. What is the opposite of feeling stuck ? The answer will have a personal flavour along the line : feeling free, feeling good, being myself, being able to move....

Next question to yourself, what does it take me to get there ?

Sometimes being with a certain client makes you unable to get a grasp on, what is important to the client. You may feel that there is a lot of noise, and one technique is to sink into another space in yourself. If you are stuck in analysing too much, it may be helpful for you to listen from an emotional level in yourself. We can use a Sufi-metaphor : listening with “the Ears of your Heart”.

Last year I had a woman client, intelligent and well-educated , a woman of many words. Sometimes when she was reflecting on her childhood experiences, I would sit opposite to her and not be able to make sense of, what she was talking about, until one day my Inner Supervisor advised me to stop listening to the actual words and instead listen from my heart. At that session it was clear as crystal to me, that she was speaking of her loneliness in life.

Often we are taught by clients to deepen our tools as therapists and supervisors.

Another “Mental Game” to set your creativity free is to call for Long-Distance Supervision or you could call it “Calling for help”. The term Long-Distance-Supervision emerged in my early years of working as a psychologist. I went to see my supervisor every two weeks, and in between I would often need some kind of help in the work and ask myself “What advice would Ian give me? or what question would he ask me ?

Long-Distance-Supervision is a technique to give yourself a mental break, and in that pause you create your own space for playing with possibilities, not being perfect and having more than one try.

Hypnotherapists will ask themselves, what would Erickson have done here, and they will each get their unique answers, extracting from him and from the articles and books on Ericksonian Therapy. The answers that fits the Uni-vers of the therapist and Erickson's statement ...”and my voice will go with you “will be true in more than one sense.

Once we had a nanny who took care of the youngest in our house. I was driving home from work, trying to figure out how to fire her the same afternoon. Considering more versions, not getting satisfied, I asked “My Inner Milton”: “How am I to do it?” Through this mental opening came the answer: ”Get him out of there!”

I was laughing with surprise. My Inner Supervisor had lifted the discussion to another level, from a question about the nanny to reflections of whether or not the little one should be in the house or among other kids in a nursery.

You may get good, even brilliant ideas, and the trap is falling in love with them, getting trapped in your Uni-vers, having just one version.

To challenge this tendency of loving our ideas, we may ask our Inner Supervisor to tickle our ribs mentally, so we do not get too clever or feel too much of an expert. Cecchin, Lane and Ray call it irreverence towards your own way of thinking.

I would like to share with you a piece of advice, that I picked up from Myron Sharaf attending his workshop in Copenhagen. Breathe! He would say, repeat, suggest, and insist according to the therapeutic process. We enter the dynamics of our clients and supervisees and the dynamics of the problems, knots, life situations...that they share with us.

You can catch yourself holding your breath or breathing shallow. Parallel Process is always there, you are in when you connect with others in a deep and open-minded way. Have a deep breath and feel life energy breathing you, and again you can actively connect to your Inner Supervisor

asking for advice or backing just to be there to be aware and contain, whatever the client or supervisee presents to you.

When my Son was 4 Years old, he said to me one morning still in a sleepy voice "Mummy, can I fly? " Yes, why not! Questions like that bring openings. Why believe in limitations when everything is possible in the mind of a child. How can you do the same in your Inner Dialog?

References:

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Gianfranco Cecchin, Gerry Lane, Wendel Ray: "From Strategizing to

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Myron Sharaf: Workshop in Copenhagen 1997 (M.S. Wrote "Fury on Earth – a Bibliography of W.Reich")

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