Demonstration of a Person-Centered Supervision: Disclosure of Childhood Abuse

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Carl Rogers was a trailblazer in counseling research and training. After early clinical experiences taught him the value of client direction, Rogers (1951, 1957, 1959) took advantage of new recording technology and launched a landmark empirical study of client-directed counseling. His theory of therapeutic interpersonal change process (Rogers, 1959) has been applied in various helping venues, including international conflict resolution groups and education. In Freedom to Learn, for example, Rogers and Freiberg (1994) report on the use of client-centered (CC) principles as a basis for student-centered learning.

Counselor-Centered Supervision (Hamilton & Williams, this issue) is an application of CC principles to supervision. CC supervision assumes that: (1) client incongruence relative to the counselor is comparable to counselor incongruence relative to a supervisor; (2) empathy, (3) genuineness, and (4) acceptance promote growth among counselors as they do among clients, and (5) perceiving the core conditions is essential for client and counselor growth. Indeed, counselor-centered supervision looks a lot like CC counseling.

In addition to communicating core conditions toward counselors, CC counselor training (Hamilton & Williams, this issue) also involves (a) Observational Learning Methods (video and live observation), (b) Core-Conditions Practice Methods (with peers, as members of interpersonal learning groups, and with clients), and (c)

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Core Conditions Analysis Methods (often including self-analysis of transcribed sessions and skills feedback). Because supervisors are concerned with their trainee's core condition capacities, CC supervision may never quite meet the same standard of non-directivity as client-centered counseling (Patterson, 1997; Raskin, 1992).

We believe that the supervision session below illustrates a case of CC supervision that is identifiably focused on communicating the core conditions. Although very few demonstration videos of supervision exist, the trend toward observational and tape-analysis methods for supervisor training is growing. In one study, new counselors rated observational learning as the second most valuable method of instruction in their master's training program, surpassed only by the value of closely supervised practice (Hamilton, 1998). Perhaps supervisors will find similar value in observing and scrutinizing supervision.

**Five-Factor Model of Counselor-Centered Supervision**

Our five-factor counselor-centered supervision model (Hamilton & Williams, this issue) emerged out of the first author's 15-year study of person-centered supervision with beginning counselors in combination with a literature review exploring key concepts and common themes in numerous models of counselor supervision.

Our analysis deals predominantly with the core conditions (herein referred to as Factor 1: Core Conditions/Non-Directive Communication) and to a lesser extent with four other developmental processes identified in nearly all published accounts of beginning counselor supervision. These four factors are: Factor 2: Core Conditions Training; Factor 3: Evaluation; Factor 4: Theoretical Diversity, and Factor 5: Ethics.

**Supervision Session Transcript and Analysis**

The beginning master's degree counselor and mid-career supervisor featured in the session have maintained a four-year relationship inclusive of student-teacher, counselor-supervisor, and co-researcher roles. Both of them identify as person-centered counselors. Consent to tape record, analyze, and publish the transcript was given on the condition that client identity be thoroughly concealed.
The session was conducted in the presence of a small training group of PC counselors and counselor supervisors. It begins with the supervisor reflecting the counselor’s question about client resistance. Supervisor and counselor communications are indicated by S1–S41 and by C1–C41, respectively. Analyses of CC principles and training methods that appear to form the basis of the supervisor’s response are denoted by A1–A41.

S1: I know you have some thoughts about “working with resistance.”

A1: In S1, the supervisor’s statement is a basic empathy response (cf., Farber, Brink, & Raskin, 1996). It is a non-directive, Factor 1 response.

C1: I have been working with a client for a couple months, approximately two months, and the issue that came up in the beginning was what I termed as resistance, but I don’t know if that is the appropriate term. What I was finding was that this particular client entered counseling due to anxiety and depression, severe depression. He was experiencing a lot of depressive symptoms, such as suicidal ideation; difficulty sleeping, focusing, and concentrating; and they were very disruptive in his life and that’s what brought him into counseling. However, when he entered counseling, he said he did not think counseling was going to work for him. He gave several reasons why it wouldn’t. That was in the beginning. So that was the setting in which to build a relationship—almost like, “Well, what are you going to do for me?”

S1: “I’m pretty sure that it won’t work.”

A1: The supervisor empathizes with the counselor’s perception of his client’s experience using first-person reflection. First-person reflection is a rather common PC empathic communication style (Farber, et al., 1996) that communicates Factor 1 attitudes. Despite considerable diagnostics on the client, the focus stays on the counselor’s experience of the client’s meaning message.

C2: Exactly. That’s how I felt. I did my best as far as being empathic and understanding, truly to try to understand him, and I think, as that happened, as we started to build a relationship, the ice kind of cooled, lessened and....

S3: It didn’t melt but...

A3: Transcripts are less effective than audio and video in projecting nonverbal gestures and verbal intonations. The counselor’s tone was tentative and questioning. After a six-second pause, the supervisor responds using the counselor’s metaphor to convey understanding that the pace was moving forward, but slowly. This response incorporates a Factor 3 evaluation element by reflecting the counselor’s concern with relative impact of his empathy.

C3: Yes. He opened up a little bit more and then he told me that he had a secret, but he didn’t want to tell me. That was probably our fourth session and he didn’t want to tell me specifically what the secret was, but he had felt that to some degree the depression, the depressive symptoms, and the anxiety he was experiencing were related to the secret. He felt very uncomfortable telling me. I acknowledged that, of course, it was uncomfortable and did not put any pressure on him to tell me anything he did not want to tell me. I thought if I would be directive and put pressure on him in any way, he was going to run—to drop out of therapy. Basically I thought that he was scared. However, I kind of sensed that this secret that he was carrying just ate him up inside. As time went on, he did give me some clues about it and basically in my own mind I kind of knew what it was even before he finally told me about it.

S4: You assumed that there was something abusive that had happened.

A4: The supervisor could have responded to the counselor deciding to respect the client’s choice not to disclose his secret, to the counselor’s sense that the secret was very painful, or to the counselor’s awareness of the client’s fear and potential to discontinue therapy if pushed to disclose. But the supervisor picks up on the counselor’s last statement that he “kind of knew what it was about,” making this more explicit by saying he assumed something abusive. The counselor response (C4 below) to the supervisor’s statement about abuse suggests that S4 captured a persistent (Factor 5) ethics concern for the counselor. The counselor will begin to reveal ongoing

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concerns about whether he is helping, whether the core conditions are sufficient, whether he is sufficiently competent with the core conditions, and whether there is a more suitable approach to helping a client expose the pains and secrets of abuse (Factor 4: theoretical diversity).

C4: Things that he had said had led me to believe that there was an abusive situation that had happened, and he later did say that he was physically abused and neglected. Every session he would come in and he would just kind of sit there and I would sit there with him, and I knew that he had suicidal thoughts and all these destructive symptoms, and I kind of felt helpless in the fact that I knew he had a secret to reveal but that he didn’t want to reveal it, and I didn’t want to put pressure on him to reveal it and I kind of felt stuck in the situation.

S5: You were fairly certain that you knew—you would be assuming that—you just felt fairly sure that it had to do with abuse, but you were uncomfortable about saying that. You just didn’t want to push it, so you kept sitting there wondering whether what you thought it was true.

A5: S5 accepts and understands the counselor’s implicit self-evaluation (Factor 3) regarding whether he was doing/did enough for this client. The counselor did not want to pressure the client, and he felt helpless and stuck, persistently wondering whether he could and should be doing more to help free this client to talk about his abuse (Factor 5). S5 reflects the counselor’s experience of significantly questioning the sufficiency of the PC approach (Factor 4) with a client who is palpably strained by the weight of holding onto a secret of abuse. The supervisor respects the counselor’s incongruence in this matter.

C5: Exactly, and also wondering at the same time, I thought in my own mind, if he would reveal some of it, if he would get some of it out, he might get better. I don’t know. It was kind of my assumption. I just think this was like a rock he carried around inside him and he kind of, in his own mind, had also left the association that his depressive symptoms that he was experiencing was related to the secret he was holding inside.
S6: Right.
A6: A simple acknowledgment of the counselor questioning whether a more directive attitude could have hastened the client's relief. The supervisor might have commented on the internal pressure the counselor felt over how much relief he imagined the client might gain from disclosing.
C6: And I refused to pressure him to tell me, because I felt that if I did pressure him to tell me and he told me and was uncomfortable with that, that it would basically be the end of our relationship and our trust.
S7: So, is there a question in what you are saying? Are you wondering? I don't know what happened with that—
A7: The counselor's tone of voice and choice of words—"refused to pressure him"—sounded ambivalent to the supervisor. He is confused by the incongruence between the counselor's words, which seem highly committed to not pushing the client, and his somewhat angry and defensive tone. A simple restatement, "You refused to pressure him," might have stimulated the counselor to clarify that his refusal was not just a private matter but involved a consultation in which he was encouraged/advised to confront his client (see C14).
C7: Well, I am wondering, in a situation like that, if a client says that they have a secret or something but that they don't want to reveal it, and that kind of like stands in the way of therapeutic change, how do you deal with that?
S8: He had this pretty specific goal, which was to stop feeling all these things that he had more or less said are the results of holding onto this secret. You want to generalize that and say, "Not only with him, but also with another client, would it be good? Do I have enough evidence that I can say this applies in general to clients?" He said he has this goal to stop feeling depressed and anxious, to start sleeping better and eating better. And he said, "I'm pretty sure all these changes are a result of holding onto this secret," but he also said, "I'm afraid to tell this secret." He hasn't quite said, "I don't want to share it."
A8: The supervisor’s summary confirms that he has been listening to the details. His summary expresses the counselor’s question on two levels: general (should I push clients to disclose secrets that are hurting them to keep inside?) and specific (would this client have come back?). The response focus at the level of specificity facilitates the counselor’s direct experience with this client (as in C10). Client-centered supervisors mostly communicate the core attitudes toward a counselor’s moment-to-moment experience (Rice, 1980). From C8 to C12, the counselor continues to explore his uncertainty about allowing his client to not disclose his secret. The supervisor’s response accepts the counselor’s implicit Factor 3, Factor 4, and Factor 5 inquiries.

C8: No. He basically said that in the beginning, he did not want to share the secret; that he was afraid, embarrassed, ashamed, and as a result, he did not feel comfortable telling me. Telling anyone.

S9: Uh huh.

A9: A prompt that says “go on.”

C9: So it was kind of like almost I thought in a sense like almost a cloud, and I didn’t know how to deal with it. I didn’t know.

S9: A cloud, in a sense, like you’re in a fog. You can’t quite really see through it to what really would be the best thing to do.

A9: The client-centered supervisor doesn’t problem-solve or direct the counselor. He acknowledges the counselor’s experience of uncertainty using the metaphor “fog,” like the counselor’s “cloud.” This Factor 1 response promotes deeper understanding (C10). It is a response that illustrates the presence of Factor 2, core conditions training through osmosis, or modeling (which could be said of all Factor 1 responses). It is possible for even a single supervision session to produce a meaningful parallel processes upon counselor-client relationships.

C10: Absolutely. Because I felt as though if I was directive in any way, I would push him out of counseling, because as time went on we did build a relationship to some degree. However, he
was very forthright from the beginning he doesn’t trust people and—

S11: It is really, really important to you to honor and respect his pace.

A11: The supervisor reflects the counselor’s current congruent feelings regarding respect for the client’s pace in present tense. He appears to be fully present in the as-if condition. The counselor conveys strength and integrity in his approach, and finds no (Factor 1) evidence of counselor doubt regarding this core respect he felt for trusting the client’s pace.

C11: Absolutely. And the situation that came up was occurring as our time together was getting ready to end, we really hadn’t gone anywhere, and I knew that our relationship unfortunately would be ending based on the limits of the number of sessions my agency could provide. So I knew that we would be terminating and it was premature, but it was just very awkward and I—this secret he had—I did not know how to work through it. I didn’t know what to do with it, basically. I didn’t know if in any sense I should give my sense of what—

S12: Yes. You were really concerned because you knew that you would be ending. You’d have to because he was only allowed so many sessions. You wanted to continue to be helpful to him. If you hadn’t had that barrier with the discharge, then your preference would have been to just stay with it for a while. You wouldn’t have felt that pressure to have to do something about that, but because of that, it felt really urgent to decide if you should say something or not.

A12: This response exemplifies how supervisors get into the counselor’s frame of reference (Factor 1) by voicing counselor experiences as if they are (living within the world of) the counselor, not necessarily in the first person, but nonetheless as if. Talking through the experience facilitates the supervisor’s actually feeling the counselor’s time pressure. Rogers (1959) made it clear that Factor 1 communication involves expressive and receptive elements on the part of both participants. Judging from the counselor’s C12 reply, “Absolutely,” the

supervisor will feel assured of having sufficiently understood the counselor’s time pressure.

C12: Absolutely. I think I would have sat with it. I would have been comfortable to sit with it and let him go at his pace and decide, if ever, to express it to me.

S13: I don’t know if this is me or you, but do you still wonder if even without that time barrier, should you have done something more active by saying something?

A13: On the surface, it is unclear, why the supervisor is questioning the counselor’s certainty about “sitting with it.” Perhaps he picked up on the counselor’s tentativeness in saying, “I think I would have sat with it.” Or he might be recalling the counselor’s earlier (Factors 3, 4 and 5) questions regarding competent and sufficient counseling practice (e.g., C7). A misunderstanding of CC counseling and supervision is that questions are almost never asked. In fact, CC counselors and supervisors do ask questions, usually of a clarifying nature (Farber et al., 1996). The question about something more than just limited time will ultimately reveal the supervisor’s intuitiveness about an unsettling consultation (C14 to C19).

C13: Yes. I think that was definitely an issue I was facing. Should I be more active, and yet I know that goes against many person-centered principles—that the client sets the pace, the client is on stage.

S14: Yes, but there’s another rub that you felt concerning the genuineness and honesty part—you felt that there was something going on—being in conflict with the message you were getting that he wasn’t ready for you to hear that. I really admire your patience with him.

A14: S14 shows that the supervisor understands the counselor’s strain to accomplish theory-to-practice consistency with his client (Factor 1, Factor 4). The supervisor supports the counselor’s commitment to ethical (Factor 5) practice. The supervisor’s admiration might also reflect this counselor’s subceived pride in his own patience (C14) (cf., Tudor & Merry, 2002).
It was difficult. I'll be very honest. It was difficult to be patient, and I thought it turned out to be an excellent situation at the end. But, in the beginning, as I was working through this with him, I felt very stuck and I wanted to be patient and yet it was difficult for me, for I wasn’t sure if I should be more active. I sought consultation with a colleague, who thought I should be more confrontational. I wasn’t happy about that, because I really resisted against being confrontive. I thought, “If I am, I am going to push him and he is going to be out the door.”

So you asked a colleague to see how strongly you would resist that suggestion.

The counselor did not say that he pursued a consultation with the intention of checking his resistance. His resistance was more of an effect of the consultation rather than a cause. The counselor initiated a consultation due to feelings of doubt about nondirective listening in the case of a client who feels pain with undisclosed abuse (C15).

I felt stuck and I wasn’t sure if I was doing the right thing, you know, and I didn’t know if basically—I was doing my best by my client, and I knew that he was really suffering and it was hard to just be with him constantly and on my part feeling, “OK, I know he is struggling and I can be empathic and I can make empathic statements and reflective statements,” but at the same time we weren’t going anywhere and his 60 days is ending.

I can feel you were carrying that burden around. You felt that you wanted to unload it. You could feel that he wanted to unload it.

The counselor’s high level of self-awareness and self-evaluative capacity is consistent with his PC orientation. The counselor is reprocessing his important theory/therapy decision point that led to his request for a consultation.

Absolutely.

You also felt that he was afraid to unload it and he didn’t want to unload it.

Factor 1 communication focuses on the counselor’s opposing cognitions each time he experienced the client’s burden.
C17: Yes, and as a relatively new counselor, I constantly doubted myself. Am I being empathic enough? Am I providing the right conditions? Maybe I'm not providing the right conditions for him to be receptive enough. Maybe if he was with someone else he would have unleashed the secret he was carrying. That's how I was feeling inside.

S18: Moments in session would come up where you'd think, "Maybe I could be doing something more caring or something—maybe more genuine. What are these conditions that I could be providing?" Feeling pretty stuck.

A18: Following along and being in the counselor's experience, the supervisor shows accurate imaging of the counselor's specific cognitions. All five factors are operating.

C18: Yes. I felt as though we were both feeling kind of stuck. I knew he was struggling. I, of course, wanted to help him. I thought, in my own mind, that it would be helpful if he could unload some of what was happening within him.

S19: Uh huh.

A19: This prompt to "go on," as in S9, involves the conundrum of the secret. A parallel can be seen between S9 and S19 supervisor acceptance of the counselor, and C8 and C18 counselor acceptance of the client.

C19: But that was a secret and— (20-second pause)

S20: Do you think that sharing that—you know that you just can't help thinking that it might be helpful, would have been something that could have let go of some of that. It sounds like you kept believing that.

A20: Rather than asking the question, the supervisor could have reflected that the counselor felt suspended between his simultaneously strong feelings that a disclosure would bring his client relief, and that his push for a disclosure would run his client out of counseling. S20 attends to only half of the counselor's feeling, and the counselor's C20 confusion suggests that the supervisor's S20 communication has not accurately comprehended, or symbolized the counselor's experience. Nevertheless, it is of interest that the supervisor appears stuck in the same spot as the client and counselor (see below).
C20: I'm not understanding what you are saying.
S21: I'm sorry. You repeatedly had a sense that whatever this secret is, it would be good for him to say. You would go back and forth with that. On the one side, that he really does not want to share, but also, "I am not sure I am doing enough. Maybe I should be doing more. I think this would be good for him to say. Maybe if I did different things, he would say it." Did you ever say to him, "Maybe this would be good for you to say"?
A21: By directly asking the counselor if he shared his persistent feeling with the client, the supervisor understands the parallel process between the client and counselor and between the counselor and supervisor. The counselor has persistent feelings that it would help the client to disclose but that pushing him will destroy the relationship. The client has a parallel persistent secret but does not want to tell it. The supervisor’s Factor 1 communication is evident at cognitive, affective and behavioral levels. The close relationship between the supervisor and counselor energizes the supervisor’s accurately anticipating the counselor’s experience (see C21-C24).
C21: Yes, I did. I did say that, and I prefaced it with my willingness to listen to anything he brought up, but at the same time I did not want to pressure him in any way to say anything he was not prepared or ready to say and that he did not feel comfortable with.
S22: Very genuine!
A22: S22 shows the supervisor’s commitment to PC theory and practice. It is important at all levels of the supervisory relationship (Factors 1-5) that a CC supervisor clearly communicates his CC orientation (Patterson, 1997). S22 explicitly evaluates Factor 3 counselor success with CC practice. In addition, by appreciating the counselor’s honest communication with the client as an instance of genuineness, the supervisor punctuates the counselor’s use of CC theory in practice (Factor 2), and by openly endorsing the approach, he is endorsing the explicit contract between the dyad for CC supervision (Factor 5). The above dialogue may also be conceptualized as representing an instance of empathic
attunement through the expression of a persistent feeling (cf. Cochran & Cochran, 2006; Wyatt, 2001).

C22: I wanted to let him know that I was willing to listen to anything that he brought up and wanted to talk about, but I also had mentioned that maybe in some way he might feel better, I am not sure. He might feel better if he came to that.

S23: How about sharing that sense that you just kept thinking that you think he probably would I don’t know if that’s too much or not. I’m just thinking that was the part of it that you kept thinking—that you thought that he probably would and that you kept going back to that.

A23 It is of interest that the supervisor asks the counselor about his disclosing behavior in much the same manner as the counselor ultimately asks the client about disclosing his secret.

C23: Yes. And I did. I did share that.

S24: You said it that way: “I don’t know but I keep thinking you probably would.” What did he say?

A24 The supervisor’s interest in the client’s response is consistent with Factor 2. A client’s response to a counselor’s communication is a major variable involved in evaluating the sufficiency of any Factor 1 effort (Cohen, 1994).

C24: Well, I don’t remember the exact words, but it was basically that he felt that he might feel better, but he wasn’t sure. But I tried my best to give empathic responses to his shame and embarrassment and fear of being judged, and to express my acceptance of anything that he would say. But, at the same time, I felt his resistance from the very beginning. He didn’t even want to sign himself into treatment for fear that a counselor would judge him.

S25: Right, right.

A25: S25 implies agreement. The supervisor conveys that he understands that the client accepted the counselor’s perception that sharing the secret might help; that not sharing it was a burden. Furthermore, this simple acknowledgement response (“Right, right,”) supports the counselor’s F-4 theoretical undertaking as having produced forward movement in the client’s capacity to share his fear of judgment.
C25: Everybody would judge him.
S26: I guess a part of what you are wondering about on a bigger level is, "Is it generally or even specifically necessary to share secrets, or might it be more therapeutic to not share the secret? Something has happened really therapeutic for him. Can I call this successful therapy if he decides not to share the secret?"
A26: It is unclear why the supervisor chooses now to direct attention to the counselor’s general concern about directing clients to disclose secrets. It may have been better to comment on the counselor’s strength of commitment to respecting the client’s fear of judgment. Perhaps the supervisor believes that the counselor is satisfied that the core conditions were effective with this client, but the general question is still looming.

C26: Yes. Basically that was really the central issue that I struggled with, and how active should I be in that?
S27: He had a really strong communication to you that, "I think that it would be good for me to share the secret."
A27: The response grasps the part of the client’s communication involved in provoking the counselor’s self-doubt. A more accurate reflection would have included the client’s experience of shame. "You felt so strongly that he needed to share the secret, but you felt the greater intensity of his shame holding him back." In C27, the counselor implies that the client’s desire to disclose was not as strong as the long-standing feeling of shame.

C27: To some degree. He had mentioned before he thought he might feel better, you know, but he wasn’t sure. This incident occurred when he was quite young. It’s a lot of years that he has been carrying this around.

S28: It’s like you got stuck with him in the perspective that the secret is holding me back from moving on.
A28: By re-focusing on the counselor-client relationship, the supervisor is able to understand more about what the counselor meant when he said he was feeling "kind of stuck" (C18). It is important to recognize that PC supervision with a counselor who holds other theoretical foci (Factor 4) does not as readily center on a counselor’s experience as does the
present supervision. Because other orientations attend to various factors external to the client-counselor relationship (e.g., diagnoses, techniques, defense mechanisms), PC responses to those types of counselor statements will focus on those considerations much more often than PC supervision with a PC counselor.

**C28:** Absolutely.

**S29:** Whether it’s true or not, it’s important, but that in and of itself—that belief is very dominant in his life; it became very dominant in your life in the session.

**A29:** The supervisor understands the parallel process between her client’s inner world and the client-counselor relationship (Factor 1). The supervisor might have said, “You could really appreciate how stuck he felt in his feeling of shame.”

**C29:** And so we just sat together. I felt very inadequate, like I was not enough; maybe another therapist might be able to get him to unload some of this baggage and emotional pain he was carrying. So I question myself constantly about the situation. Was I doing enough? Was I enough—not feeling like I was enough, and so it was a feeling of being stuck.

**S30:** The difficulty of the therapeutic work was really compounded with him, in particular, by this sense of not feeling adequate.

**A30:** The supervisor hears the counselor wondering, once again, if another (more experienced?) counselor would have been able to be more of a help to this client, more able to free him from this shame. Beginning counselors often deal with these sorts of self-evaluations (Factor 3), theory explorations (Factor 4) and ethical considerations (Factor 5). They seem to serve an accountability function in counseling.

**C30:** I felt like I was really no help.

**S31:** Hmmm (uttered with surprise).

**A31:** The strength of the counselor’s self-doubt is very pronounced. The supervisor expresses genuine surprise at the degree of the counselor’s feeling of inadequacy. The core conditions have enabled the counselor to disclose increasingly deeper feelings. The counselor appears to trust the supervisor and observation team enough (Factors 1 and 2), to pursue this dilemma.

C31: I mean, we had a relationship, but his symptoms were not decreasing at all. As a matter of fact, at times I thought they were getting worse. His anxiety was not really decreasing.

S32: So that gave you no reassurance that you were adequate.

A32: The response expresses empathic UPR (Factor 1) toward the counselor's chagrin when faced with the client's difficulties. Most supervision approaches agree that beginning counselors generally learn more from a supervisor who accepts their doubts and anxieties. The supervisor could have offered support, by sharing his experience that clients sometimes appear to get worse before they get better. The counselor's admission to a team of consultants, that the very approach he is involved in demonstrating may actually be hurting his client took a lot of courage... though not as much, perhaps, as disclosing a childhood abuse.

C32: And so I just kept doubting whether what I was doing was right. Should I be pushing him?

S33: I'm curious what happened that you resisted your colleague who recommended you be more forceful. What was it that that, what had some measure of adequacy or belief in it in what you were doing?

A33: The supervisor recalls that the counselor's self-doubts had led him to a consultation. The direct question facilitates the counselor's awareness of self-efficacy in his chosen theory (Factor 4), despite or in addition to his feelings of inadequacy.

C33: Well, I did resist my colleague's idea that maybe I had enough evidence because my client had dropped clues, that I had enough evidence to kind of be a little confrontive. I told them why I resisted against that. I said if I were confrontative in any way, this client will run and not come back. In my sense, I thought he was too fragile to confront and I thought he would discontinue and that it would be the end, and I didn't want that to happen. I didn't want him to end the experience with a distrust confirming his distrust of people, including therapists. Because when he began the second time we met, I distinctly remember him saying he did not believe it would help and that he had difficulty trusting anyone.

It really is a challenge, isn’t it, to keep questioning all that you are doing and to be open to what might be the best, the most sensitive thing, and to hear as best as you can what that would be. The situation that he is saying, “I am too vulnerable; please don’t do that.” To trust that you are really hearing that right and that’s the most accepting and empathic and therapeutic thing that I can do for this client. To consider the possibility that he’s not so fragile. It’s hard to do that—to have confidence and a sense of adequacy as a therapist when you’re not completely certain. To consider the possibility that encouraging a disclosure might be better, but then feeling some certainty in what you are doing. It’s hard, isn’t it?

The supervisor shows respect for the counselor’s questioning, uncertainty, self-doubt, and capacity to trust himself. Although the response is a bit lengthy, it respects the range of feelings and thoughts that were hard for the counselor to process with this client. It includes core condition, theory, ethics, and evaluation factors.

I felt very uncertain whether what I was doing was right, whether I was helping him at all, and yet he never missed a session. He came in twice a week for nearly two months. He was consistent, and I just basically sat there with him.

Did that help, him showing up, give you any sense that maybe I am being adequate?

The supervisor’s closed question is attuned with the counselor citing evidence that his client showing up for sessions was a sign he was helping. It follows the counselor’s lead regarding Factor 3 evaluation of client data that supported the counselor’s Factor 4 theoretical orientation. An alternative response might have been, “Despite your doubts, the fact that he kept coming offered some assurance that you must be helping in some way.”

I thought there has to be a reason why he keeps coming in. I wasn’t sure why he kept coming in, but I thought there has to be a reason, but I do believe he wanted help. He wanted help. Despite his feeling uncertain of whether this was the way to get
help, not wanting to feel the way he felt drove him into counseling.

S36: And you said that from early on you had a clear communication from him that being able to trust you was so difficult. In a sense, that overrode the times when you thought of saying something about your impression that he was talking about abuse. You kept thinking, "If I do this, he has already said to me, you know, trust, trust, trust. He's said, "I don't think I want to say this. I want to be in charge of choosing this." Wouldn't this be a betrayal of his trust for me to put this out here?"

A36: The supervisor understands the counselor's concern with how to express immediacy and not direct nor disrespect his client (Factors 1 and 4).

C36: He never said to me directly that I don't trust you. He didn't say that to me. He said he had difficulty trusting anyone. And from the very beginning, then, I thought maybe that translates into me as well. He never had trusted before, so I was very resistant to being very directive with him. And yet I worried, should I be directive with him to some degree?

S37: I wondered what you had in mind to say, if it would be something like, "I keep thinking what might be the secret that you have, and not feeling sure if I should say it or not, and wondering whether you'd think I should say it or not."

A37: Factor 2 training often involves analyzing specific counselor responses to clients, followed by an assessment of the client's response. This usually takes place in transcript or tape analysis. Without tapes, counselor-supervisor Factor 2 communication may directly explore what the counselor said and how the client responded.

C37: Eventually that did happen.

S38: Oh. Is that what you did?

A38: It is sometimes mistakenly assumed that the PC approach limits a supervisor (or counselor) to respond with specific kinds of empathic reflection. There are an infinite number of ways that nondirective empathy can be expressed (Bozarth, 1997). In S37-S38, the supervisor could have reflected, "You
got the impression that his never having trusted anyone more or less meant, "That means me, too."" However, S37-S38 understands the counselor's confusion about whether what he did was "right." The supervisor is on target in anticipating the counselor's dialogue with his client (C38). Although it would be helpful to hear the actual tape, the supervisor shows his experience bringing the counselor-client session into the supervision relationship.

C38: Eventually I said something to the effect that he had given me—that he couldn't say it himself, but if he didn't mind if I said it.

S39: When you say "eventually," are you thinking that the timing of that was good or you wonder if it might have been earlier?

A39: The supervisor picks up on the counselor's choice of the word "eventually." The direct question seeks clarification of the counselor's intent. Is he feeling that his non-directivity was ultimately productive, or is he still questioning doing more sooner? Note how the supervisor's response facilitates the counselor's self-directed evaluation (Factor 3).

C39: Well, basically all of that happened at the end of our time working together, and then eventually he did tell me his secret, and that occurred actually right before termination that he was able to tell me. In fact, he was scheduled for discharge less than a week later. I didn't really have to push him but he, in time he became more open to that.

S40: It sounds like you're saying you did it at a time that seemed right for you. You didn't do it too fast but you felt that you had to fit it in before the end.

A40: The supervisor completely misunderstands the counselor in S40. He is perhaps assuming that the counselor's comment in C39 ("Eventually I said something...") meant that the counselor felt some pressure to be more active in encouraging the client to disclose before the end. But the counselor is saying that the client chose the timing of his disclosure. He did it himself.

C40: No. What I am saying is I never said what—he told me what the secret was without me asking him to.
S41: It’s been a half-hour. Has this been useful?
A41: The counselor’s emphatic “No” emphasizes a failed Factor 1 attempt by the supervisor. It is unclear how it is that the supervisor so completely misunderstood. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that the counselor felt free to disagree. In an invited address, Kazdin (2006) recommends that counselors integrate client satisfaction, usefulness, and helpfulness ratings into their ongoing work with clients (Factors 2, 3, and 5 are especially relevant here). Supervisors are likewise responsible to use formative, summative, and follow-up assessments in their work with counselors. S41 asks if the session was helpful. It shows the supervisor’s concern with Factor 3: evaluation of his supervision.
C41: Yes. I think you really understood my feeling of uncertainty and being stuck and questioning what direction I should have taken.

**Discussion**

We believe that the five-factor model applied well to the counselor-supervisor relationship. The interview demonstrated the facilitating effects of core-conditions communication in client-centered supervision. The counselor set the pace, and the supervisor was primarily a nondirective listener.

Based on input from the counselor after the session, we learned that the counselor became more aware of and able to express personal anxieties and doubts as the non-evaluative climate promoted feelings of self-acceptance. The counselor experienced increasing freedom to acknowledge and express more vulnerable feelings as a relatively new therapist. The supervisor was patient with and accepting of the counselor’s uncertainty, and the counselor became more congruent and self-accepting. Two supervisor responses, admiring the counselor’s patience and claiming the counselor to be “very genuine,” exemplify that the CC supervisor is him or herself striving to be genuine in the relationship (Rogers, 1980).
References


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