



Chapter 16

Training Counselors to Provide Online Supervision

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It is a commonly voiced phrase that “things are changing rapidly with technology.” Fifteen years ago, the topic and methods described in this chapter would have been considered science fiction. Back then, today’s technologies were just beginning to emerge, and only a handful of technology specialists—and fewer counseling professionals—were able to use the devices we commonly use now to communicate via the Internet with family and friends. Desktop videoconferencing had just come into play in the late 1990s. I (Marty Jencius) recall spending more than a few weeks with a colleague hooking up our computer cameras, registering them with a videoconferencing server, and attempting to connect with video and audio so we could video chat through the Internet (when we were just down the hall from each other). We struggled through multiple computer port assignments, new video card drivers that needed to be loaded, individualized hardware and software settings, and fluctuating Internet speed. All of the parts had to fall into place for videoconferencing to work, and when it did, it seemed almost idiosyncratic. There was a certain pride in being a pioneer techie in a nontechnology field like counseling. Today, with improved software and hardware, videoconferencing, for example, is *ubiquitous*, and users do not realize that they are interacting through a machine. Those forming a digital connection are transcending corporal boundaries and accessing their own *virtual presence*, capable of transferring emotion as well as content (Jencius, 2013). The connection is available as soon as you turn on your computer or portable device.

The ready availability of ubiquitous technology means that it is easy for the nontech supervisor to consider the possibility of providing online supervision. Technology platforms become particularly enticing to supervisors who attempt to provide supervision to counselors working at a distance, for example, in rural

areas (Wood, Miller, & Hargrove, 2005). A parallel process evolved: As counselors were developing methods to provide distance counseling via technology, supervisors were considering providing supervision using that same technology infrastructure (Jencius, Baltimore, & Gertz, 2010). In the past 10 years, telehealth methods have advanced in technology platforms to become faster, clearer, and more secure and to offer an easier learning curve for professionals who want to incorporate these methods into their practice.

It is important to note that in the process of writing a chapter about providing training in online supervision, we became acutely aware that it is difficult to separate the process of training online supervision from the act of providing online supervision. If the objective of training is to develop effective online supervisors, by looking at the expected outcome skill set, we can determine what types of activities can be essential in this process.

This chapter addresses some of the historical precedents of providing education in online supervision by first looking at models of how educators are training supervisors in an online environment to provide traditional face-to-face supervision. Next, we discuss advances in technology that allow for the provision of distance supervision, with examples of how online educators are adapting training in supervision to the online environment. The chapter suggests a format for the provision of online class instruction of online supervision, taking into consideration the outcome skills that an online supervisor should have as a result of taking such a class. The chapter concludes with a cautionary tale regarding the training of ethical online supervisors.

Methods of Supervision

Traditional Methods

Bernard and Goodyear (2014) defined supervision practice by highlighting its role in helping counselors to develop counseling skills. These authors asserted that counseling skills, or any specialized skills for that matter, do not develop in a vacuum. Rather, counselors' skill development ought to be accompanied by regular feedback and opportunities for guided reflection (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Otherwise, how do counselors really know that they are actually growing or improving their skill sets? One can extend this logic to the development of counseling supervisors' skill sets as well. In other words, supervisors need supervision of their supervision in order to grow and have a positive impact on their supervisees (Watkins, 2011). Here, we review several traditional approaches as well as technological innovations in supervision. The purpose of this chapter is to present strategies for training supervisors who plan to use technology-assisted interventions in their practice.

Supervisors are faced with the reality that they frequently develop skills while functioning in their professional roles. The work environment has been found to be the most influential and least controllable influence on the supervision process (Milne, Aylott, Fitzpatrick, & Ellis, 2008). Accordingly, workplace demands necessitate efficient yet effective approaches to meeting the requirements of supervision (Miller, Miller, & Evans, 2002; Watkins, 2011) while attending to supervisors' skill development (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). A number of supervision methods have been developed to assist with the provision and training of supervision that (a) account for workplace demands and environmental effects on supervisors' de-

velopment, (b) increase access to a supervisee's work with clients, and (c) provide ways for supervisors and supervisees to reexperience counseling sessions for supervisor evaluation (Huhra, Yamokoski-Maynhart, & Prieto, 2008).

Supervision historically moved through a series of developmental transitions in the adoption of technology (Jencius et al., 2010). Rogers (1942) used audiotape to record sessions. The development of a viable publicly available Internet and the later development of Web 2.0, the social Web, created a platform for technology-based online supervision (Jencius et al., 2010). New online technologies that allow for multiple computer screens and shared audio and video (all from separate locations) have not been fully explored in supervision practice. A brief description of each traditional method is presented here along with our observations on their utility for the training of supervisors. We believe that all live supervision methods need to include a rationale for use, intentional sequencing, appropriate timing, and agreement on the type of feedback to be offered and need to be established between supervisors and supervisees prior to their implementation.

Synchronous Approaches to Supervision

Live Observation

Live observation approaches to supervision have historically been noted in the literature (Borders & Brown, 2005). Among these approaches is the knock-on-the-door method, which involves the supervisor interrupting the counseling session either to meet with the counselor individually or to join in the session to enhance the effectiveness of the counseling session (Miller et al., 2002). Similarly, supervisors would deliver messages by calling in to a counseling session using a telephone located in the counseling room. Today, the utility and efficiency of live supervision approaches in most community mental health settings are limited because of scheduling difficulties (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014) and the cost demands associated with a productivity-driven workplace. However, live supervision approaches have set a precedent for the use of real-time supervision interactions to train counselors and supervisors. In fact, we view live supervision as a precursor to the synchronous technology-assisted supervision approaches discussed elsewhere in this book.

Bug-in-the-Ear

The bug-in-the-ear approach is a less obtrusive approach to bringing the supervisor into the room with a counselor and client than a knock on the door or a telephone ring (Jencius et al., 2010). This method facilitates supervision through the use of earbuds worn by counselors while conducting sessions. Counselors are better able to hear supervisor feedback and incorporate directives through technology without disrupting the counseling session. Although being able to receive feedback and incorporate it into the counseling session via this approach takes some time, with experience, the supervisee can discriminate supervisor input. One can imagine the challenges of attending to several voices while conducting a session: the client's dialogue, the inner dialogue of the counselor, and the in-the-ear messages of a supervisor.

Bug-in-the-Eye

Monitor text or bug-in-the-eye (Klitze & Lombardo, 1991) methods involve supervisors typing prompts to supervisees via computer monitors during counseling sessions. The use of computer monitors allows counselors to glance at directives

at their discretion. However, it is important that supervisors who use this technology be mindful not to overwhelm their supervisees by sending too much information too often (Jencius et al., 2010), as it may diminish the effectiveness of both the supervision and the counseling process (Miller et al., 2002). Supervisees experience the benefits of real-time feedback without voice, phone, or knock-on-the-door distractions. However, visually impaired supervisees may not benefit from this approach. Furthermore, computer literacy is essential, as is the necessary equipment to implement this approach, which may be too expensive for some.

Asynchronous Approaches to Supervision

Audio Recording

Audio recording uses analog or digital devices to capture the dialogue between counselors and clients. These recordings are stored securely (e.g., stored in a locked office drawer, transmitted via encrypted software). Then, preselected segments from the recording are used in supervision to assist counselors with their development and to plan appropriate interventions for clients (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). It has been our experience as supervisors that the use of audio recordings can enhance the accuracy and representativeness of the counseling experience. We agree with Bernard and Goodyear (2014) that reliance on supervisee self-reports and case notes alone is not always in the best interest of the client's welfare and supervisees' development as counselors. Furthermore, like all methods of supervision, the use of audio recordings in supervision necessitates planning and consistent follow-through by both supervisors and supervisees. Finally, our clinical and educational experiences resonate with Bernard and Goodyear's position that the use of audio recordings should evolve from a high level of control by the supervisor (e.g., telling the supervisee what to listen for, instructing the supervisee to transcribe audio recordings, providing formal written critiques of recordings, and using a structured format) to empower supervisees to take responsibility for reviewing and producing meaningful segments that best support their development and effective counseling.

Videotapes/Digital Recording

Supervisors can view supervisee behaviors, contextualize verbal exchanges, and directly view nonverbal behaviors during supervision using video-recorded segments. Video recordings, like audio recordings, provide supervisors and supervisees with work samples that can be securely stored and repeatedly viewed. We have found value in using video recordings to increase supervisees' learning potential via repeated re-viewings of their practice. We also have benefitted from having video recordings as evidence when problems or liability concerns have arisen while we have been functioning in our supervisory gate-keeping roles.

New Methods

Online supervision in its current practice typically consists of face-to-face videoconferencing with the supervisee and supervisor (Rousmaniere, Abbass, Fredrickson, & Taubner, 2014). Using face-to-face videoconferencing involves using a new technology to provide an old supervision format instead of considering the new and unique opportunities that the technology can provide. An extension of the use of videoconferencing would be to include video-streamed portions

of client sessions for review in supervision or to provide in vivo supervision for counselors as they are seeing their clients online. Similarly, a supervisor could provide bug-in-the-eye or bug-in-the-ear supervision through multiple screens or multiple devices from a distance. The advent of wearable technology such as Google Glass or Apple Watch would allow for bug-in-the-eye supervision to occur in a more ubiquitous fashion when a counselor is working with a client.

Approaches to Training Supervisors, Feasibility, and Available Resources

University counselor education programs and community agencies vary in their expertise and approaches to providing supervision, capacity to implement multiple methods of supervision, and available resources to complete these tasks. We suggest, particularly in the early stages of a counselor's training, that supervisors use a combination of synchronous and asynchronous methods for supervision. For example, beginning counselors supervised by new supervisors (under the supervision of experienced supervisors) ought to use some means of obtaining a work sample (e.g., audio or video recording) and be available for live supervision in the event of client concerns (e.g., when conducting a suicide assessment with a severely depressed client). Later, as both counselors and supervisors-in-training increase their skill sets, supervision methods can move toward empowering the developing supervisors to monitor and evaluate their progress and the progress of the counselors-in-training.

Foundations of Online Counseling Supervision

Supervision is recognized as a distinct practice used to train mental health practitioners to increase their counseling competencies, ability to function more autonomously, and ability to make appropriate ethical clinical judgments while dealing with complex clinical issues (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Homrich, DeLorenzi, Bloom, & Godbee, 2014; Watkins, 2011). In higher education, one would not assume that a graduate student would necessarily make a competent instructor simply because he or she had participated in courses while a student. The same holds true for supervision in counseling, meaning that competent counselors do not necessarily make competent supervisors without some training in the practice of supervision (Borders, 2014; Borders et al., 2014). In fact, it is practice with regular structured feedback that provides counselors with the means of developing skills in supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

Recognizing the essential role of supervision in preparing counselors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), the counseling profession developed standards for best practices in supervision (viz. American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Taskforce on Best Practices in Clinical Supervision, 2011; Borders, 2014; Borders et al., 2014). In addition, state regulatory boards (e.g., state licensure boards) and accrediting bodies (e.g., the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP]) have acknowledged the importance and centrality of supervision by creating regulations for the training and practice of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). The profession of counseling, among other disciplines like psychology and social work, has offered credentialing for counseling supervisors (e.g., the National Board for Certified Counselors).

Taken together, these organizations serve the purpose of legitimizing the practice of supervision and creating guidelines for implementation rooted in expert consensus and the extant literature (Borders, 2014; Borders et al., 2014). In their seminal work *Fundamentals of Clinical Supervision*, Bernard and Goodyear (2014) offered a concise and practical breakdown of regulatory boards, credentialing groups, and accrediting bodies' respective roles regarding supervision practice.

Training Supervisors

From an educational perspective, supervision regulations and standards for practice impact counselor education programs' efforts to train competent supervisors. For example, most counselor education doctoral programs offer a formal course in the supervision of counseling to meet CACREP (2009) standards (see CACREP Doctoral Standards, Section IV, A.1–4, B.1–2). Clinically speaking, regulatory bodies outline the qualifications, frequency, amount, and activities associated with supervision. Also, supervision standards promote counseling supervisors' ethical accountability to quality practice and the promotion of client welfare (see the *ACA Code of Ethics*; ACA, 2014).

Competence in Online Supervision

Online supervision competence is mentioned in the *ACA Code of Ethics* (ACA, 2014). According to Standard F.2.c., "when using technology in supervision, counselor supervisors are competent in the use of those technologies." This begs the questions: (a) How do supervisors become competent in the use of those technologies? and (b) How do supervisors integrate their technology competencies into practice?

From a training perspective, it would seem that developing online supervision competencies is at least a twofold process, beginning with knowing how to use technology in the counseling field and progressing to applying it within a counseling specialty area (e.g., clinical supervision). To address the first issue, Coursol and Lewis (2003) provided guidance on developing and implementing a course in technology in counselor education. These authors suggested providing training in the use and application of software and hardware, affording hands-on experiential activities with technology, and offering opportunities to apply technology skills within a variety of counseling specialization areas.

Developing a course in technology in counselor education suggests the intentional integration of technology when developing the syllabus, choosing topics and class activities, designing assignments, providing feedback, and outlining the necessary technology requirements to make the class work (Coursol & Lewis, 2003). There are pedagogical implications of extending technology competencies to supervision in counseling. In other words, we believe that having existing competence in technology (e.g., e-mail, videoconferencing, e-learning instructional tools) is essential to designing and conducting training in online supervision.

Online Supervision Credentialing

One effort toward credentialing the practice of distance counseling can be found at the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE; www.cce-global.org). The CCE was established to assist the National Board for Certified Counselors with managing and administrating its credentialing efforts. The CCE offers a creden-

tial in distance counseling called the Distance Credentialed Counselor (DCC; www.cce-global.org/dcc). The DCC is offered as a nationally recognized credential supporting the merits of training in best practices in distance counseling.

The DCC posits training in best practices in distance counseling through the adaptation of traditional counseling approaches for delivery to clients via electronic means, thus improving access, reach, and convenience. Transferring this logic to the credentialing of distance supervision, training in distance supervision could improve the supervisor's capacity to build on traditional supervision practices by adopting technology to deliver supervision via electronic means. Thus, one could conceive of a credential parallel to the DCC, a Distance Credentialed Supervisor. However, to date, credentialing criteria have not been developed by the CCE for the provision of technology-assisted supervision. The CCE does offer a 30-hour online training course to become an Approved Clinical Supervisor.

A Training Class for Online Supervision

Psychotherapy supervision and training are widely available online and include the application of a varied range of new technologies (e.g., Rousmaniere et al., 2014). However, despite this, we were unable to locate methods for training supervisors in online supervision. In this section, we propose a curriculum for an online supervision course, built from the best practices utilized in training counselor supervisors. Participation in the proposed course assumes that *attendees have had training in supervision—preferably experience in traditional face-to-face supervision—*prior to taking this course and engaging in online supervision.

Learning outcomes should drive pedagogy when one is thinking about utilizing a new method of instruction. Popular in professional development curriculum circles is the concept of backward design. Backward design is a method of designing a curriculum that first looks at setting goals (identified results), then looks at ways to assess results, and then designs the activities that make the desired results occur. Our approach to designing a course for training online supervisors begins with the desired outcomes in mind (e.g., the qualities of proficient online supervisors who have successfully navigated the curricular and experiential dimensions of the course). Next, we develop a way to assess these outcomes or online supervisor qualities. Finally, we create virtual assignments and classroom activities that will work toward obtaining the desired results.

Objective of the Class

The objective of the class is to prepare supervisors, who have had prior training in traditional supervision methods, to use an online format to provide supervision to practicing counselors. To that end, the course emphasizes the application of technology. In addition to the session topics proposed here, and inherent in the discussion of the role of supervision, other topics seen in the Approved Clinical Supervisor (CCE, 2014) training will be broached. Other topics include the role and functions of the clinical supervisor, models of supervision, techniques and interventions, supervision process, ethics, and evaluation.

Online Supervisor Training Outcomes

Participants in the Online Supervision Course will do the following:

Technology

- Be able to manage the technology associated with a secure online platform
- Be able to establish a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)-compliant platform
- Know how to minimize the risk associated with transferring sensitive information
- Know preferred platforms for providing supervision
- Know how to address scenarios when technology fails

Theory and Foundation

- Know and apply a variety of supervision theories to online supervision cases
- Know and apply ethics associated with supervision
- Know how to establish a supervision contract online
- Be able to form effective supervisory relationships
- Perform a supervisee needs assessment

Ethics

- Address local and regional licensure limits in providing online supervision
- Know and endorse appropriate online supervision certifications
- Apply supervision ethics in a digital format
- Acknowledge and address cross-cultural issues in supervision and know how they manifest online

Consultation and Practice

- Perform a case analysis
- Devise an online supervision plan
- Demonstrate individual, group, and live supervision

Recommended Course Texts

In addition to this book, we would recommend the following texts as support for learning how to work in an online environment:

Evans, J. (2009). *Online counselling and guidance skills: A practical resource for trainees and practitioners*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Jones, G., & Stokes, A. (2009). *Online counselling: A handbook for practitioners*. London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Course Delivery

The course can and should be delivered through an online format. This would train, engage, and assess supervisors-in-training with the platform that they would eventually be utilizing in practice. Supervisors-in-training should have adequate knowledge of and be able to use a computer before partaking in an online course of this intensity. Our recommendation is that trainees have at a minimum the skills included in the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (2007) *Technical Competencies for Counselor Education* prior to trying to engage in online training. These technical competencies include competencies in e-mail, word processing, webpage development, spreadsheets, electronic bulletin boards, videoconferencing equipment, multimedia software, searching and evaluating websites, the ethical and legal implications of service delivery, and basic computer maintenance (including security measures). The course format should include a platform that will allow for

multiple supervisors with synchronous and asynchronous components. A synchronous platform will allow enrollees in the course to meet simultaneously and work through sample online supervision concerns. The synchronous format also allows for an online live fishbowl process by having a supervisee available to connect during the training session. Asynchronous instruction can contain content for review on traditional supervision approaches, ethics codes regarding online service delivery, direction establishing secure connections, and other documents used in creating an online supervision environment.

As we have stated, the use of technology in supervision training is the norm, not the exception. The extent to which technology can be infused in the teaching of clinical supervision is in need of further elaboration (Jencius et al., 2010). Accordingly, we offer a process, content, and materials to provide educators with a starting point for designing and implementing a course in training online supervisors.

A Sample Online Supervision Training Class

In the interest of creating a replicable, adaptable, and transferable curriculum, we have organized the class sessions into (a) session rationale, (b) session content, (c) session process, (d) session materials/resources, and (e) instructor considerations for adapting supervision training to an online platform.

Session 1: Applying Distance Technologies to Supervision

Session Rationale

Those providing online supervision need to know the types of distance technology and their application to counseling supervision. Distance supervisors need to know how to use the technology that will be subsequently used in supervision practice. This session reviews technology applications and discusses their use for synchronous and asynchronous supervision activities.

Session Content

The session includes asynchronous content regarding various platforms by which online counseling and online supervision are provided. A rubric of platforms, including necessary hardware, software, portability on multiple platforms and devices, advantages, disadvantages, and rationale for choice is presented to trainees. Trainees are given associate websites to review the platforms.

Session Process

Students in the online *synchronous* course are divided into dyads to create conversations around various types of distance technology and their potential use for supervision. The dyads report back to the full class, and others in the class can contribute to the dyads' responses. The course instructor creates a common client problem and initiates the supervision responses using each technology in a demonstration. Dyads discuss possible platform uses, deterrents to use, technical limitations, and accommodating a technology failure.

Session Materials/Resources

The platforms assigned include e-mail, videoconferencing, text messaging, and virtual world.

Instructor Considerations

Instructors leading this session need to be apprised of current advances in technology. At this stage of the training, the case example ought to allow trainees to focus on the technology application/adaptation and not the clinical complexity of the case. The goal for this session is technology adaptation. Subsequent session exercises will address clinical complexity as supervisors-in-training master the platforms.

Session 2: Ethics and Distance Supervision

Session Rationale

Online supervisors need to know and practice ethical considerations in an online environment, including supervisee self-care, differences in informed consent, potential electronic dual relationships, and so on. The goal of the session is for trainees to be sensitized to potential ethical issues in an environment that could lead to ethical disinhibition.

Session Content

The session content includes reviewing Section F (Supervision, Training, and Teaching) and Section H (Distance Counseling, Technology, and Social Media) of the *ACA Code of Ethics* (ACA, 2014), developing an informed consent with the supervisee, and addressing concerns of dual online relationships in supervision.

Session Process

Students in the online course first read resources, review, and take an online test with regard to providing counseling and supervision in an online platform. This is done prior to the online session meeting. During the synchronous class meeting, students will discuss the nature of ethical concerns with online supervision.

Session Materials/Resources

Ethics codes are used, highlighting those portions that relate to the practice of technology-assisted counseling and supervision. Multiple ethical dilemma case scenarios are discussed from an online counseling and supervision perspective. A model online informed consent for an online supervisor to use with a supervisee that is modeled after Kaplan, Wade, Conteh, and Martz (2011) and Jencius (2014) is distributed.

Instructor Considerations

The instructor should take care in providing students with a wide array of ethical dilemmas to resolve. Dilemmas are discussed in dyads separate from the general discussion and then returned to the large group for collaborative learning. The synchronous dyad/large group process takes a considerable amount of technical skill and should be test-run at the end of Session 1.

Session 3: Conducting Distance Supervision

Session Rationale

Online supervisors need to know and convey to their trainees security and privacy issues associated with the provision of online supervision services. Online supervisors know how to create safe and secure online communications and record keeping.

Session Content

Online content available for review prior to the class synchronous meeting includes HIPAA regulations, with sections relevant to online provision of services highlighted. Information on what a business associate agreement is, platform providers who form business associate agreements, and initiating such an agreement with a provider is addressed during the synchronous session. A list of encryption methods for data storage and data transmission is provided. The session covers methods to limit privileged communication content and still receive consultation on cases.

Session Process

The session process is a synchronous review of documents highlighting the processes of addressing HIPAA regulations, forming a business associate agreement, and ensuring encryption of transmitted conversations and docu-

ments. The whole class leads a step-by-step construction of a fictitious secure and confidential online supervision practice.

Session Materials/Resources

Session materials include HIPAA regulations, with a bullet/comment tag for relevant regulations and what they mean in terms of practice; a description of what encryption is, levels of encryption that are considered secure for the transmission of sensitive data, and platform providers that meet encryption specifications; and a sample business associate agreement with practice points highlighted.

Instructor Considerations

The process for this class is more psychoeducational and less dyad/small-group work. There is content to be reviewed and expanded on, including a simulated setup for a compliant practice.

**Session 4:
Adapting Counseling and Supervision Models to Distance Supervision**

Session Rationale

Online supervisors should be aware of supervision models and counseling models that apply to the online supervision process.

Session Content

Online supervisors need to review their personal theory of change, their counseling theory, and their supervision model to anticipate how they will adapt their process of live face-to-face supervision to online supervision.

Session Process

Materials related to an overview of counseling theories and supervision theories (discrimination model, integrated developmental model, etc.) are available asynchronously in preparation for online class discussion. Pair-and-share in attendee online group rooms occurs as a way to stimulate a larger whole-class discussion that is centered on a particular scripted supervision case.

Session Materials/Resources

Session materials include online materials related to an overview of counseling theories and an overview of supervision theories and approaches. A sample case is created by the instructor for use in large-group discussion.

Instructor Considerations

Students in a strenuous online discussion look at their personal theory of counseling, the model(s) of supervision that they practice, and how these may interact in an online supervision exchange. A sample supervision case is presented, and students describe how their counseling/supervision model impacts the approach they would take with the case and the supervisee.

Session 5: Distance Supervision Case Vignettes

Session Rationale

Online supervisors need to have experience practicing and simulating supervision experiences through the online medium before they practice with real supervision scenarios. Trainees are provided with online supervision simulations that cover some of the learning experiences covered thus far in the course. Trainees use case vignettes to guide the experiential activities while under the supervision of the course instructor.

Session Content

The following vignettes and others are generated by the course instructor:

- Practice and evaluate skills in establishing a supervisory relationship
- Obtain informed consent to engage in online supervision
- Address dual relationship and supervisor/supervisee boundary issues
- Discuss values differences with supervision
- Identify and address diversity competency issues in online supervision

Example Vignette: Structuring Online Supervision

You have been asked to provide distance supervision to an intern who works for a satellite branch of your agency. Your agency has the technology for you to videoconference with the intern weekly. The agency has a secure server for e-mail transmissions. Electronic client records are available at all agency locations, making shared access to client files possible.

You have corresponded with the intern and agreed to hold your first online supervision session. The following prompts are intended to prepare you and the intern for your first session.

As the supervisor, what do you need to prepare for your first meeting?

- Secure/private location
- Supervision contract
- Phone (as backup)
- Access to electronic client records
- Method/format for documenting supervision meetings

Other: _____

1. Based on what you have learned in the course so far, what should the supervisee do to prepare for your first online meeting?
Please list below.
2. Compose a brief (2–3 short paragraphs) e-mail prompting the supervisee to prepare in accordance with the e-mail directives.

Session Process

Students are grouped into dyads and given a vignette. Each dyad is asked to prepare a 15- to 20-minute live (online) demonstration according to the instructor's guidelines/rubric around a relevant topic (e.g., role-play building relationships during the first supervision session, structure the nature of online supervision). An example e-mail and completed supervision contract should accompany the demonstration and will be turned in to the instructor.

Session Materials/Resources

Case vignettes are provided by the instructor via a course management system (e.g., Blackboard, Edumodo). Students need access to a recording device and must be able to transfer data digitally to the instructor for review.

Instructor Considerations

Simulations of case consultation issues are completed online with synchronous group observations of students attempting to provide supervision to other class students using fictitious cases. The purpose of this experience is for the instructor and students to observe the kind of digital presence that a student has with his or her supervisee. It is a fairly high-tech skilled process to be able to make the class observations possible.

Session 6+: Developing the Distance Supervision Group

Session Rationale

Online supervisors benefit from instruction that includes application to real experiences. For Session 6 and beyond, the online class turns into an online supervision group to which trainees bring their experiences working with online supervisees.

Session Content

The trainees who bring online supervision experiences to the group each week provide the class content. They are allowed to share and get group supervision from other trainees.

Session Process

Trainees have the opportunity to present a case from the week before, and they prepare information for their classmates to use in assisting them in their supervision. The class instructor organizes and manages the group process.

Session Materials/Resources

Trainees bring experiences as content for class discussion. The class instructor assumes process and platform responsibilities.

Instructor Considerations

At this point, the class momentum changes from instructor driven to trainee driven.

Follow-Up Sessions

Trainees are given the opportunity to meet at a later date, weeks after the class, to review and discuss their online supervisor experiences and share them with their cohort.

Ethical Considerations for Training Online Supervisors

How an instructor uses the virtual environment to ethically train online supervisors is the focus of this section. The practice of ethically training online supervisors may be factored by the concept of *persuasive computing* (Fogg, 2003). Persuasive computing involves creating environments, learning experiences, and online content that is designed to change the attitudes or behaviors of the user through repetitive interaction. The creation of a safe and ethical virtual environment begins with instructors' ethical use of technology, as instructors are charged with influencing the attitudes and behaviors of their students.

According to Nelson, Nichter, and Henriksen (2010), ethical considerations for Web-based counseling identified in the research should be applied to the practice of online supervision. We extend these considerations further to include the practice of training ethically competent online supervisors, namely, the equivalence of online supervision training compared to face-to-face supervision training (Panos, Panos, Cox, Roby, & Matheson, 2002). We take the position that ethical online supervisor training considers students' technology competencies and the availability of resources to access and participate in the course. Students' comfort with and competency in technology is linked to satisfaction with online supervision (see Chapman, Baker, Nassar-McMillan, & Gerler, 2011; Coker, Jones, Staples, & Harbach, 2002; Conn, Roberts, & Powell, 2009). In this section, we offer information on ethical approaches to (a) ensuring the confidentiality and security of information; (b) securing informed consent among students, clients, and instructors; (c) developing crisis management and emergency contact protocols; and (d) managing boundaries and dual relationships.

Confidentiality and Security of Information

According to Nelson et al. (2010), ethical practices are "fundamental to all clinical supervision regardless of supervision delivery modality" (p. 4). The exchange of information during online supervision needs to be secure, protecting client information

and all clinical records (e.g., progress notes, assessments). Supervisee work samples, such as digital/recorded information containing supervisor–counselor interactions, need to be uploaded or transmitted to a secure server. When providing courses or trainings for online supervisors, instructors need to factor in any security measures that will be taken or that are feasible in order to protect client information.

Instructors who offer online supervision training in a distance learning environment (online vs. in person) need to ensure that course attendees are in secure locations when discussing the details of client cases or supervision interactions to protect client information. For example, if a course attendee is engaging in a synchronous discussion of his or her supervision, this interaction should transpire in a room with a closed door to prevent others from listening in. Course attendees (i.e., online supervisors-in-training) should never discuss client or supervisee issues in public places, like coffee houses, restaurants, or hotel lobbies. Online supervisors-in-training need to protect the confidentiality of their supervisees by applying the same principles used to protect client information.

Finally, instructors need to be informed of local and federal laws regarding the transfer of sensitive medical information (e.g., HIPAA). See Chapter 2 for more information on this topic.

Informed Consent

All ethical instructors utilize informed consent and have—either as a part of it or as a separate document—a statement of the risks and benefits of using technology and an online supervision training platform. Incorporating computer-mediated communication into teaching practice requires additional considerations for inclusion in these documents (e.g., incorporated into the course syllabus and/or posted on the course information management system). The informed consent should include:

- The distance counseling credentials of the instructor
- The risks and benefits of using computer-mediated communication in supervision
- What to do in case of technology failure
- Anticipated response time
- Emergency procedures
- Cultural differences
- Time zone differences
- Potential denial of benefits for this service

Included in the informed consent is the practitioner’s social media policy (see below). Section H.2. of the *ACA Code of Ethics* (ACA, 2014) and the National Board for Certified Counselors (2012) suggest that counselors connecting with clients online note in their informed consent links to all professional certification sites to facilitate consumer protection, procedures for contacting counselors offline, an indication of how often e-mail will be checked, backup plans for cases of technology failure, information about coping with misunderstandings as a limit of the medium, and information about local assistance and emergencies. Some supervisors also include a waiver to hold harmless issues that are unique to the online platform: the student’s e-mail being breached by a partner, a text

message mistake, or a hardware or Internet crash. As in all informed consents, there should be statements regarding when students/supervisors have a legal and ethical duty to break confidentiality if there are safety issues or as mandated by the court.

Crisis Management and Emergency Contact Protocol

Crisis situations may be discussed using synchronous or asynchronous modalities. Instructors should explain the protocol for crisis-related events at the start of instruction and throughout the course. Consultation with course instructors about crisis events is not a replacement for the protocol in place at the respective supervisors'/students' sites. Instructors can manage crisis situations with students and then use these experiences as teachable moments emphasizing the role of technology and the online supervision platform. Teachable moments may be processed by the group via discussion boards or synchronously through videoconferencing. Individual consultations may be offered and followed up via e-mail correspondence on a secure server. Students are charged with being aware of and responsible for these policies and protocols. We recommend that instructors include a phone number to text/chat/call with explicit instructions to deidentify client information in these types of exchanges—waiting instead for a secure line of communication to discuss details and an action plan. Specifically, we recommend that details of crisis events and plans of action be discussed using synchronous communication (e.g., videoconferencing, phone).

We recommend that course syllabi and course sites include language about crisis management. Instructors training online supervisors should provide the following:

- Their cell phone number and availability
- At least one e-mail address that is frequently checked and an alternate if needed
- A disclaimer deferring to agency/site policies and protocols regarding clinical emergencies
- A disclaimer about using social media to vet crisis concerns (i.e., Don't do it!)

Finally, course instructors ought to have a plan detailing coverage in the event of illness or unforeseen events so that students have assurances that their crisis needs will be met. In the event of technology failure, instructors need in-person, phone, and other backup options to address students' crisis needs.

Boundaries and Dual Relationships

Kaplan et al. (2011) raised the issue of the potential for dual relationships when counselors are using computer-mediated communication. For example, there is the potential that trainees will be exposed to more personal aspects of the supervisor/course instructor should they find a digital trace of the counselor's personal social media site. Social media contact with clients has the potential to enhance and support client improvement and, therefore, is not immediately ethically excluded as a dual relationship. We extend this logic to the relationships between supervisors (and, specifically, those who train supervisors to provide online supervision) and supervisees. Accord-

ingly, boundaries must also be clearly stated. Having a clearly written social media policy for your practice can clearly define the boundaries and help you avoid most boundary issues with supervisees.

In addition, counseling professionals who use social media should separate their personal digital footprint from their professional digital footprint: separate Twitter accounts, separate Facebook accounts, separate e-mail accounts for use with friends and clients. Instructors should be diligent in learning about security controls that specify who is allowed access to personal sites and contact information. We are in a profession in which clients may be curious about our private lives, and we have to take the extra step to learn how to lock down permissions and secure our digital private lives. However, even though you discuss social media policies with your supervisees and include this information in your informed consent, you still might inevitably have to deal with the issue of a friend or follow request from a student or supervisee. How you choose to respond and the rationale for your accepting or not accepting the request may have implications for your instructor–supervisee relationship. In this case, it is best to establish a social media policy that addresses directly what you will do or not do should you get a friend request from a student or supervisee and stick with your policy.

Technology Use and the Phenomenon of Disinhibition: A Cautionary Tale

The development of Web 2.0 technologies (social networking, microblogging and blogging, synchronous messaging, virtual worlds) came to prominence beginning in 2004, with the development of Facebook and similar social networks. Given these trends, it is no surprise that technology use has become ubiquitous (Weiser, 1991), and the experience of technology has become more seamless, leaving users with the sense that they are not really working on a computer.

As a result of computing being ubiquitous, supervisors and supervisees may be subject to the *online disinhibition effect*, in which they may self-disclose or act out more frequently or at a greater level than they would in regular face-to-face interactions (Suler, 2004). We have noticed this phenomenon of disinhibition in our observations of conduct on social media, students' descriptions of experiencing online relational aggression, and our recollections of e-mail that should have been placed in the draft folder before being sent. Therefore, training online supervisors requires instructors to monitor their biases and pay particular attention to their own disinhibition and the emotional safety net offered by asynchronous virtual communication. To counter this, we suggest that instructors offer individual consultations and/or virtual office hours.

Ethical supervision instructors take the time to reflect on their correspondence with trainees when offering educational feedback. Instructors' directives or gate-keeping interactions with trainees who are not practicing appropriately should be clear. Instructors need to monitor for any evidence of trainees' disinhibition and seek their own supervision, as well. Instructors should include social media policies discouraging trainees from discussing class experiences on Facebook and the like. Finally, informal rants or discussions about frustrations with supervisees or the class should be discouraged in favor of addressing issues directly with the instructor. Consequences for the misuse of social media outlets should be clearly outlined at the start of the course.

Conclusion

It is safe to say that the training of online supervisors is new pedagogical territory in counseling and related disciplines. The increasing demands placed on counselor training programs for flexible and relevant curricula warrant the use of technology and distance learning approaches to meet institutional demands and students' needs. This includes the use of distance or technology-assisted supervision approaches. Despite the paucity of information on approaches to training distance supervisors, we have reviewed the available literature, drawing parallels from in-person supervision approaches and suggesting adaptations for training online supervisors. We have also outlined the basic structure for a course on training online supervisors, including objectives, technology requirements, considerations for instructors, and a six-session curriculum.

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