Participant 1

Speaker 1: So I'm going to ask you some questions about your experiences when you use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees. During the questions, it might be helpful for you to think about an experience or some experiences you've had with supervisees where you've kind of promoted their awareness or self-awareness, that relationship about others and maybe what it's been like for you holding those in your mind a little bit.

Speaker 2: Okay

Speaker 1: So some of the questions might seem repetitive, but they might have a little bit of a different direction. Some of them might be focused on your experience of yourself like your thoughts, your feelings, even sematic awareness like, Is something every scary? And some of them are going to be directed towards your experience of your supervisee, what you think is going on with them, maybe even the client. So I'm trying to slow things down and find out some common themes and experiences with using supervision to promote self and relational awareness. So that's my introduction. Any questions about that?

Speaker 2: No, I don't think so.

Speaker 1: Any questions about anything in the consent form or anything like that?

Speaker 2: No. No, it was clear. Yeah, it was good.

Speaker 1: Or concerns? Okay. Okay. So what are your... I'm starting. Okay, so there's about 10 questions, and I'm going to write a little bit even though I'm recording. What are your general thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees, about the meaning of it?

Speaker 2: The meaning of it... So, I mean, first of all, I think it's very important, and I think it's at least a very natural thing for me. But I don't know if it's always a natural thing for the people that I supervise. And what I mean by that I see counseling as so incredibly relational. So we're bringing our own body into the room, but we're bringing so many other things into the room about ourselves. I think just being aware of what things we bring into room just as a person and how that might impact the relationship that I have with the person that I'm counseling, and I also think the relationship that I have with my supervisor or even my supervisee... I mean, we want our clients to be more competent in self-awareness, so I think it's so important that that's something that we're committed to doing, also, as counselors, as supervisors. I hope... I think that answered.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Just a little follow-up question to that, can you say a little bit about what you bring into the room, what supervisees bring into the room?

Speaker 2: Well, I mean, we bring into the room our immediate life stressors, just things that have happened that day or that week. So we're struggling with those things. We're also bringing into the room just our own life experiences, our own family of origin experiences, our own prejudices and biases about people in general, about gender, about race. I mean, the list goes on and on. And I think, too, just a self-awareness of what's happening in that moment as we're with the client, all of the thoughts that are running through our head because there's tons of them, and feelings that we're experiencing in that moment, too. I mean, I think one of my favorite questions to ask supervisees is, What does it feel like for you to be with that client? So we have things that are going on in the moment, things that are going on within the last week or month, and then things that we're bringing in from years and years and years ago. And that's a lot of things to be in one room, one interaction, I think.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Well, do you use that question in... Would you be noticing something that would prompt you to use that question?

Speaker 2: To ask that question about what it feels like to be with that client?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I definitely have used that question if I could tell that the supervisee is just having a difficult time, or they feel stuck, or they're having a hard time being objective. Or even, as they talk about the client, there's a lot of feeling connected with it. But it's actually a question that I ask quite a bit and just to encourage them to pay attention, to be more self-aware. I think it's interesting because new, new supervisees are... They're very self-aware of what they're thinking because there's just so much anxieties connected. I think what I have found is maybe counselors who have been doing this for a longer time, sometimes they kind of lose that a little bit, which is interesting. I think asking that question causes them to kind of check in and be like, "Yeah, what does it feel like to be with this client? How much of it is the client, and how much of it is me?" kind of sifting through some of that.

Speaker 1: Okay. So this question is... There might be some repetition in it, but it might be phrased in a way that makes you think of something else. So can you overall describe your experience using supervision to promote self-awareness and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Okay. It's interesting because I was doing some preparation because I was like, What is she going to ask me? Is she going to ask me about what models of supervision I use and things like that? Because I just finished a really, really great course this summer, and there was actually a whole section about how to promote self-awareness in your supervisees and what type of questions to ask and things like that. And I feel like, for me, that fits pretty well because I think I use a developmental model of supervision just because, I mean, I supervise a lot of interns. And I think just having them be aware of where they are from a developmental phase, which phase they're in, I think is really, really important. So I think that's a piece of self-awareness. And I also, I usually ask my supervisees to just... I even do this in the interview, and I'm careful not to move into more of intrusive counselor-type questions, but just to kind of talk a little bit about their background.

Speaker 2: First of all, what about the counseling field interests them? How did they decide to pursue that? And then what are some things from their own background that they're bringing into the counseling session? Because I think in the very beginning to be aware of, once again, your own self and what things you're bringing into it. So it's something that I even ask during the interview, and we have that conversation quite a bit because I work with, I mean, mostly interns, graduate-level interns.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative), and in school, right?

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 1: Yeah. So now I'm going to shift a little bit sort of towards the... You'll see what I'm talking about. How do you decide... Maybe think of a time, maybe, and it was maybe even when you were actually aware of deciding that you were going to use supervision to promote self or relational awareness.

Speaker 2: Yeah, let me think.

Speaker 1: Because I hear you say that you do it with everybody from the beginning, but I'm sure there probably are times when it specifically seems like it might be necessary.

Speaker 2: Right, right. I guess... I don't know if this is the best example, but it's a more recent one. So I guess it's coming to my mind first. and I think what I've been noticing with her... There's been a certain type of client that she seems to get stuck with or maybe just kind of lose her objectivity a bit, which isn't typical for her. So I kind of waited a little bit, and I realized that there were at least three or four clients that had that theme. And the theme was that they were just really questioning their major, questioning their career path.

Speaker 2: I brought that to her attention, and I didn't actually say to her, "This is what I see is their common theme." I asked her, and she didn't need a whole lot of prompting, and she shared what that was. And it turned out that she wasn't really even aware until that moment that she was actually experience those same type of questions. So it led to us having a really, really good conversation, and she realized that she was feeling very deeply what they were feeling because she was feeling the same thing, and it was causing her to lose some of her objectivity a little bit. So we were able to have a conversation about that, and then I was able to suggest other people on campus that she could talk with because she's kind of questioning if this is what she wants to do for the rest of her life, which for me, my self-awareness, I was like, "Oh, no!" I don't want her to leave but, at the end of the day, that doesn't really matter. What matters is that she's doing what she feels like she needs to be doing. So I don't know if that really answers your question but...

Speaker 1: Yeah, but that's interesting that... your response. And if you could say about that, sometimes it wasn't even what you wanted to hear, but you went there, anyway?

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Oh, yeah, definitely. I know. It wasn't. It wasn't at all, but I mean, you could very easily see the theme with these clients. But I did not know until she said that to me, and I actually think, in some ways, she wasn't really fully aware until she... because she even said, "Now that I've said it out loud, yeah, I think I have been struggling with that internally." And, I mean, she was surprised that she was able to talk to me about it. I'm like, yeah, let's talk about it. That's fine. And then we had to figure out if she felt like she could still work with these clients. I actually think she did, and I would agree with that, too just because having that conversation now, it felt very freeing to her and the fact that she was going to talk to someone else on campus a little more about that. We're going to keep an eye on it because this is something that's come up within the last month, I would say, a pretty recent one, to make sure that she-

Speaker 1: Oh, what... I'm sorry.

Speaker 2: No, no, no. That's okay.

Speaker 1: I'm just wondering what is that whole process like for you, though?

Speaker 2: Hard, yeah, but we both just kind of teared up a little because she's been with me. So she's full-time now, and then she was part-time last year, and then she was also with me a year to do her internship and practicum as a graduate student. And I think the thing that really touched me and, as she said, "I just so appreciate that, that you care more about me as a person versus an employee," because I was honest with her. I said, "Well, clearly I don't want you to leave ever, but that's not what's important here. What's most important is you as a person versus you as an employee. So, yeah, and I don't know where this is going to end up. This is a conversation. I know she actually applied for the Director of Career Services position. She told me about that, and I said, "Go ahead," if you think that's something you want to pursue. But it was interesting just because she's a pretty self-aware person, and I don't really know know if she saw that. Or I think part of it was she just... It became more real when she actually said it out loud.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah.

Speaker 2: So I think it was good.

Speaker 1: Yeah. It sounds like you used some of your counseling skills. You saw the theme. You brought it up, and then kind of it went where it went even with your own... maybe triggering some of your own anxiety, "I might lose her," or whatever. But you still went there.

Speaker 2: Oh, definitely. Yep. Yeah.

Speaker 1: It's a great example. Yeah. So, I mean, back to that question then, if you could put it down to how that felt to you, your thoughts, slowing down that process of maybe even making that decision to go there. I know it happened fast, and I know it was just an automatic kind of a counselor response. But if you could break that down, could you... maybe a couple of keywords?

Speaker 2: Yeah. I mean, initially, I wasn't really sure where it was going to go. I mean, it was pretty clear that once we identified the theme, but I really had no idea that this was what she was thinking. I mean, she's pretty private, not in a negative... I think in the moment, there was definitely shock. And I remember when she said that out loud, because you could tell that she was hesitant, I felt like I immediately needed to say to her, "It's okay. We can talk about this." But I remember just saying, "Oh, wow. Okay. I didn't know." And I did share some of my feelings with her because her and I do have a really good relationship. I said, "I'll be honest with you. You need to know that I think you're extremely valuable, and I would hate to see you leave. So I'm feeling a bit sad right now. However," and like I said earlier, "you matter. Your own personal happiness and fulfillment is what really matters to me. You matter as a person." And I really meant that. I really meant that.

Speaker 2: I don't know. I definitely had those emotions, but I was quick to just be like, saying to myself, "It's going to be okay." She did say... She's like, "I'm not leaving this year because I've come this close to getting my license. I'm going to stay." So I think that made me feel like, okay, I don't really have to think about this all that much right now because she's still going to be around until May. I can very easily... I feel the feeling, and I mean, this is just me personally, I feel the feeling, and I very much easily move into rationale mode.

Speaker 1: Yeah, mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative), I'm like that, too. Was there anything about the relationship that you had that made it harder, easier, impacted it in any way?

Speaker 2: Well, I definitely think the fact that we have a good relationship makes it easier. So I think because we've had that collaborative relationship, that really, really helped. And I think that... I mean, I hope that helped her feel safe to say something because that's a hard thing to have to say to your supervisor is, "I'm really questioning if this is what I want to do." And I think that's just hard for her personally. I mean, she's questioning if she wants to continue in this field altogether. I plan to have more conversations about that, too, because I do want to keep an eye on her, that she doesn't... Is she still invested? Because it's only October, and if she's saying, "I don't want to leave," that's a long time to be in a place of ambivalence and things like that.

Speaker 2: So, yeah, I think our relationship did help because I think she felt safe to say something that I think would've been hard if we didn't have a good relationship. And it also makes it hard to think about the fact that she might not be here because we do have a good relationship. I would definitely miss her, and I appreciate everything that she brings.

Speaker 1: Well, I hear you saying that it was out of your caring for her, in a way, that you continue to go there and that you continue make this something safe that she can talk about with you. So that's out of your relationship.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah, definitely.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Let's see. Is there any other thing with maybe another example where you can talk about thoughts or feelings or experiences or considerations in yourself that you're aware of when deciding to address something with a supervisee? Can you think of something where it's been harder to address something, bring something up and what that feels like inside of you?

Speaker 2: Yeah. I think, for me, what's harder is... and I'll definitely do this, but what's harder is having to give constructive feedback, maybe more that seems like... I don't know, more on the negative side, I guess. It's just harder for me, just my personality. It's interesting. I can definitely do that with clients, but with supervisees, it's a little bit harder to do. And there have been times when, early on as a supervisor, when I have not done that, and I know that that's an area that I need to grow in. So typically, when I know that I have to do that, I have to have a lot of self-talk in that moment and say to myself, "This is okay. This is going to be helpful for the person." And I think part of it is how they see me is important.

Speaker 2: So I have to remind myself that, okay, you've already established a good relationship with this person. This is going to go well. This is going to be received. This is going to go well. This isn't going to impact the relationship that you have with them. And then I'm able to do it. I'm able to do it, but it takes some effort of convincing inside my mind to do it in that moment. And sometimes, if I know that I have to have a difficult conversation with a supervisee, I'm known to practice in my car on my way to work, role-play what I'm going to say to them because that helps me feel better to do it in the moment because I think sometimes I can fumble with my words. And I don't think that sends a very good message to them. So I have to practice it, rehearse what I'm going to say.

Speaker 1: What feeling is it that makes it hard to do?

Speaker 2: I think... I guess just some anxiety of how they're going to receive it. And then how are they going to perceive me? And is this going to affect our relationship? And even some anxiety, Am I going to communicate this clearly?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative), okay.

Speaker 2: Because when it's something that needs to change, I'm like, okay, this needs to change. So I need to make sure I can communicate this clearly, and I sometimes get anxiety about... Because I'm uncomfortable doing it, am I going to come across as kind of fumbling all over the place? And I can only imagine what they might think, like, "Okay, what's going on?"

Speaker 1: Yeah. Any thoughts about why it's harder with supervisees than with clients to bring stuff up?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Hmm. Well, the only thing I'm thinking... Well, I'm thinking a couple things like with clients... I mean, I worked in addiction counseling for a very, very, very long time before coming to work at a college, and I started out in a field way back in 1994 where confrontation was the preferred method of intervention. So I feel like I'm so comfortable with that, and I've done that for so long. And I think for me, and this sounds... Hopefully you'll understand. For me, I don't care as much about what a client thinks about me. I mean, I do. Don't get me wrong. But I don't care as much as versus a supervisee for some reason. I mean, I do care what clients think about me, but if I had to compare the two... So, yeah, I don't care as much because it's really important that the supervisees feel safe. And it's funny as I'm even saying this because constructive criticism doesn't make the situation, this relationship feel less safe at all. I mean, this is probably things that I'm bringing to the relationship. But I think that's probably the difference just because I care more about how I'm going to perceived by the person. And I'm used to doing it with clients.

Speaker 1: Right. Do you ever have any... Are there ever any considerations about the supervisees or developmental level, you mentioned that, and the quality of their clinical work when you're deciding that maybe you need to address something about their self-awareness or relational awareness?

Speaker 2: Yeah, definitely, and I don't think I've mentioned that yet. So definitely, and that helps me do it in the moment. That reminds me that, well, first of all, yes, the clients' needs are important, and my role as a supervisor is as a gatekeeper. So it's very important that I give feedback to supervisees on areas that they need to change for the clients' sake, absolutely, but also, at the end of this relationship, I have to basically sign off if I think that they're ready to graduate or if they're ready to be licensed. So my role as a gatekeeper and also thinking of the clients' needs, yeah. And then that definitely helps me do things that are difficult, for sure.

Speaker 1: So kind of looking at that, you might feel pushed, maybe, to do something like that because of... Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah.

Speaker 2: And those are the things that outweigh my concern about what they're going to think about me, even though I'm... I mean, that outweighs it. I'm like, well, that doesn't matter. Those things are more important, and typically it goes well. It really goes well. I've been blessed to have good relationships with people that I've supervised. So I remind myself of that, too. It'll be fine. This needs to happen because of the client and because of their own development as a counselor, too.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). You might not have... You can say, "I can't think of anything," after I ask this question, which is fine. But did you have any example in mind of somebody that it just felt like they were not aware of something, and it was harder to bring it up, and what that was like for you, just that process? And I just want to say...

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Okay, go ahead.

Speaker 2: So I had... She was an intern in the master's program, and I think she was very private. There were just a few things she would share about her own personal journey, but what I noticed... Once again, it was a theme. What I noticed with her is that she liked to keep everything with her clients very much on a cognitive level, that she would not direct the session to more of a feeling level. Or if the client would go there, she would pull that away. So we were able to bring that to her awareness, and she just could not connect as to why. I remember just... I had some thoughts, and I had some theories, and I even would-

Speaker 2: Based on some of the... the very small amount of stuff that she had disclosed to me about her own personal journey, I shared some of those, and I remember her just saying, "Nope, nope, not connected. Nope, not connected." And I had to have a conversation with her faculty supervisor about it, and it was right at the end of her internship. So I talked with her about-

Speaker 2: And I remember talking to her about if she would be willing to do some work on her own, and she didn't really think that she needed to. So there wasn't anything that she had done that was damaging, so to speak, with clients. So I talked with her about... We only had maybe a month of her internship left that we were just... I was just going to be very selective who I assigned her to.

Speaker 2: She was an intern doing her internship for a master's program.

Speaker 2: Well, I consulted with her faculty advisor.

Speaker 1: Oh, yeah. Okay.

Speaker 2: Actually, the three of us had a conversation about it, and it was just very much like a blind spot for her, that she did not know what was connected to it and was not very open to pursuing that. So, I mean, we decided, and I let her know, let her faculty advisor know that we only had... It was probably even less than a month, that I was just going to be mindful of the type of clients that I assigned to her, and this would be noted in her evaluation. There was something blocking, and I do think it was something going on with her. But either she was not aware, or she just was not open to talking to me about it or pursuing that. And unfortunately, it was impacting with her work with clients, and she ended up, I found out, she ended up not... She's doing something totally different now.

Speaker 1: I wonder if she even ever got any insight.

Speaker 2: I know, I know. I hope. I hope because it was definitely... She just struggled in that area. She struggled with intense emotions herself. So if someone would be emoting in front of her, that was very uncomfortable for her. So we'd have conversations about, well, that's going to happen. But she just was not willing to go there with me, and that was hard. That was a tough one. I think that was one of the few times that I had to consult with the faculty just to get some idea on how to move forward.

Speaker 1: Yeah, because what would that be like for you to meet with her week after week and then have that same... Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative), stiffness.

Speaker 2: Right, and it's interesting because, I mean, she was actually only with me for one semester, which is pretty rare, which I do not like because it's really hard to get to know someone. But the type of clients that she had, and I don't know how this happened, they were very much short-term, solution-oriented. And now I think back on it as, Was that what they needed, or was that... because she had this one particular client that was definitely... wasn't fitting in to that typical thing, and she was having a hard time with him. And I said, "Well, what's going on?" And she was closed off. There was clearly something going on. She was very closed off to that. So that was hard.

Speaker 1: It sounds like....

Speaker 2: That was definitely hard.

Speaker 1: The trying to create self-awareness and gatekeeping kind of came together in that.

Speaker 2: Yes, definitely. Definitely, and like I said, I really did. And I was honest with her. I really had to... with the few weeks that we had left, I had to be selective in the type of clients that I assigned to her. And I remember her saying, "That fine. I understand," like didn't seem very affected by it. Yeah, that was... She was a very hard one to read, to get a sense of. Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah, a hard personality to be in this field, I think. Uh-huh (affirmative). Do you ever have any thoughts or feelings about what the supervisee's reaction is going to be when you're deciding to use supervision in this way to promote some self or relational awareness? Does that ever come into play?

Speaker 2: It does. I think after this particular experience, it came into play a lot more because typically, the reaction usually has been positive when we have those conversations. And then this particular intern kind of threw me for a loop a little bit, and I know, after that, I was just... because I always, always hope that they are open to having a conversation about it. That kind of caused me to be a little gun-shy, even thought I still did it because I still think it's very, very important. But, yeah, that's definitely a thought that I have.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. And I think you might've said a little bit about this before, but what are you aware of... How do you think about how their reaction might impact you? We only have two more questions after this, by the way, so we're almost done.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Okay. Well, yeah, I think... I mean, our relationship is important. So I think about how it might impact our relationship, and then I do think about, wonder if they're not willing to have that conversation, or if they're stuck because I'm very sensitive that I don't want supervision to become a counseling session. So I think sometimes I wonder to myself, "How much do I need to push this person or question this person?" Because you can very easily cross that line, and now it feels like it's more of a counseling session versus really focusing on their own self-awareness when they're with clients. So my concern is, What happens if they don't want to have that conversation with me, and then I feel kind of stuck? Which fortunately, like I said, has not happened a lot. Thank goodness.

Speaker 2: They're usually pretty open to having that conversation, and there's questions I can ask that aren't counseling-type questions that cause them to reflect themselves. And sometimes I'll even leave them with some reflection homework. I've definitely suggested to supervisees to journal before. And if they're not really sure what's going on with this particular client, I'm like, "Just write a little bit about how you're feeling in that moment to increase your self-awareness." So, yeah. Someone suggested that to me a long, long time ago, and I'm like, that's so helpful.

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2: Because sometimes we just need to find space to do that because it's hard to reflect in the moment when you're in that session. I mean, there's so much going through your head, and sometimes you just need some space afterwards to reflect, "Okay, what was going on with me?" And I don't think that's a skill that comes natural with new clients, you know what I mean?

Speaker 1: Yeah, I agree.

Speaker 2: So, I mean newer supervisees, yeah.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative), and yeah, their stuff is mixing with their skills and getting triggered and everything. So, yeah. Do you have any other thoughts about the fear of stepping into too much of a counseling role?

Speaker 2: Yeah. I mean, I've very sensitive to that because that happened to me early on when I was a brand-new counselor and not knowing that that's what was happening, is one of my supervisor's would actually... I mean, she was pretty open about it. We would have our supervision, and then she's like, "But then we're going to meet again for a counseling session." And I didn't really know about this. It's so funny because I'm like, I don't remember hearing about that in my training, and now you hear about it all the time. But I remember very, very quickly it not feeling right. So, fortunately, that did not happen for very long because I spoke up, and she was like, "Oh, okay." She was open to changing that, but I just remember how that felt, and I'm very, very aware of that when I supervise people, a lot to do with the experience that I went through and just knowing now. I mean, you hear more about that now, but knowing that it still happens. It's just not good.

Speaker 1: So overt, too. That's interesting.

Speaker 2: She was, I know, and I didn't even... I knew something wasn't right, and I think back on it now. I'm like, yeah, my gosh.

Speaker 1: Huh. That's interesting. I wonder where that came from in her that she did that. But yeah, that's a different... Okay. **So you have talked about this a little bit, second to last question, but it wasn't at the... So how... I am curious about the relationship between you and the supervisee both at the time when you are deciding to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness and during the time that you're doing it, after the time, any considerations that come up to any and all of those or none or one**.

Speaker 2: Yeah, that I haven't already talked about, I'm trying to think.

Speaker 1: Yeah, if there's anything that you haven't... that comes to my mind when I directly ask that question because you did mention it. So, if you've talked about it, that's fine. But I haven't asked that question about the relationship directly, but I know that you touched on it.

Speaker 1: How are considerations about the supervisee’s clients a part of your deciding to use supervision to promote SA and RA in supervision?

Speaker 2: I mean, the thing that I didn't focus on, which is really the first thing that comes to mind, is I definitely think about what's best for the client. That's really, really important. And I definitely think about my role as a gatekeeper because mostly everyone I supervise are interns or pre-licensed. So I'm definitely in that gatekeeper role. Pretty much everyone that I supervise is pre-licensed, an intern. Then I think just reminding myself that there's a way to promote self-awareness, there's a way to provide constructive criticism that you can still have a solid relationship with someone, kind of like what I do with my clients.

Speaker 2: I feel like my confrontation style is kind of like a backdoor approach. A lot of times, they don't even realize that I'm doing it, and a lot of times, I'm just bringing questions for them to think about, so just reminding myself that I can do this. I can do this in a way that's going to be safe and helpful for them. Using some of those clinical skills in the supervision process, I think, is really helpful. I, too... I don't know if I mentioned this. I'm pretty open about just my own self-awareness working with clients. I think it's so important as a supervisor to say, "Hey, listen, I've been there. I'm still working on things, too. It's okay to have these thoughts and feelings." And I'll share some of my own experiences, not necessary personal experiences but experiences working with clients.

Speaker 2: I think it's so helpful for supervisees to see that we're human, too, and that we're still working through some of these issues in self-awareness. It doesn't end. It never ends. To kind of normalize it, I'm pretty open. If I mess up or something like that, I'll be like, "Let me tell you a time with a client when this happened." I feel like those conversations have gone a long way. A lot of times, supervisees will say to me, "We really appreciate when you share with us that you're not perfect." So, yep, I will tell you that every day. So that helps, too, to share some of my own experiences and how I've grown in that area and how I'm still growing, still need to grow.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay. Yeah. Yeah, just kind of being humble in the whole process sounds like it's a big important...

Speaker 2: Definitely, definitely.

Speaker 1: So now that I've stirred up all your thoughts about this, is there anything that we left out or anything else that you would like me to know?

Speaker 2: Hmm. I can't... It's interesting. I was looking through my notes from the class that I took this summer, and there was several slides about this, about different ways to help counselees be reflective. So, I don't know. It's just really helpful to be able to think though how I actually do it, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: And if I do it, [inaudible 00:48:02] of anything I know.

Speaker 1: Well, it sounds like you definitely do. Yeah. I'm going to stop recording now for a minute, I think.

Speaker 2: Okay.

**Participant #2 Transcript**

Speaker 1: Okay, so this should take probably less than an hour. My last one took about 48 minutes, so just to give you an idea. My dissertation is on the experience of supervisors as they use supervision to promote self-awareness in supervisees, so I want to know what it's like for you. I'm going to be asking you questions about the emotional, what you're aware of emotionally, maybe cognitively, what you're aware of in the supervisory relationship, what you're aware of developmentally with the supervisor. Your experience is part of it, and there are some questions that are more focused on how do you decide you're going to do it in that moment.

Speaker 2: Okay, [crosstalk 00:01:17].

Speaker 1: I have to do two studies and one is the deciding process and one is the actual experience of doing it. It's okay if there's overlap, and the questions are going to seem repetitive probably because you'll probably answer some of them before I get to them, but we'll just go through them anyway, and I'll just have more data to go through, which is fine.

Speaker 1: Okay, so the first one is the general one just about your ... What are your thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Repeat the question again just so I make sure I've got the [crosstalk 00:02:04].

Speaker 1: Okay, yeah. What are your general thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness? By relational awareness, I'm talking about supervisees' awareness of their impact in their relationship with their client, with their supervisor, and everything, so either self-awareness that's more internal or relational awareness.

Speaker 2: Oh, okay, okay.

Speaker 1: What are your general thoughts about what it means?

Speaker 2: It means different things to me. I think that in supervision, the more I help my interns be aware of what their internal experience is, and that might be their experience with me, but also then with their clients. In other words, what it feels like to be them in the context of where they are and that that understanding what it's like to be them is pretty central, so that might be like when I'm first starting with interns and they're learning how to do intakes and they're overwhelmed and we pay attention a lot to what it feels like to be them where their head is filled with what am I going to do? I'm not sure I know what I'm doing and all those kinds of things. We take a look at how in those moments they're so aware of what's going on inside them it's making it hard for them to be attentive to what's happening to their clients at the same time.

Speaker 2: Their awareness is so inwardly focused, they're having trouble recognizing the impact that has outwardly focused, so sometimes we might look at that if we happen to look at a video tape, and I realize it early on they're spending so much time looking down and writing intake information that they're missing things, okay?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Then the other side of that is sometimes with interns, something we'll talk about in process, is they're so aware of what's going on with their client in the sense that they've stopped being aware of what they're experiencing inside, so trying to find a balance where inner awareness is really useful because it gives us clues about what's going on with your client. It helps keep you grounded to what matters most, so that's part of it with them and their clients.

Speaker 2: In the supervision process, one thought that just comes to my mind is I try to do everything I can to make it safe for people to be aware of and express their insecurities and uncertainties so that that's really normalized and okay and we can hear that and listen to it. I try to do that by talking about the ways that I've messed up as a counselor or the current clients like, "Oh, I get so frustrated inside when I'm with this particular client," so I try to model that, but to create and atmosphere where it's safe to be real and hopefully then that also models an atmosphere where they can create for their clients that it's safe to be real, so those are some of my thoughts. I don't know if that's what you were asking about.

Speaker 1: Yeah, thank you. Yeah. Yeah, thank you. Like I said, some of the questions might seem repetitive as you go through, but yeah. Just whatever comes up for you is going to be useful to me, so yeah. Describe your personal experience using supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees. This could be your experience what it's like for you. It could be your experience like how often you do it. It's an overview question again. I'm going to get more specific.

Speaker 2: Oh, okay. In other words, my own personal awareness as a supervisor while I'm with my-

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yes. [crosstalk 00:06:25].

Speaker 1: Yeah, thank you. Yeah. Yeah, thank you. Like I said, some of the questions might seem repetitive as you go through, but yeah. Just whatever comes up for you is going to be useful to me, so yeah. Describe your personal experience using supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees. This could be your experience what it's like for you. It could be your experience like how often you do it. It's an overview question again. I'm going to get more specific.

Speaker 2: Okay. What I experience differs from supervisee to supervisee, but sometimes with what is a harder process for me, let’s say is if I’m with a supervisee and I’m realizing there’s issues I want to work on them correcting, but I am feeling this need to support and. Also a little uncertain how do I challenge, I’d say for me that, for some supervisees anyway, I can feel a little lost inside about needing to challenge and wanting to challenge and having my own kind of inner uncertainty about how to do that, so that is sometimes an area of discomfort for me. Not with all supervisees because some oare easier to do that with than others, so is that what you’re looking for like what I experienced?

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's perfect.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: I think that also for me being able to find my place ... Part of what happens for me is because I'm an onsite clinical supervisor, what is happening with their clients, the buck stops with me basically, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: If they're not able to do what's needed to be done for that particular client, ultimately the welfare of that client is my welfare, and part of my job as a supervisor is to make sure that client is getting what they need to get, so I have to ... One of the areas I have to be attentive to is holding those in balance and leaving space for the intern to perhaps solve the issues with that client, find their solutions, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: And not rush in and give them solutions, but at the same time recognizing I have a responsibility to the welfare of that client that they're seeing, so that is sometimes sorting that out. I have my responsibility to provide a learning space for the intern, and I have a responsibility that the client they see receives excellent treatment, so how do I leave space for growth in the one area while making sure the client receives what they need? That would be an internal space that I'm in. As a supervisor, I'm trying to sort out where to go with my interns [crosstalk 00:09:19].

Speaker 1: How would you describe that internal space? What's that experience? Are there words for that?

Speaker 2: Tentative. Sometimes uncertainty. That's a good question. How would I describe that inner space? Closing in and I have to make it bigger, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: If I'm getting tunnel vision and I'm over-focusing on actually one part of it or the other, sometimes I have to back out and make it a bigger space. This just brings this up. I think I don't often directly articulate it in the way that I've articulated it to the intern in that I want to find the balance with. I may be doing it, but I'm not necessarily saying to the intern, "I want to balance your learning with what your client needs," right?

Speaker 1: Uh-huh (affirmative). Uh-huh (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Right?

Speaker 1: Right.

Speaker 2: I don't actually articulate that to them. Maybe I should. I don't know.

Speaker 1: You're holding it [crosstalk 00:10:40]?

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yes, yes.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Okay, thank you. Describe any thoughts or feelings that you might have about supervisee responses that you might be aware of when using supervision to promote self and relational awareness.

Speaker 2: Supervisee responses. Well, I have a sense, or at least I think I have a sense, of when a supervisee and I are tracking on the same page here, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Where I'm getting what it is that maybe is their difficulty and they know I'm getting it, so there's that awareness of that, sometimes an awareness that either I don't know that they're getting it or I'm not sure that they're being attentive, let's say, to something that I think is important to be attentive to, and then inside, I can feel like why aren't you being attentive to this thing? I don't know. Could you ask the question again? I'm trying to-

Speaker 1: Yeah. Describe any thoughts or feelings that you have about supervisee response that you are aware of when you're using supervision to promote self and [crosstalk 00:12:08].

Speaker 2: Oh, okay. Okay. When I can see that my supervisee or when I'm experiencing my supervisee like the other day when I was talking to one of my interns and she was expressing some frustration with a client who had canceled and whatever, and she was feeling stressed about it, and we were able to explore what is this about the stress. What are you expecting of yourself? It's not just at this level. It could be at this level noticing that she's got a lot of emotion around something. It's not like she's crying, but it's sort of like there's a lot of emotion and anxiety around this particular client, and that allowed us to go a little deeper to be not just her anxiety for her client, but her anxiety for herself, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: That able to pay attention to maybe my client canceled because I'm not doing a good job and this is her way of not wanting to be in treatment with me, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: That's where we were able to go to, so noticing when my intern has some feelings of stress that feel like they're more personal about who they are as a counselor and what they're experiencing and then we can just pay attention to that.

Speaker 1: Yeah, and what's that like for you when you have to go there?

Speaker 2: I'm glad that we can. I like that. Like I said earlier, I try to be really intentional doing whatever I can do to create a safe atmosphere, so it feels like when an intern's able to go there that they're shifting from what they do as a counselor to what it's like to have the experience of a counselor, which is also a place that I'm a counselor, too, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: We can meet and share that experience. I know what that's like for me, so it feels ... I don't know. It feels like a good space when we're able to do that.

Speaker 1: Okay. Thank you. I appreciate the example, too. That's really helpful. How do you experience the relationship between you and a supervisee when using supervision to promote self and relational awareness?

Speaker 2: I love being a supervisor. This may be a bigger question, but I like the relationship with my interns, the supervisor relationship. I like the sense of maybe I'm a little further ahead on the journey, but we're all on the same trip kind of thing, and I like doing supervision. I just like that idea of getting to share together with what that experience is like for us as counselors, not just like here's your clinical techniques, but here's the inside part of being a counselor. That's a part of that awareness, sharing my awareness of myself, which opens it up for them to share their awareness of themselves. That's a part of supervision that I just think is important and it's a privilege. It's like a privilege as a supervisor.

Speaker 1: In specific, if you think about some specific supervisees where you've had bringing things up, has there ever been something that impacted your supervisee relationship when you've done that in one way or another?

Speaker 2: Well, all my supervisees, except for one, have been able ... We do two semesters, have finished all the way through, and I had a supervisee who was struggling academically, but I didn't know it, but doing well in the internship. He struggled at first, but then he was really hitting his stride, and then I'm not sure if this is going to get at your question. I'll just tell you the experience. Then I found out from his faculty supervisor or somebody in the program that he was at risk of failing because he hadn't turned in things he needed to turn in, and I was like, "Wow, I'm not experiencing him this way here. You're having a totally different experience of him in that way there."

Speaker 2: Being in this place where then I tried to come alongside him and then he didn't answer phone calls ... I don't know. It was a mess. That's very unusual. It's never happened here. I didn't feel like what was happening with him was negatively impacting him with his clients, but my concern for his welfare became bigger than that, obviously not his other personal life, and trying to navigate with that with them. In the end, they made him leave the program and that was very sad. There was a lot that went with that, and that was a first for me.

Speaker 2: Usually, they had really positive experiences and everything goes well, and he was having a positive experience here, so my feelings for his welfare and concern for him just became bigger than what's usually happening and like my sorrow for him, so that's maybe a little bit of an example of that. I don't know [crosstalk 00:18:34].

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah. Perfect. Thank you. Next couple questions are about a little bit maybe earlier in the process when you were just, sorry, when you were deicing that you're going to go there with a supervisee and use supervision to promote their self-awareness versus theoretical awareness or something like that. A question about what you're aware of in yourself as you're deciding to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness and what you might be aware of related to the supervisee.

Speaker 1: I'm just going to blend them together because I think it might be easier when you're deciding to address self and relational awareness in supervision, so thoughts, feelings, experiences, or considerations that you have that you might be aware of in yourself when you're deciding to go there if you could go there, if you're at the beginning of that process, and what you might be aware of in that supervisee when you do that.

Speaker 2: Well, the first thing that comes to mind inside me is this balance between privacy like respecting privacy, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: And also what I helpful to be able to express and utilize in supervision while still respecting my intern's privacy, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Sometimes like recently, I had an intern and she herself brought forward why working with a suicidal client was complicated for her because of different suicide people she had known, etc. who commit suicide, and she brought that forward herself, and we were able to pay attention to what's it feel like for her then if she has a client and she's concerned for safety and how does all of those ... How does she find a balance between how her own sense of fear has been affected, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: She brought that information forward. I didn't say, "Have you ever had any personal experiences with someone you know or cared for committed suicide?" I don't think I would've done that. I wouldn't have done that, right?

Speaker 1: Right.

Speaker 2: I don't invite interns specifically to share things from their private lives that might impact how they're handling a situation. I do try to create an environment where they would feel free to share it, but I don't specifically because I just feel like that's ... I want to respect their privacy and their vulnerability, and I don't want to put them in a position where it feels like, well, if I tell Speaker 2 about this, maybe she'll view me differently or whatever, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I guess that's the first thing that comes to my mind is I'm just attentive to that. Often when I am inviting, I'm usually asking something very general like, "What's that like for you?" or those kinds of things. Wow, when you and your client were in that situation, what was going on inside of you while that was happening, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: That allows them to share as much or as little as they would like to, so for me anyway, I see that as not any forced requirement to share awareness, but opening it up so that their focus shifts to their own awareness. If I'm saying, "Wow, what's that like for you?" Or, "What was that like for you when you were in that session?" then they can shift to pay attention to that, or then they could bring forward what they would like to share or not share. I don't know if that's what you're thinking about or-

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2: ... maybe not.

Speaker 1: What are your considerations, and you probably already have answered this to some degree, about students' supervisory needs and development when thinking about addressing self and relational awareness in supervision?

Speaker 2: Okay. Well, I do think there's somewhat of a developmental need there, so the interns I work with have been a variety of ages, and I've had ... In fact, it's interesting. I have an internet right now who was undergrad right into her grad program, and for some of the youngest interns I've seen as compared to maybe later stages of life interns, it feels different. There's a certain amount of maturity and life experience and a little bit of confidence about who I am as a person even if I'm not confident in myself as a counselor yet that makes that feel sometimes.

Speaker 2: I'm going to use the word fragile. It's not quite what I mean, but that there's a little more ... I feel a little more openness being able to pay attention to what's going on inside and more comfortableness that it's okay, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: The insecurities or whatever are okay, where sometimes with the youngest of my interns that it feels there's a little more fragileness and I have to be attentive to that and provide a level of support and reassurance that it's okay. You know what I mean?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I'm not doing a good job explaining this.

Speaker 1: Do you have any idea what that fragility would be about? [crosstalk 00:25:49].

Speaker 2: Well, sometimes I've had younger interns who I think feel the need that they're supposed to know than they have to know, so they have to show that so I'll know they know things, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I don't come in and say, "You think you know a lot, but you don't." It's usually after about four or five weeks they've figured that out for themselves, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: There is sometimes more of a sense of proving themselves or, like I said, even thinking they know more than they know, so [crosstalk 00:26:36].

Speaker 1: That impacts you in some way?

Speaker 2: Sure, absolutely. That's part of that balancing thing. Like I said, I don't come in and say, "Well, you don't know what you think you know," because I know the process will bring that to their awareness, but I try to do what I said earlier. I try to create an atmosphere where it's okay to not know things and help them be comfortable with me so that then it's like okay to back up from that position and be able to realize you're not here to demonstrate to Speaker 2 you've got it all together, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: We're here for you to learn and for us to share this experience, etc. etc. and so they shift to a more teachable posture, I'd say, a little more teachable posture. Then sometimes the older interns I work with who are coming in a second career often ... My experience has been that they have started out more comfortable with what they don't know and it's okay that they don't know stuff, so I guess yeah. That would be a difference there.

Speaker 1: That impacts your supervision with them?

Speaker 2: Yes, yeah, it does. It does. Right, it impacts where I go with them, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: It impacts, in a sense, if we think about with clients in a sense, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: It impacts where we go when we go there with our clients, so for the intern that maybe is in a posture that they themselves need to feel they know all kinds of things, then it's important that they demonstrate that they know these things. I'm trying to make it safe for them to acknowledge that, wow, I'm lost, or I feel a lot more anxious than I wanted to ever admit, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: My focus with them is creating the safety, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: In the process, where with the other interns, sometimes in a sense that's not a stage we have to spend as much time at, so it does impact how I do what I'm doing.

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Thank you.

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 1: What are you experiences regarding specific student attitudes towards supervision when you think about using supervision to address self and relational awareness?

Speaker 2: Well, I think I've maybe a little bit of I just talked about it, right?

Speaker 1: Yeah, mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Some students come in, like I said, maybe not as open and ready to show me. I've taken my classes. Now look what I can do, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Sometimes I have students who know more than they think they know, so they don't think they know much of anything, but I see them doing a lot of really good things and I'm trying to build them up, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: And give them space to make their own decisions to trust their own judgment, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: There's those students and then there's the students who I think come with a pretty good sense of here's where I think I'm strong. Here's where I really want to grow. They have a balance and they're also able to ask for what they need really directly, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Yeah, there's differences. They come in in very different ways.

Speaker 1: Maybe different amounts of scaffolding from you and you're sensing different readiness kinds of things.

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah. Right, so I just work on adjusting and try to meet them where they're at, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: And then adjusting.

Speaker 1: Okay. Okay. You have touched on this, but we haven't asked this question, so how are supervisees' clients a part of your experience of considering addressing self and relational awareness in supervision?

Speaker 2: Yes, so like I said before, I ... The way it works here, especially over the last two years, it used to be clients filled out a lot of intake information and then they were assigned a counselor, and that was easier for me because I at least had more stuff to go on before I knew who the intern was going to see. Now we have a process where they're assigned to an intern and I might not see the additional information until right before that intern's appointment, and if I see something immediately, I may jump in and reassign that client, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Because I'm trying to match intern ability with client need and that changes over time, too, so who an intern could see their first month, because again, we do two semester, who they could see in September, they might be able to see a much more complex client in December, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I'm trying to get the balance, but interns, like all of us in a sense, don't know what they don't know either, so they may be seeing a client and think they've gotten the things they need to ... I mean, we have a pretty complex intake process where they have to ask a lot of different questions, etc. but again, sometimes you don't know what you don't know and you don't know how to ask the questions in a way that allows you to get to deeper meaning, so I'm always trying to find that balance to help the interns.

Speaker 2: If they come in and they talk to me about a client with depression or whatever, and I might say, "Well, did you do a back inventory, because I think we could get more information from that," and then they're able to maybe look and realize, oh, this client was more depressed than I realized, but they didn't think to do a more comprehensive assessment [inaudible 00:33:28] right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Always trying to figure out how to do that, and then I had an intern last year and towards the very end of the semester, it we've been the end of the school year, it turned out she ended up with a client who had a probably pretty significant eating disorder, but we only had a couple weeks to go, and this client was very frightened to have ever even spoken to a counselor, and this particular intern was really good with the types of clients who are fragile and afraid.

Speaker 2: Under normal circumstances, they don't have interns see complex eating disorder clients, but it was more valuable for this client to have an experience if they were only going to be here for a few weeks before we figured out what to do, and that intern was very strong with creating connectedness and safety, so I left that intern with that client rather than saying, "Oh, this is complicated eating disorder. We're going to give them to somebody else," right?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: Just moving things around.

Speaker 1: All the time, it sounds like.

Speaker 2: Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yep.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Just a couple more questions here.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Again, there's probably repetition here which is totally fine with me. I need to ask the questions the same to everybody, so when you are thinking about self and relations awareness in supervision, what is your experience of yourself and the supervisory relationship?

Speaker 2: Okay. Sometimes I forget, we'll start that way, how an intern may initially see me which is like Speaker 2's my boss is not a thing I think of as myself, and then some things will eventually come out and I'll realize, "Oh, my gosh. That's how they were thinking of me at first," right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I'll realize, "Oh." How they at least initially perceived me isn't even how I was thinking of me with them, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I may miss that they're not necessarily viewing the relationship with their supervisor in the same way I view it, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: Ultimately, yes, I am their boss, right?

Speaker 1: Right.

Speaker 2: Part of what I have to do for every program is I have to do these evaluations like a midterm and a final evaluate which is a clinical supervisor for me. I hate doing those because that's not my thing. I don't like giving grades and you know?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: We just finished midterm evaluations, so even around that, I find that personally not my thing, and it shifts me into a different space where now I'm evaluate you specifically and it's going to somehow impact your grade which just feels uncomfortable to me, so that shifts us into a different role. I don't know. I don't think I'm answering your question.

Speaker 1: Oh, go ahead. You're doing great.

Speaker 2: What was the question? Sorry.

Speaker 1: It was about that beginning part when you're thinking about addressing self and relational awareness, what are your experience inside yourself and in the relationship of a supervisor's relationship?

Speaker 2: I think maybe I was addressing I wonder if they view me the way I view them.

Speaker 1: The relational part?

Speaker 2: Yes, the relational part. These are complicated questions.

Speaker 1: They're supposed to get a depth of the experience, yeah.

Speaker 2: When I think of that part, in some ways I try to model in their experience with me what it might be like to have their experiences with their clients, so not by directly saying, "Here, this is what it's like to be with your client," but that idea of creating a space of acceptance and curiosity and there's finding your solutions and that kind of stuff that I try to model that and so that it ...

Speaker 2: I don't say, "Therefore, go out with your clients and do the same," but that I hope that it creates a sense of comfort and trust that gives them something they need in their own work, right?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: And that how it maybe feels like to be them in that kind of supervisor thing is something they can think about what does it feel like for my client to be with me when we're in that space together, so I try to ... That's part of the awareness piece I think for me. It's modeling what it feels like to be in a safe space.

Speaker 1: You're aware that you're doing that in that moment to intentionally-

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I'd say that's probably a thing I do very intentionally all the time, you know?

Speaker 1: Yeah. Okay. Great. Okay, so this last question is really just the general question is there anything else coming up for you or anything else that you can fill me in on what it's like, what the experience of using supervision when you're using it to promote self and relational awareness what that's like for you?

Speaker 2: I like that part of supervision personally. What I said before, I like that part that is we share, like I said earlier that I may be further along on the journey, but we're on a same trip, you know?

Speaker 2: I like that part. That part of supervision to me, at least for me, that's what makes supervision meaningful, you know?

Speaker 1: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: It's that person-to-person even though the one person has more clinical experience, etc. but that we still share personhood as we do this important work, so that part of supervision, I value that, so I think because I value that, I emphasize it, I guess. It's a value I hold.

Speaker 1: Okay. Okay. Well, thank you so much for your time-

Speaker 2: You're welcome.

Speaker 1: ... and your thoughtful answers and responses. What I'm going to do is if you have any thoughts that come up afterwards, feel free to jot them down in an email. Probably in a few days, I will send you an email, just say did you have any other thoughts that you would like to add. That's part of my IRB process that I do a follow-up email, but I'm not doing follow-up interviews, so I really appreciate-

Speaker 1: Yeah. That way I can get it transcribed and then it's go from there.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So I will try to not take a lot of your time. I think they've been taking around 45, 48 minutes. What I'm going to ask you questions about is your experience when you used supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees. So, I know that it's going to be hard. Some of the answers you're going to be including as supervisees' experience, but try to make sure that you also put your experience in. If is it stressful? Does it anxiety? Do you ever wonder if I should go there? Am I too much of a counselor? Even the positive side, how do I know? Am I using my intuition because I have two separate studies that I'm doing that I'll tease apart later. One is what goes on inside you that makes you know that you want to go there with a supervisee? The other part is what's it like when you do go there. So, their experience.

Speaker 1: Anyway, sometimes it helps to keep in mind a certain supervisee where maybe they lacked self awareness in certain role, or you thought their family dynamics were interfering. Just have that picture in your mind when you're answering some of the questions. Okay. All right. One more thing. The questions, some of them are a little bit repetitive. It depends how broad your answer is. I have to ask them all the same for everybody. So if you feel like you've already answered it, just feel free to just say that.

Speaker 2: My master's thesis was qualitative interview, so I totally get that.

Speaker 1: Okay. Yeah. This is my first time ever doing research. So, I probably would have designed it a little bit differently, but this got through the IRB so this is what we're doing.

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1: Okay. Okay. In general, what are your thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Yeah. I think especially in our profession, although it's true in many professions, but we're one of the professions where it's true that what we do is so much tied into who we are. Whether it's how we're physiologically responding in the room, non-verbals where we're ever not aware of what we're saying, the emotion. So, one thing I think is so important and actually does harm if we aren't incorporating it in some way is that we can't separate that out from what we're doing, and it's going to have a big impact on the supervisee. It's also kind of a parallel way modeling how we need to be as therapists in the room with our clients. I can keep talking if you want me to.

Speaker 1: Yeah, no. So your general thoughts about what it means. I think we kind of got that. Great.

Speaker 2: And what it look like. I think the self awareness piece can both be self awareness about what's happening in the room, so what I'm experiencing, what I'm thinking, feeling. It's also self awareness about where might these things be coming from. Then self awareness about what might I do about that. So, do I have strategies that are growth area for me? Am I kind of in process with that? Supervisees I think vary a lot, as we know, in terms of how much they come into this work with, into their master's program with in terms of just general self awareness, self awareness in relationships, all those things. There's students that have done a lot of work outside of being a therapist or supervisee are going to be able to bring that into the setting. So, I think there's a lot of variation or a lot of a pretty big broad spectrum in terms of how much self awareness students come in with.

Speaker 1: Yeah. That's great.

Speaker 2: Do you want me... Okay.

Speaker 1: Because we'll get to more-

Speaker 2: Okay, some particular ones.

Speaker 1: Yeah. This is another kind of a broad one. In general, and we're zero in on this a little bit more, what is it like for you when you use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: I actually really enjoy that connection in most cases. I mean, there are some situations where it might be worth emotionally in terms of the setting, but I guess I still believe in it and I see it as so central to students' development. One of the reasons I love to do supervisions, I love to see people develop and grow. So that feels like a really big piece. I think it's also exciting because it has such a big piece about self acceptance. The supervisees accepting themselves because a lot of times there can be embarrassment or shame or self doubt because of things that they're experiencing as a new therapist. And being able to create an environment where they're learning to value that and not feel the same around it and just have that growth mindset as a supervisee, as a new therapist just learning is really exciting to me. I just love to see that happening in the world, and this is my small window of how I get to do that.

Speaker 1: I totally agree with. Does it ever bring up any sort of emotions for you when you see that happening in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Great question. Let me think a minute here. I mentioned it-

Speaker 1: Thoughts or anything. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Right. It can be excitement seeing whether it's the light bulbs going on or whether it's just seeing them growing in that awareness and that change happening over time. The current setting where I've been, this is my fifth year now on this setting where I'm supervising, I see the same supervisees for nine months. So, enough time to see growth and progress that way. I mean, just in terms of feelings that evoke, if it's bringing up things that are really painful for the supervisee, they can impact sadness with that, identifying with that. Not so much sadness that they're identifying it here, but that they have that. I guess that's a mix for me. That's where it gets complicated because there's the sadness about what they experienced or the pain or there could be anxiety or fear that they're feeling in relationship to case because of their history and their own experiences or experiences of people close to them.

Speaker 1: A transference kind of a thing.

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative). But then there's also that piece that for me is I guess, I don't know, I hope is an emotion. But that hope is that redemptive piece because one thing that gives me hope in this work including for ourselves is God can use all these things for good. So, experiences, that's kind of using this, especially theological ones but experiences with supervisees, the new therapists that have had that have been difficult, painful, traumatic that in their work here. There are ways that they can weave that in and that can shape who they are and how they can be a healing presence to others. So, even when I'm feeling the hope or maybe even when I'm feeling the sadness or maybe even outrage your anger on their behalf, you can feel that as well, there's also this piece about hope.

Speaker 1: Yeah, that's cool. Are you ever-

Speaker 2: Can you tell me how many questions you have because in terms of scaling how long I answer?

Speaker 1: Yeah. There's about 10 more.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Some of them you'll probably just braise through. But can you describe any thoughts or feelings that you might ever have about the response you might get from a supervisee when you are doing this kind of supervision?

Speaker 2: I mean, do read to me the first part of the question again.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Any thoughts or feelings that you might have about a response that you're aware of in a supervisee when you're doing this kind of supervision.

Speaker 2: Right. I think kind of initially supervisees can feel a little bit uncertain about if I'm asking or inquiring or observing something that would be more self of the therapist versus just things that they're saying or doing in the room. That discomfort and usually it's more discomfort than defensiveness. I mean, sometimes people can be a little defensive. I haven't had a supervisee with a strong. I've been fortunate to haven't had a supervisee that's been highly defensive that way maybe probably because of how I model that. That discomfort and I think just I guess the thought would be the reminder that... Let me think how to articulate that. I guess it's necessary.

Speaker 2: So, a question like am I pushing too much, I guess I just take time to pose if it is appropriate with where we're going with it or the kind of question or way that we're exploring this. If it is, making sure to just keep those boundaries in terms of exploring it in a way that's appropriate for supervision and is pertinent to the supervision, which they work as a therapist. So, it's always watching that line between it's not a therapy session. It is about supervision and about their work as a therapist and needs to stay within those bounds. That's part of my thinking process with that. Certainly if the client is uncomfortable just using that question to make sure that I'm still nose bound.

Speaker 1: Does that vary with different supervisees depending on what you might expect from them or where they're at at all?

Speaker 2: Absolutely. Some students are very much more incorporate that and are very aware of that. Other supervisee is less. But if a student gets less comfortable with that [inaudible 00:10:37], then I think they'd be less of that. There's some of that, but for students that are invited more, there might be more exploration. It can also be appropriate sometimes for students to do some of the processing about what they do with someone else as well. So, we might identify something but maybe they're in therapy and they talked with the therapist about... The whole process doesn't have to happen with me. If they're getting that in other places, it could be that sometimes we have a whole conversation. It could be that we kind of identified that, "Oh I'm going to talk to this person about that and I'll come back and let you know what I'm thinking about how I incorporate that into my work." Does that answer the question?

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah. The next question is about the relationship. Have you experienced any... What do you experience in a relationship? I have to be really careful that I don't go to grounded theory with this because yes, what do you experience in a relationship? Maybe think about a few different supervisees, when you use supervision in this way, the supervisory relationship. Yeah.

Speaker 2: There's certainly more of a personal quality to any relationship. As part of that professional relationship, again within appropriately professional boundaries that way, which I think engenders trusts. I think a benefit of that could be that students are more likely to ask questions instead of trying to pretend that they know how to do things, which is much safer for the client, and not to mention that less of a liability risk and are much more likely to-

Speaker 1: Brings things to you, right?

Speaker 2: ... bring things to me, whether it's about what they're doing with the client, or even that awareness. Well again if they aren't self aware, if we're not self aware, we're likely to harm clients in the work that we do. Again, it's decreasing risk of harm that way. That's one piece I think about in terms of that relationship is that openness and that trust. I found that students also want to curate the relationships forward. Once we're done with the formal relationship, they want to stay in touch. They want to just let me know what's happening professionally, in general in terms of what's happening personally. So, there's that sense about being colleague in the field. I think when done well, it can actually lead to a healthy thing in terms of just collegiality because once they graduate, they're supervising now, but over time they might run into some setting where it's more of a colleague in the field. Yeah. Other things about that relationship.

Speaker 1: Has it ever gone the other way?

Speaker 2: Let me think back. I'm not thinking of anybody in this setting. I have two other settings where I worked. I guess I have not had a supervisee relationship that's gone badly. I'm sure that sometime when that happen, I didn't realize that I feel really fortunate to be able to say that. Yeah. I can't think of one where it's gone badly. I mean, it's been different levels in terms of how it flows. I had one other thought. Let me remember what it was. What was your question again just so I-

Speaker 1: It was about the supervisory relationship. Has there ever been a time when it's been harder to do that with certain supervisees for you?

Speaker 2: Right. I've never had one where it went badly. I think it's more difficult for me. Maybe I didn't get that part of the question. I think it's more difficult for me. I've had a couple of times where there was a supervisee who had very low levels of self awareness. Then I'm feeling a tension in terms of deciding about how to approach that, making sure that it's appropriate for them to even be in the room. No one where it was to the degree where I pulled them up, but just concerns about that. But then at times that there's a low self awareness, they don't even realize why it's important. They don't even get it. Then there's that educational piece, which can be difficult. Let me though for a minute. I think there's something I was going to say about how it can be difficult.

Speaker 2: I guess the only thing that we have to be able to do is that if there's anything where maybe we're raising a concern or challenging especially if it's bringing up like let's say I'm doing the practicum supervision in this particular job setting and maybe something we need to contact the faculty supervisor in their graduate program, which is a separate institution or something like that. So, it's more exposure that that level of challenge or raising concern. When we've done more self of the therapist, there's been that trust. Self of the therapist work and then there's been the trust, then it can be I think emotionally more difficult sometimes to make those reports even though I do not do it and I realize why I need to do that, but yeah.

Speaker 1: Okay. Great. So the next a couple of questions are going to be how you decide. I know it's a very quick process usually in supervision. Something happens and we're like, "I think we need to explore this," or something is going on with this person and we need to go there. So these are breaking down really to slow down that process so we can get some insight into what goes on inside supervisors in them making that decision. At the very beginning, if you can think about it, when you first have that thought that I think I need to make that decision to go there about this particular client or some issue with the supervisee, what are you aware of in yourself, if you could slow that process down?

Speaker 2: I'm a gut person. I think [inaudible 00:17:11].

Speaker 1: Great. I want to break down that gut and see what that looks like.

Speaker 2: I literally often will feel in my abdominal area, in terms of breaking down that level physiological reaction. So, if I feel this is tightening in my check or sensation in my abdominal area, either muscular or my digestive system, kind of listening to that. To me that's a cue to listen and try to cue in okay, am I picking up something here? So, paying attention to that. If I find myself having an emotional reaction to something they're saying, and especially with something there's a quicker reactive type of thing, a feeling. If I'm feeling frustration towards something that a supervisee, something that I see or something they're reporting in the interaction or some sadness or some defensiveness, so just paying attention to those things. Also, another thing I pay attention to is if I suddenly feel confused. Sometimes that's a cue that there's something going on. There's a little deeper level in the therapist that needs to be kind of drawn out and processed.

Speaker 1: Okay. Now these two next questions are very related to that question. If there's nothing more that comes to you, that's fine. The first one was describe what you're aware of in yourself as you're deciding. Are you related of any particular thoughts, feeling, experience or considerations that are related to the supervisee specifically it going on inside of you, I know this is complicated, when you're thinking about it.

Speaker 2: [inaudible 00:19:05] parallel that's happening in me?

Speaker 1: No.

Speaker 2: Or do you want to read it again?

Speaker 1: Yeah. I'm not sure that I wrote it that clearly, but it's describing the thoughts, feelings, experience or consideration that you're aware of that are related to this particular supervisee-

Speaker 2: With the ones that I'm having.

Speaker 1: Yes.

Speaker 2: Okay. Yeah.

Speaker 1: So you just talked about a generalized experiences that you're having, but can you think of an example maybe when you had some particular reaction related to one supervisee?

Speaker 2: Got it.

Speaker 1: Let me know.

Speaker 2: Okay. Yes. Let me think about that.

Speaker 1: I'm trying to get at what part is related to just what goes on in you. What part is related to the supervisee. Then the next question is about what are your considerations about the relationship.

Speaker 2: Okay. So, let me think about that for just a minute in terms of examples.

Speaker 1: Yeah, take your time.

Speaker 2: The thoughts or feelings I have in relationship to what the supervisee might be experiencing.

Speaker 1: Or just how they might deal with maybe you going there.

Speaker 2: Oh, okay.

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2: I don't know if this gets at it or not, but one thing is that I'm not a best friend of my supervisees. I'm not their primary support person. I have this professional supervisee thing, I don't know how well I'll articulate this, but there's this dynamic where I deep into things where at that moment in other settings I might provide that in deciding how to do this. For example, I have a supervisee whose mom suddenly died several weeks into her first practicum experience. There's all this grief, very emotional. Took a week or two off from practicum, came back in but in the room, and she had a lot of self awareness, but aware that there's a lot of grief. It's easy for her to be emotionally triggered about her own stuff just with things that might be... just because she's going through a lot of grief and there's a lot of emotion there.

Speaker 2: I'm just using an example of being able to talk about how she's managing her emotion in the room, and providing support for her personally because she's going through that and she's a supervisee. So, whether it's a staff person or a practicum student, I want to be a supportive person with things that people are going through emotionally. We're not really doing that grief work, so I'm not doing the grief with her specifically. She's getting her primary support for that elsewhere, but thinking about how do I support her as she continues to be present in the room. So, it could be that kind of thing or whether it's a student that is really emotional because of something that the client is experiencing. It's eating disorder, well I had a history of eating disorder myself, or this person has been sexually assaulted, I have a history of that. I guess I hope I'm tackling the question, but-

Speaker 1: You are, you are. This is great.

Speaker 2: ... I think that there is a huge piece that has to be about tremendous respect. That the supervisees have to know that I have absolute respect for them for all the experiences they bring to the table and that there's not judgment. There's not a devaluing. Part of that safety is just that respect for them and needing to communicate that. So, I want to communicate... Okay. I'm thinking. I don't want them to communicate that this makes them that just because... I guess both ways.

Speaker 2: Just because they've had this experience doesn't mean they'll be a good therapist working with that issue. I'm thinking about that, or just because they've had the experience doesn't mean that I could never help anybody else because I struggled. Even those are not healthy binary choices. That binary is not healthy because either one is true in end of itself. What are you doing with that? I think about how can we use whatever is coming up for you in the room or whatever you're experiencing, the self of the therapist, how can we use that to help this client? How can you use that to grow and strengthen the gift that you are as a presence of healing? I don't know if that's too vague or.

Speaker 1: No, no. It's great. It's great. It just brings up how when you, and I don't want to take too much time but it makes me think of the times when you know experiences a supervisee has been through and you see it might be impacting the way that they're working with a particular client who has something similar and they don't see it. What that's like to know that you need to help them identify it, but you're not going to be the one to necessarily help them work through it.

Speaker 2: Right, right. You don't want me to talk about what I do with the supervisees necessarily, right?

Speaker 1: No. I mean, you can touch on that, but it's just as more about your experiences but yeah. I heard you mentioned the self of a therapist. I was wondering if you use Aponte's model a little bit with that.

Speaker 2: Some. Yeah. I don't know if I use it puristically but yeah, we use the [inaudible 00:25:28] graduate program. I went through a Massachusetts PhD program where there was a lot of self of the therapist work.

Speaker 1: I would love to have that conversation with you probably another time because some of the things you're saying sound close to the way that I work too. So yeah. Okay.

Speaker 2: I guess I can say something else just in terms of experiences I've had as a supervisor. Another thing that comes up is if a client, and this is true for all of us including myself, but when a client comes up about something and there's an unconscious bias in a way that is offensive to me, that would be another of like what do I feel. Does that make sense?

Speaker 1: Yes.

Speaker 2: There might be that initial response. I might be offended and not in the sense that I mean, I don't react out of that, but just being aware of that helps me as a supervisor how to address that with them. It's just another thing that occurred to me that can happen sometimes in supervision.

Speaker 1: Yeah, definitely.

Speaker 2: Whether it's whatever, cultural, racial, gender, religious, whatever kind of bias that-

Speaker 1: You see.

Speaker 2: ... it feels [inaudible 00:26:44]. Yeah. So, that would be another thing. I mean, there are all kinds of things that can get evoked in me as a supervisor.

Speaker 1: Yeah, sure. Okay. Let's see. Where am I here? When I ask this, what thoughts and feelings are you aware of when you're deciding, this is one of the deciding questions, to adjust self and relational awareness of a supervisee. I guess I'm thinking anything on the continuum hesitation to fear, resistance. What is that process like for you?

Speaker 2: Right.

Speaker 1: When you're first thinking about. I don't know if you... I know you talked a little bit of the sematic process, but when you're actually deciding yeah.

Speaker 2: Right. What I feel can definitely vary in how I am doing that day. So if I didn't get as much sleep or it's a lower energy or maybe things have been more difficult in another sphere of my life or something in the day that can certainly impact how it feels because it takes more emotional energy to do that kind of supervision versus these are interventions you can try, for examples. It takes a lot more emotional energy. So, I feel about doing it is going to vary depending on how I'm doing on a given day or a given hour. It's also impacted by the setting. So, I'm more cautious and I can be more hesitant sometimes in a group therapy setting because I do do group video supervision with the practicum students.

Speaker 2: I have this year four at a time we're in a room. There what it can be, there's some discomfort with bringing certain things up. I do less in-depth, of course, with that, but then there's also a piece that if I don't bring something up at all, then it indirectly communicates to other practicum supervisees. Like if I just wait and have a private conversation and I don't address it, but it's something that might be more obvious or important, there's that ethical responsibility, I think, to then bring it up in that group setting at least as identifying and saying we can talk about it more later. That feels a much more uncomfortable to me because it's a group setting. There, that would be an example of where it's more difficult for me to do that and I'm trying to figure out how to navigate that in a way that's respectful.

Speaker 1: Attention between those two things.

Speaker 2: Yeah. That's why from the first of orientation in August before we started the school year for our nine month practicum, I really honed in on the kinds of things I've been talking about all along in terms of what it means, and why self of the therapist is important and that this is not a judgment. There's acceptance that we learn and we grow by just being aware of those things. It may be good or bad experiences, but it's not good or bad that we've had. It is what it is and we use some going forward. I've been fortunate, I think, that I've been able to cultivate safe communities every year, but that would be difficult. I feel like there was a year where was at least, let's say, one supervisee that was making that group situation not feel emotionally safe for others because it's a different level. They had to trust not only me as a supervisor but the co-supervisees.

Speaker 1: And that takes a lot of discretion on your part to figure out what that is.

Speaker 2: They're just comfortable with that. Then if a student is going through a really hard time, like the supervisee is going through a really hard time, it is harder for me to push them to bring those up because it feels like okay, they've already got a lot on their plate. They're struggling. It doesn't change what I do again-

Speaker 1: Right, but it changes how you feel when you do it.

Speaker 2: ... and pushing someone is hard though because then it feels like it takes more energy from me because I'm carrying the weight of that. I'm empathizing, so I'm kind of grieving with them that it's heavy right now, and that this brought up something in there. So, there's more heaviness there. Let me think a minute here. I guess another thing that's come up, I mean frequently I don't have a specific example, every once in a while what will come is a supervisee will come back later and ask about something. And I realize that wasn't as clear of communications as it could have been and it hit something raw or vulnerable for them. But again, usually it goes well, but occasionally they'll come back and ask a question and we'll have that conversation, which I'm so glad we come back.

Speaker 2: I guess there's that risk in doing this kind of work that because it does hit so close to home that I don't know how that will be for them. In those moments, I can have that regret and again it's not huge. I've never had anything like huge or terrible but like, "Oh, I'm sorry that you sat with it for a few days and were stressed about that conversation, the therapist conversation." So infrequent but that can come up too.

Speaker 1: I love the way you broke down that experience and talked about what you can feel after or before and different things like that. I think that is a part that I think a lot of people don't go there because it can be stressful to take all these things into consideration.

Speaker 2: I guess I can add one thing about my process with that is that if it has been something where I'm picking up that the self of the therapist conversation with the supervisee has been different for some reason. It's not always. Somebody is just like, "That's interesting. I never hear that," blah, blah. You know what I mean. You kind of move on. It's not deep emotionally, but it's been emotionally intense. It's like if you think about that and I almost always check back in later, circle back around even just stop by in betweens at the end of the day or something, like, "How are you doing about that? Any more thoughts about that?" Again, too if there's anything that I did it wasn't fully communicated or I don't them to leave with a burden. I want them to leave a sense of possibility and maybe not excitement if it's a heavier thing, but at least curiosity, compassion for themselves. I think the self compassion is a big piece.

Speaker 2: Yeah, and self compassion for myself when it's hard to have to identify tough things. Like if a student has a block and they're really do need to work through it because it's going to impair their ability to be a good therapist. Just as it is with a client, it's hard to point out. You know what I mean, to have to, you know this really has to be addressed. So, just having compassion for myself like, "That was a tough day."

Speaker 1: Right, right and you had to be persistent sometimes depending on how they take it or whatever. So yeah. I think bringing in self compassion is a great tool for students and for us too. Okay. Where was I with that one? Here, we're getting there. This one, what are your considerations about students supervisory needs and developmental level when you're thinking about addressing self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Wow, that's a big question.

Speaker 1: What are your considerations?

Speaker 2: Maybe thinking about stages of change would be a careful way is one thing I guess I don't know, I think I kind of unconsciously do. So, I'll articulate it that way. I've had supervisees come in that there are in their 40s or 50s and they're going back for a master's degree in counseling. A lot of times the people that go back at that point for master's degree in counseling have done a lot of self reflection, a lot of self awareness. I mean, they're coming with all kinds of life experiences. So, that self of the therapist supervision that I do with them is going to be very different than a 23 year old who just is in their second year of their master's program first practicum and coming out, even if they have a very high self level of awareness for their age. There can be that.

Speaker 2: Then just within, it's not just age. There can also just be how much work they've done or how much reflecting they've done. Thinking about the stages of changes, if someone is in pre-contemplation, which they aren't aware of something. Then thinking about that contemplation of how I do that in terms of just reflecting general questions and making sure that I'm staying in a, I'm getting a little off trail from the exact question, I'll get there, but making sure that I'm staying in that curious stance myself. If I'm staying in curiosity and compassion, then however we explore it has the greatest likelihood of being experienced well in a good way by my supervisee, even in bringing those things up.

Speaker 2: If they haven't had any awareness, I'm not going to be able to jump to the action stage necessarily with all the ways this is going to be implemented in terms of how they relate differently to clients or how they use that with clients. If there's something immediate where there's a... I mean, as soon there are critical things, we have to do some that. Am I speaking to vaguely? So in other words, if they're doing something where, let's say, they're avoiding addressing something because of their own history with something or because of their discomfort. Let's say maybe in their history is I'm uncomfortable talking about sexuality. When this client brought up this issue in the room, I just changed the topic as a new therapist and didn't even follow up. I started talking about something else they've talked about. I didn't even follow their trail of thought or just [crosstalk 00:37:12].

Speaker 1: Right, changed the subject.

Speaker 2: There's definitely that piece like action stage, okay looking at that and some self awareness. Sometimes you have to take action and it goes back in terms of becoming more aware like what does that bring up for me when I do that. It kind of circles around. Sometimes some of that more self understanding can be explored more gradually in terms of asking questions, following up the next time I talk with them in terms of what they've been thinking about with that or what they're realizing about that. They can lead towards more subtle changes in terms of what they're doing differently in the room. I think there's just a big range in terms of that contemplation and developmentally, I guess there's developmental in terms of just stage of life, but then there's developmentally in terms of developmental self awareness. Let me think. Yeah, go ahead.

Speaker 1: Also developmental level of the process of becoming a counselor.

Speaker 2: Oh, okay. Right. Let's do that. I think that one thing that I see developing over especially I work with a lot of students where it's their first year of ever doing therapy, not all of them, but a lot of them in this setting is their first year of doing therapy is that when they go into it, they think it's something they're going to do. They don't realize how much they are the instrument as they are in the room and how much they need to continually be tuning in and learning and growing moment by moment, every moment for the therapy for the rest of their career as they're doing this. So, just heightening that awareness in a gentle way I think is a big thing. I'm not sure that it always come across in coursework, but it can come across as we're looking at specific cases, or a specific hour of therapy that they did with a client.

Speaker 2: So self of the therapist and development of the therapist. In some ways there's more work at the beginning because you just aren't aware of all the biases you have and all the ways that you're coming in. But in other ways, there's even more work as you go in because you are going beyond that initial kind of like I'm in the room and I'm trying these things and I'm doing these interventions. In some ways, self of the therapist work becomes deeper and even more as you go on. So, it's kind of an interesting paradox I think there. I don't know if any of that addressed. Am I getting at the question though or?

Speaker 1: No, you are. You are. I'm letting you kind of talk because you're touching on a lot of the different things and some of the things are even from previous questions. So yeah. Thank you. What are your experiences... and I probably could have phrased it in a different way. I'll read it and then I'll tell you what I mean. What are your experiences regarding specific student attitudes towards supervision when you're thinking about using supervision to address stuff on relational awareness? If you ever have sensed anything about their attitude towards authority or supervision or anything like that, does it ever come to your deciding factors when you're deciding to bring those things up?

Speaker 2: Like kind of binary as do I bring self of the therapist things, that question?

Speaker 1: Like yes or no, but what your experience is if you do it. Yeah.

Speaker 2: I definitely notice the difference in attitude towards those kind of questions, attitude or response, depending upon what they have in their graduate program. So, students who joined to a graduate program where there's a lot of self of the therapist focus, it feels a lot more seamless and that I feel very comfortable because they're already comfortable when they see me. They've already been talking about self of the therapist stuff even though they're doing clinical work in the other coursework or a lot of the coursework before they see me in supervision. If they haven't, and we have some programs that we get students from where they don't do as much of that, then it can be more difficult because it may feel like I'm challenging and saying that, I mean maybe not that they're not incompetent, but I don't have confidence in them or I'm criticizing them. Just by raising the question, they don't get that we're all doing this.

Speaker 1: How does that affect you if you sense that response from them?

Speaker 2: Right. It feels uncomfortable just in the feeling.

Speaker 1: It is a mix of feelings probably, right?

Speaker 2: Yeah. I mean, honestly, if you really break it down initially, not in terms of what I'm communicating back to them, but for myself, I just love to dive in. There's frustration that I have to... I mean, there's frustration that we can't just dive in. Not high level, but there's a little bit of frustration like okay, they don't get it that this is important. So, a little bit of frustration. Maybe a little bit of apprehension about am I going to be able to sell them on this? Are they going to get this because it's not something that's being promoted in their program. They've looking at all these other people's authorities so they're going to think that I'm some anomaly or some weird supervisor. Am I going to be able to sell them? So, a little bit of apprehension there.

Speaker 2: Concern about how they might impact group dynamic. This again part of the supervision that I do is a group setting. So, is it going to negatively be unfair would be way too strong a word but a little concern. Nervousness about how their reaction might affect my relationship with other supervisees because we're in this group setting. I think the other piece compassion, empathy would just be usually is because they're afraid in some way or insecure if they're having a reaction. So, it definitely evokes that and I think that ends up being kind of the prevailing thing.

Speaker 2: I'm able to come back to it's not primarily frustration. I mean, there are those things too in terms of me. That comes back to how do I communicate this in an effective way. How do I get them on board and how do I do that in a way that they feel held in, emotionally safe and cared for because again I want to our relationship to parallel what I want them creating for the client.

Speaker 1: Right. Yeah. I appreciate the way that you're talking about the mixed feelings because I think that is, if you break it down, I mean we push through sometimes and we do it because we know we should but there are things going on.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: We're getting there. This is a different question. How are supervisees' clients part of your experience of making that decision to address self and relational awareness?

Speaker 2: You mean like presenting issues in that way or?

Speaker 1: Whatever way, either clients presenting issues, what's going on in the counseling right at that moment. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Got it.

Speaker 1: Just welfare in general and whatever you want to touch on. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Right. I think a lot of times when we're not self aware or bringing more of our own emotional baggage into the room as a therapist, these would be my supervisees, it's going to make-

Speaker 1: Sorry. I don't know. I'm never in my office at this time. So, I don't have to answer the phone, but I don't necessarily know how to stop it.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Go ahead.

Speaker 2: If we're uncomfortable in the room because of our own stuff, it's going to make the client more uncomfortable. If the situation where I feel like the-

Speaker 1: [crosstalk 00:45:52]. Yeah. I'm going to push it. I just saw a do not disturb. It's fine. I just pushed it.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: If there's a situation where it appears I'm confident there's a good chance that the client is uncomfortable or the clients are going to be able to... I'm kind of thinking how to generalize it because there are so many specific examples. Basically where it's not going to be the optimal care for the client if it's not addressed. I'm sorry. With the phone, I got distracted. The question was about what do I consider about what's happening with the client or the client affects whether or not I address things with the supervisee?

Speaker 1: Yeah. Coming to your decision process, how do the clients come into it?

Speaker 2: Yeah. If it's going to hurt the clients in some way or keep them from best care, I mean better care, then it's definitely a piece of that because I'm here. In our setting here, we have several full-time staff. We have some faculty that see students some and then the other students at the university. Then we have this year four interns of various from the other year. I want every student coming in to get really good quality care. So, if there's self of the therapist things that are there unaddressed or whatever and any of us including like in this case my supervisees, the practicum students, I want that to be addressed because I don't want students to come in and not get the best possible care they can get. I don't know if that addressing what you're expecting.

Speaker 1: It does. It does.

Speaker 2: Did you want specific examples or more just like a general?

Speaker 1: Whatever you want. Just if there's something that comes to your mind that's a good example of how the client came into the picture when you were deciding, that would be great.

Speaker 2: I guess too just messages that the clients leave with is really important to me too. Self of the therapist can have so much to do with that. Other things can too, but that. So, what are the messages that I got about boundaries and relationships with my parents, or what are the messages I got about responsibility for sexual assault, or what are the messages I got about what I do with anger. Again, it's just so complex because it's what we say and what we do and interventions we use. Then there's so much that's even more powerfully, I think communicating to clients are as much by what we're doing.

Speaker 2: So, I think that's what drives all of that because it's not about... Again, I'm not a therapist. I'm not a coach. I'm not a mentor to my supervisees. It really is about helping them be the best possible therapist in the room and the self of the therapist is a means to that. It's not that I don't care about them, but my professional role, my role is to help them be the best therapist they can be and grow [crosstalk 00:48:58] and equip them to do that well and always is what's going to best serve the client.

Speaker 1: Regardless of what might be the hesitance either you might be experiencing. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: Sometimes if a supervisee use quick to go some place, and I'm not sure it's really hurting the client, then I'll be more likely to let it seat and see if it's comes back again. I mean, it's not getting pushed every single time at all.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Yeah. I've had that experience too. Empathy, okay. We pretty much reached the end of this, but I want to just see if you have any lingering thoughts or anything else that you'd like to say?

Speaker 2: Okay. Let me think.

Speaker 1: Okay. I'm also going to send you a follow up question probably today or tomorrow and just anything else that you thought of just once, then you can write it down too.

Speaker 2: Okay. I guess just, I don't know if we touched on this or not, I'm not sure we did but part of it is about the specifics of self of the therapist things I bring up with supervisees that I'm not sure if I addressed this. The other part of it is that the parallel thing is about the process. I don't want them to just leave with awareness of certain things about themselves. They'll bring in like, "This is how I respond to defensiveness. This is what comes up for me when this parenting style is talked about or whatever, like what triggers in me." But I also want them to be aware of how can I continue to be aware of the process of identifying things in myself by noticing in the room what's happening?

Speaker 2: In other words, these are things that it's not just like the specific conversations about content of self of the therapist, but it's about that process about how do I be a therapist? How do I continue for my whole career because that's the vision I want to sell them on, learn from my whole continue to be a therapist who is growing in self awareness? And how am I going to do that when I'm not having somebody that's micro-supervising me anymore? What are the things I'm going to watch for? What are the indicators to me? A lot of that self awareness just talking about the specifics but about how do they know if something is going on. What are the clues that they take from the client, from the client relationship, from themselves and that leaving with the more intentional or explicit kind of awareness that way as well I guess [crosstalk 00:51:58].

Speaker 1: So kind of helping them to internalize that part of the supervision process, that ongoing tuning in to what's going-

Speaker 2: Absolutely.

Speaker 1: ... using themselves and yeah.

Speaker 2: And a commitment. Like that they leave with the vision for that, and a commitment to continue to do that even if they're not in a supervisory relationship or with a supervisor who is bringing those things up.

Speaker 1: Yeah because that does happen. Yeah, no. I appreciate that. That's great. Has this been okay for you? Has this been comfortable?

Speaker 2: Absolutely. Yeah. I [inaudible 00:52:32]. I don't know. Yeah. How many have you done so far?

Speaker 1: You're my third I believe.

Speaker 2: Okay. So you're up and rolling now.

Speaker 1: Yes. I have like another... The people from 5C have been great, and my advisor said that's okay if I just do. I'll change a little bit with my demographic. So, when she said that-

Speaker 2: If you need more supervisors, I can reach out to some people if you need people.

Speaker 1: Okay. Yeah. If a couple of people don't-

Speaker 2: I'm not asking but if you end up you need people, let me know. I can't promise that they would have time to do it, but I can certainly reach out. I have some people I know that supervise first and second years, and I can ask if they're willing to be in your research study.

Speaker 1: Thank you. I mean, if you'd like to do that, that would be great. Then if you can pass their name onto me, and I'll reach out to them, or you can ask [crosstalk 00:53:28]-

Speaker 2: At this point you mean?

Speaker 1: Well, I might need-

Speaker 2: Oh wait, if you need them.

Speaker 1: So, I have one or two more scheduled. It's about two or three people. I had eight respond, but a couple of them have not gotten back to me. So, I'm thinking I probably will need about two more people. If you think of anybody-

Speaker 2: Is it okay to just kind of pace from your consent just a general description of that?

Speaker 1: Yeah, that would be great. Then they could email me back, and I could get them on the schedule. In the meantime, if other people email back, then maybe I won't need them but yeah.

Speaker 2: Right, right.

Speaker 1: So yeah. I appreciate that. Thank you so much.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah because it's great to deal with people I don't know too.

Speaker 2: Right. Right.

Speaker 1: Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2: All right. Take care.

Speaker 1: Thank you so much for your time. I will send you that follow up question and that will be all that ask from you, but I just really appreciate this so much. It's been great.

Speaker 2: I'd love to see what you write up at the end.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Participant 4

Speaker 1: I'm going to eat my lunch while we talk.

Lori: Please eat your lunch. I'm going to drink coffee. I want this to be relaxed.

Speaker 1: All right. Good.

Lori: Yeah, that's right. It's lunchtime there. Yep.

Speaker 1: Yeah, it is. Yeah.

Lori: Yeah. Okay. So what I am going to try... My questions... You're my fourth interview, right now. I think. I've gotten a sense that some of them are repetitive. If you feel like you've already... It didn't feel that way when I was writing them, but I have to ask them the same way to everybody. If you feel that way and you've already answered it, just say, "I think I've already answered it."

Speaker 1: I get it.

Lori: Also, I'm trying to get at an experience that's a little bit hard to get at, and that is your experience when you are using supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisee's.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Lori: It's okay to talk a little bit about the supervisee's experience, and all of that stuff, but I also want to reflect on your experience, whether it's emotion, sematic, thoughts, feelings, cautions, considerations. "Oh, I don't think I should go here." All that stuff is what I really want to get at.

Speaker 1: Got it.

Lori: Okay. And, I'm going to ask you some questions that are focused on your considerations about the supervisee relationship, some about what's going on inside of you, some about your considerations about the client. And, there's going to be some questions that are about how you decide that you want to go there. Actually the way that Oregon State has you do it is you do two separate studies, out of one group of questions. And one is deciding to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness, and again, I know it's a knee jerk reaction for a lot of us. So slowing down that process is what I'm interested, and the experience when you're doing it.

Speaker 1: Okay. Go for it.

Lori: All righty. This hasn't been taking more than 45 minutes at all.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Lori: Just so you know. All right. I am recording. The first question is just what are your general thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisee's?

Speaker 1: What does it mean to promote self awareness? I think a lot of it is process of how I approach supervision with supervisee's, both clinical and personal. It's that self awareness is what's it like for me to be in session with a client right now. What are reactions am I having, how am I feeling about confidence and competence. Promoting self-awareness for me is asking the questions in supervision about how are you doing as a therapist. How are you feeling about this role. And helping them become the best therapist they can be when they're in session with with their clients. I guess that's... For now, that works.

Lori: Perfect. Okay. Is this something that you do regularly? What is your experience doing this?

Speaker 1: Yeah. It's something I've done for probably 15 years. I've been involved in supervising master's level clinicians from very different angles. From the academic side to the clinician side in a therapy office, in my own private practice work. And in my work here at the university, as well. Something I've done quite a bit. As well as for as supervise clinicians, as well. So both grad students and licensed clinicians I have offered supervision too. Something I do on a regular basis for the past ,15 years or so.

Lori: It's one of the things that you emphasize in your supervision.

Speaker 1: Say again.

Lori: It's one of the things you usually-

Speaker 1: Yeah, it is.

Lori: Okay. Describe... What I'm looking at here is any thoughts or feelings that you might have about how the supervisee might respond? That when you are using supervision to promote self and relational awareness. Does that ever come into your experience?

Speaker 1: Ask that again.

Lori: Thoughts or feelings that you have about supervisee response to this supervision? Does that ever come into your mind that you're thinking about how they would respond if you go there?

Speaker 1: Well, yes. But there's part of it that doesn't really care. I want the response, regardless. So, it's a place we're going to go, regardless of what that might mean, because even if they respond negatively, we're talking about what does that mean for them as a clinician that's learning how to do this job. If that's hard for them, well then let's talk about that. Why is this hard? Or why is this uncomfortable? Or why does that feel a way too exposed or transparent for them? We'll go there. I guess I think about it, but I don't really care, we're going to go there anyway. Does that make sense? I don't know.

Lori: It does, but I'm going to go back to the part that you think about it. Can you tell me what some of those thoughts are?

Speaker 1: I guess a realistic one is occasionally one thought I have is, I hope they don't cry, because I don't want that. I don't like a crying clinician.

Lori: Right.

Speaker 1: That's one thing I'm thinking about. I am concerned about them seeing it as a growth opportunity, not as a difficult thing. I guess I am thinking about how are they going to respond to this. How will I respond to their response through that process. I think that's part of it. Does that make sense?

Lori: Yeah. Has there ever been an example where you have, that you're thinking about where that has come up more so than with somebody else? I'm not giving you much time to eat your food. Sorry about that.

Speaker 1: No, no, no. That's okay. We're good. A time where that came up, where I was aware of my thinking about?

Lori: Yeah. More so maybe with one supervisee? An example where it was that you think about that?

Speaker 1: There was one where I know caught me by surprise, that I thought it was a routine, let's ask some self awareness questions, and it didn't go in the direction I thought it would. And the clinician became very upset, and upset at me for challenging their competence. And then resulted in tears and leaving. Then, subsequent times where I had to confront or address, or talk about those uncomfortable things, I was initially a little hesitant to go there because I was aware of what happened in the past, and didn't want that to happen again. That might be an example of where I was aware of my own reaction and response to that growth experience in supervision, because it felt uncomfortable. I didn't want them to feel uncomfortable and I didn't want to be seen as a harsh or insensitive supervisor, either. Does that make sense? Did I answer the question?

Lori: Yeah. Perfect. Thank you. Have you ever been aware of... So the question is, how do you experience the relationship between you and the supervisee when you're using supervision in this way? Is there anything you're aware of, maybe that you could even compare and contrast when you don't use supervision that way or when you do? Does it enhance? Does it do anything for the relationship between you and the supervisee?

Speaker 1: I don't know. Can you ask that again?

Lori: Yeah. The question is how do you experience the relationship between you and the supervisee when you use supervision?

Speaker 1: Yeah. In that way, I think in some ways it strengthens the relationship between me and the supervisee because the supervisee realizes I'm concerned not about just their clinical work, but also their personal growth and how they're doing as a person. I've seen, generally speaking, that that works out positively because they feel cared for and supported as a human being, as well as a license seeking, or a licensed clinician.

Lori: I'm thinking about the person who cried. Maybe the next supervision session, did you notice anything in the relationship there?

Speaker 1: That next time there's a lot more guardedness on that person's part. I think they were guarding themselves against being confronted and uncomfortable, again, or challenged in a way that they didn't find helpful or supportive. We talk about that, but that's a hard thing sometimes to talk through, depending on the individual. But yes, you're right. They were a bit more guarded and I was probably a bit more sensitive about the things I said and questions I asked. But nonetheless, I still [inaudible 00:09:11]

Lori: But there was some sort of an impact on the relationship?

Speaker 1: Sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Lori: And in you, how you proceeded?

Speaker 1: Sure. Exactly. I was a little bit more cautious, careful in the words I used. Intentional to balance some of our conversation, that was both restorative and encouraging, as well as challenging. Probably aired more on the encouraging side to counterbalance our previous session.

Lori: Okay, thank you. These next two questions, I'm pretty sure that you've hit on them, but I'll just ask them again. You can tell me if there's anything else. Describe what you are aware of in yourself as you're deciding... Oh no, these are different. These are about the deciding process. As you're deciding to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness and supervisee. Example, in a session, maybe when something comes up in you, and you want to go there, or you think you want, what are you aware of in yourself in that moment?

Speaker 1: I'm thinking how are they going to receive this? Are they going to receive it positively or negatively? And are the words I'm using going to be received the way I intend them to be perceived? It's probably part of what I'm aware of. That's the first thing that comes to mind, anyway.

Lori: Okay. Are there any considerations about the who the supervisee is sitting there across from you, that might differ in different situations when you're thinking about bringing something up?

Speaker 1: I can't help but think that yes, that relationship that I have with an individual, it does impact that. There's some supervisee's that I have a more, I guess I'm going to say a stronger relationship or a more what might seem to be a more solid relationship, based on the ways in which we think about things, interact together. Some where it's a bit more guarded, there's more distance between myself and that individual. I think that does impact the comfort level of using growth mindset in supervision, because I feel more free to be a little more confrontational, a little more challenging in certain ways because there's more strength to the relationship. Whether it's a student I've had in class, more as a professor, maybe. And now I am their supervisor, or somebody who I've worked with closely for a longer period of time. There's a greater sense of trust. I can challenge and that they know that my challenge is coming out... My questions coming out of care and concern as opposed to an authority figure.

Speaker 1: Think some of the times that hasn't worked as well has been when there's been maybe a perceived... Weaker probably not the right word is what comes to mind. Weaker relationship between me and the supervisee, and not as deep trust that I have their best interest or wellbeing at heart. It feels more like I'm a supervisor with authority, challenging them in some personal way. It's easier, a lot of times, to challenge their clinical delivery than it is something about their character, or what reactions they have for themselves in session, because that becomes really personal, and personal is harder, a lot of times, for us to acknowledge and look at when we're being evaluated by another in our clinical practice.

Speaker 1: Our clinical practice of clinical practice is a skill, I can ask these questions instead of those questions. I ask open ended questions instead of close ended questions, or prompt a client to reflect more and me talk less. Those are easy. I can change it, I'll try that more next time. But if there's something about me that is... I have to grow in, that can be harder. I might have to confront my own inadequacies or my own need for therapy, or my own need for change beyond just a clinical study.

Lori: If you sense that a supervisee was going to have a harder chance hearing any of those things, would you, your mind to go through a few different of these considerations? Maybe more so than with somebody else that you've had that longer term relationship?

Speaker 1: Sure. I'd like to think not, but yes, the reality is yes it's true. I'd like to think I'd be the same across all venues, but-

Lori: I know. I know. I'm looking for those little micro processes.

Speaker 1: Exactly. No, you're right. It's true.

Lori: Yeah. Okay. Okay. This might break down the question. What are your considerations, can be thoughts or feelings or whatever, about students supervisory needs and developmental level when you're thinking about addressing self and relational awareness?

Speaker 1: Their needs as well as growth and development?

Lori: Their developmental level, yeah, as a counselor development.

Speaker 1: I think that's really important because if it's a 24 year old grad student that's just finishing up their grad school program as a 24 year old, coming just through schooling, compared to a 47 year old midlife career change person, or has been doing some human service work for a long time, I think there's... I do think their level of... Their developmental stage and their level of life experience and maturity, all those things that factor into that, do play it play a role. I think I can... Well, it can go both ways, to be honest. I think of some of the supervisee's who have been older, developmentally, sometimes it's harder to challenge them because they've been through less. Especially if they're older than me, that gives even more interesting in terms of the dynamic.

Speaker 1: What do I know? They're 10 years older than me and they have a whole lot more life experience. I don't have a voice to speak into their life, in the same capacity. Sometimes a 24 year old might be more receptive and open because they recognize that they're green and don't know everything. I think you're right, developmental stage does impact how we approach. But also, depends on where they are as an individual. I've known 47 year olds that are open and receptive and they want the feedback. And I've met 24 year olds that don't because they know it all. It can really depend, but developmental stage is necessary to consider and reflect on, definitely.

Lori: In my experience, some counselors who are 24 can be at a higher counselor development level then somebody who's 47, too. What about their counselor level of counselor development? Does that impact how easy or hard it is for you to get into that role with them of promoting self and relational awareness?

Speaker 1: In terms of their counseling skill?

Lori: Where they are in their development. Yeah. As a counselor because some people develop quicker and they're-

Speaker 1: More intuitive in the process.

Lori: Right.

Speaker 1: I think those...The individuals who are more intuitive and more developed in that process, they're easier to use what you're referring to as personal growth supervision. They're more open to that because they recognize the wholistic aspect of their clinical work. People who are on the other end of that spectrum or I think much more challenging to use a growth mindset because they're less open to their own self awareness. They want to learn a particular skill, so they can go do a job, and they don't want to reflect on themselves in that capacity.

Lori: Right. Right.

Speaker 1: I find difficult because, early on I remember being confronted by... When I was in training, clients who challenged my ability in all facets, and I remember walking away thinking, "Oh my goodness, this personal thing about me is not good enough and this clinical part about me just not good enough." I remember reflecting on that and saying, "What do I do about this?" And talking to supervisors about how do I work through each of those pieces. And so I know it can be challenging and difficult because the clinical work, it can be challenging not just from the diagnosis and treatment side, but also from the impact it has on us personally.

Lori: Right. And I think some supervisee's are just more closed off and they have not even thought about that this work is going to involve themselves, and personally I find those harder.

Speaker 1: I agree. I agree.

Lori: Yeah. Any tips you have for opening those up I would love those. On a different conversation, but yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah. But I think as part of that comes by just talking about the process and sort of educating them about here's what supervision is, and here's how I think about supervision. I think early on a lot of my supervision was very just clinical and it wasn't all personal. It was clinical. And I like to work with my supervisee's from a more wholistic approach to say a part of it is clinical and a part of it is personal. I want to be addressing both of these at the same time. And so from day one, we're talking about these two aspects of process and supervision. Saying the groundwork ahead of time is one way of achieving that.

Lori: I think you're right.

Speaker 1: I'm noticing on my picture, it has my daughter's name, so I'm not sure what comes up on your screen, but it says my daughter's name and not my name. I'm not sure how that happened.

Lori: It says Amanda. Yeah. But I recognize the last name.

Speaker 1: She's obviously using my computer.

Lori: And maybe even Zoom.

Speaker 1: I guess so.

Lori: That's funny. So this question is, and there's only four questions left, what are your experiences regarding specific student attitudes towards supervision when thinking about using supervision to adjust self and relational awareness? And, so what I mean, what I'm trying to get at by this is, are there students that have maybe a really positive attitude towards supervision, some may be a little bit less positive? And does that impact how you would bring up things about self and relational awareness for them?

Speaker 1: Certainly, supervisee's have different approaches and different reactions. That's true. Let me think about that. I would like to say that no, it doesn't impact how I approach that. Liking to do something doesn't mean that's what I actually do. I'm thinking about that. I don't think... I think regardless, I still go there because that's important to me. So I think, I don't think they're position impacts my willingness to go or not go into that space.

Lori: Does it impact maybe the way that you might feel knowing that you have a supervision hour coming up and you have to bring-

Speaker 1: it does impact how I feel about it, you're right. It makes make me... As we said before, in a previous question, it makes me more sensitive to the words I'm using, or the balance between addressing clinical issues and addressing personal growth side of it. Or providing enough encouraging examples of what they're doing well that that's demonstrated in their growth. I think it does impact, have an impact in that regard. How I feel about it, but it doesn't mean we're not going to go there.

Lori: Right. So this might be... This is a close ended question. But is there ever just, even though it might be a fleeting sense, any anxiety when you're going to be... Knowing someone maybe doesn't have a great attitude towards supervision?

Speaker 1: Sure. Because yeah, none of us like to enter into... I don't think anyway. Few of us like to enter into difficult situations or tense relationships, or have those hard conversations. I don't think those are pleasant or pleasurable. And so, it does have an impact on how I feel about that going into it.

Lori: Not whether or not you do it.

Speaker 1: Correct. Correct. I'm probably more aware of my uncomfortableness in approaching that. Whereas, with somebody that's more receptive and open, I'm not thinking about it because it doesn't evoke the same emotive response for me. It's more natural process. We just go there. It was likely when the client said this, or what did that resonate within your own experience when this clinical presentation. That can flow just more naturally with somebody that's more comfortable or more developmentally at a place of self reflection. A student that's more closed, or a student that's more resistant to those things, I'm aware of the challenge that this may present as we go down this road.

Lori: Thank you.

Speaker 1: I might feel my heart pounding more or I might be aware of my own reaction. "Oh, we're walking into a tense space."

Lori: Yeah, yeah. Great. Great. How are supervisee's clients a part of your experience of considering to adjust self and relational awareness and supervision?

Speaker 1: How are my supervisee's clients?

Lori: Part of your consideration or decision to address these things with your supervisee?

Speaker 1: That's part of it. It's how an individual's doing as a clinician, just how are they managing caseload or the work pace, or managing the balance of paperwork and and clinical time. And how they're managing their personal life, and work life balance. That's one piece of it. But you can't help it acknowledge that there are times where a client or a clinical issue is going to resonate in me in some way that, or in the client, or the supervisee, in a way that I had anticipated or we don't know about. And so there are times where that may come into play and times where it's not, just depends on I think when the supervisee... I can think of some examples of where... For one supervisee, a client, a clinical presentation, whether it's a student in a college level struggling with sexual identity issues, one clinician that's already thought through their own positions in that area and where they are in their process, that's really not that difficult or relevant of an issue. How's it impact you as a person? It's fine. I know where I'm at and I know we're there and I can help navigate that that student through that process.

Speaker 1: And another supervisee who had not done a lot of their own personal work around understanding their response to LGBTQ issues, and so that clinical issue became much more relevant to the supervision and their growth because it required them to reflect on their own past, or an experience. Their own family systems that influences their beliefs around those issues. And so, it is not... You can't predict when that's going to be the case when that's not. It really depends on the unique client load that the supervisee has, and the supervisee's own personal experience. But if my job is to identify that and to talk about those issues, to see where that is necessary. We certainly know that clinical issues can present themselves in supervision in ways that are personal, not just professional.

Lori: Would you say that that's one of your reasons for bringing up these issues with supervisee's sometimes?

Speaker 1: Right.

Lori: Clients are part of that decision making.

Speaker 1: Sure, sure. Think if I'm not doing that, I'm failing in my role as a supervisor to help develop that clinician. I don't see my role as just developing a good clinician that knows CBT and reflective listening. You can do that great. But it's at the wholistic development is recognizing that those things are truly important. But how am I... Where's my own health and wellbeing in that stuff, in their clinical work? I think they can reflect on and think about how am I doing it? What did the client issues bring out in me that I hadn't been aware of before? What do I do with that, as clinician trying to help other people?

Lori: Okay. I'm at the end of my questions, but I just like to ask if there's anything else floating around in your mind that you could just elaborate on about your experience in this kind of supervision?

Speaker 1: I guess one thing I'm thinking about is that I've been through lots of supervision training seminars or workshops, or even in grad school classes, I had a course on supervision, and I think there's not a lot of focus, at least my experience, there has not been a lot of focus on the personal growth side. And so I think it's cool to hear that you're looking into this and most of the supervision I've been part of has been clinical. How do you help supervisee's think about their clinical work and develop that piece, less on the personal growth. That's necessary, important. I like that you're doing that. And it's prompted me to think that I probably need to do some more reading and some more study around that particular area. This was actually helpful for me to think about that. Thank you.

Lori: Good. There's a lot of research on using experiential activities and groups, and things like that to promote personal growth and awareness in supervisee's. But there's nothing about what it's like for supervisors to go there. And I think there must be some hesitancy and some things going on. Some supervisors don't go there, they make it all administrative or they make it all [crosstalk 00:27:52]

Speaker 1: That's a lot easier. Yeah. It's easier to stick with the nuts and bolts administrative stuff, client load. You saw 18 clients this week. How's that going? Run through each of them so I know what they are. That's easy stuff. You're right about that. It's harder for you sometimes to go to those places. Like with that supervise that I knew didn't receive information well, didn't receive feedback well, it's harder to go there because I don't want to enter into difficult awkward spaces. Heightening my awareness of making sure I don't shy away from those spaces, I need to be reminded of.

Lori: Thank you.

Speaker 1: That's cool.

Lori: Well I really, really appreciate your participating in this.

Speaker 1: You're welcome, Lori.

Lori: Thank you. And I probably, or I will, because it's in my IRB thing, I will send you a follow up email with a question just asking if you have thought of anything else that you would like to write down, sometime in the next week probably I will do that. And then that is all I need from you. Thank you so much.

Speaker 1: How many interviews are you doing?

Lori: I am probably going to do seven or eight. And I'm halfway there or more... There's a couple more from the 5C that I'm doing in the next week or so. You guys are so responsive, and helpful.

Speaker 1: Good. Hopefully you keep getting those numbers, and have fun writing. I miss those days of writing dissertation. Those were good times.

Participant #5

Speaker 1: Yeah, I'm just recording it. Going to transcribe it and then I have the information ready to use. So in general, these have been taking around 45 minutes. I have about 10 questions to ask you. Some are repetitive, so if you feel like you have already answered it, you can just say, "Oh, I think I already talked about that." But I have to ask it because I have to ask the same questions to everybody.

Speaker 1: And again, what I'm trying to do is slow down that process of what happens inside us supervisors when we're either deciding to go there in supervision to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness or when we're actually in that process and what we're experiencing.

Speaker 1: So I'm actually going to ask some questions around the decision making, what goes on in you when you think you might go there. And then, although my focus is on you, even though it's normal to talk a little bit about what's going on in the supervisee too, that's all part of it.

Speaker 2: Okay, sure.

Speaker 1: Okay. All right, here we go. So in general, this is my general question is, what are your general thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: So my general thoughts are, well, I always often tell the therapist that they're the tool that they use in therapy. And so if they're not becoming self aware, then they're not going to actually be able to help their clients. They can't really go anywhere that their clients, they can't take their clients anywhere, that they're unwilling to go themselves.

Speaker 2: And so it's not a question of whether that stuff will come up. It's just a question of whether or not they'll be able to address it and be aware of it. So there's no way to stay completely biased and not have your own stuff be triggered in the room.

Speaker 1: Okay. Great. Thank you. Can you describe your overall experience using supervision in this way, like an overview. Is it something you normally do, sometimes do? What is your background with that?

Speaker 2: Do I normally do what? Like-

Speaker 1: Do you normally, describe your experience using supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees. Is that something that's normally a part of what you do? Sometimes? All of that.

Speaker 2: Yes. Yeah, well it's definitely something how I conceptualize the supervisee and their situation and how they're describing the client. So it's always a part of supervision and then it becomes a question of whether or not the supervisee is open to hearing the kind of feedback that they might need to hear it. So I've had varying responses to that, whether or not they're willing to actually go there or not in certain areas.

Speaker 1: Okay. And over the years at the time that you've done supervision, is it usually, is it been something that's part of your supervision practice?

Speaker 2: Yeah, for sure. It's been a, to varying degrees depending on the supervisee's willingness and how, what's being actually triggered from therapy. I wouldn't go there if it wasn't being triggered by something in therapy.

Speaker 1: Okay. Okay. So this next question is about your awareness of the supervisee. So it is, describe any thoughts or feelings that you have about the supervisee's possible response, that you might be aware of when using supervision to promote self and relational awareness. Does how the supervisee might respond impact your doing this kind of supervision?

Speaker 2: Yes, for sure it does. The supervisee's response is really important to me because I want them to feel like it's a safe place to grow and to learn and not to feel like it's confrontational or intrusive in any way. And like I said, I've had varying degrees of response to those.

Speaker 2: I try to be really in tune with it and with what with the client or what the supervisee is I'm mirroring back to me or reflecting and try to be in tune with those things. And like I said, not all therapists are open to hearing that kind of feedback.

Speaker 1: So if you thought a supervisee or therapist was not going to be open, how would you know that that might, that they might not be open? What would give you that?

Speaker 2: Well usually it'd be about setting boundaries and avoiding certain topics, which doesn't mean I wouldn't go there. It might mean I would be wanting to gather some more information about what exactly might be happening. So say a supervisee has authority issues with men in her life and I'm pressing her in a way that makes her feel like I'm accusing her of something.

Speaker 2: Then I would want to know what kind of, why the resistance is there and try to work around it in some other way to a collaborative experience. So that I could give her the insight she might need at the same time as also respect boundaries and respect her own experience. And understand what triggers she might be experiencing in the supervisee role, just like I would want her to do in her therapy.

Speaker 1: Could parallel process that.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: And are you in tune with, maybe countertransference-wise, what would, might be going on with you in that process?

Speaker 2: For sure, yeah. I'm also thinking in terms of that too. What supervisees could press buttons in my life that could trigger some of my own personal experiences and how that might play out in supervision as well. Yeah, that would definitely be a part of the process.

Speaker 1: Okay. And during this time too, if any example comes to your mind, feel free to share that. Give me a deeper understanding of what you're talking about. And also, anything that, gut feelings that you are aware of when you're thinking about this. Tightness in my stomach or I get anxious, any of those explanations are also part of what I'm looking for too.

Speaker 2: Okay. Okay.

Speaker 1: Okay. How do you experience the relationship between you and the supervisee when you've used supervision to promote self and relational awareness to the supervisee? Either before, during, or after.

Speaker 2: So the question is how do I view it?

Speaker 1: How do you experience it? Yeah.

Speaker 2: Oh, how do I experience it. Well I mean, I guess that would depend on the supervisee. Some of them, like you've mentioned with countertransference, there's some that I would connect with pretty easily and wouldn't have, I would feel the freedom to be able to speak more plainly with them. And then there's some that have more resistance and some that might be sending a signal that they're not really interested in that or they might be feeling pressured or something like that.

Speaker 2: And I'm trying to be in tune with those things and using my own self-awareness to pick up on the cues that the supervisee might be expressing to me. So I don't know if this is helpful, but I use in therapy, I use an attachment theory perspective. And I try to do that in supervision as well, which means the three main things of attachment theory would be safe haven, secure base, proximity seeking and separation distress.

Speaker 2: And so I just keep those things as a factor in supervision. So I want to be a safe haven, which is a place they could run to if they feel overwhelmed about whatever their clients are doing. Also, a secure base to explore from, to learn to, whatever interventions they might be using, to try new things and to explore the world of therapy. And at the same time, also the proximity piece is having an open door, having the ability for them to text me or call me when they need to.

Speaker 2: And then also, separation distress would mean them being aware of the fact that if they felt alone in this process, they would naturally feel distressed because it's a new, scarier world that they're entering into, a professional world. And so I want to be mindful of the fact that if they don't get the kind of attention that they need, they would feel distress as a therapist. And that's not a sign of their weakness or anything, that's just a sign of them entering into a field where they don't have a lot of skill or awareness yet.

Speaker 2: So I conceptualize with all four of those things in mind, when I try to do those things. And so part of the, what you're inquiring about, is the self awareness piece would have to be with exploration if they felt secure. Then they would be able to have the freedom to explore part of their own internal world in a way of how it affects their therapy, if they felt secure.

Speaker 2: If they feel insecure, then they're going to behave in ways that they've learned throughout their life. Some strategies to protect themselves or guard against feelings of rejection or feelings of inadequacy or fears of failure. They're going to start doing all kinds of different strategies to minimize those feelings.

Speaker 1: Okay. How does that impact you if they're at a different, in those different attachment points?

Speaker 2: So how does it impact me in the sense of, well I really enjoy the process of supervision. I've only had a couple of really bad experiences. Most of them, I have, I mean I supervise at least 10 to 15 people a year. And so I've been doing it for about seven years.

Speaker 2: And I've only had maybe one or, one for sure, maybe two, that have had a negative experience with that. So for the most part, it's really an enjoyable experience for me as a supervisor and them as young clinicians. So I enjoy that process.

Speaker 1: As you're helping someone and they're maybe becoming aware of something that they weren't before, what, you enjoy it. But what is it like for you? Maybe just some, a couple of feeling words, maybe.

Speaker 2: It's exciting, it's enjoyable, it feels useful and helpful in someone's life. I mean, that's part of why I became a therapist, was to help people. And so helping therapists help people also feels good to do those things. It can also be, it could bring up anxiety because I've had one bad experience, I'm hesitant to push someone too far. Because some people are really more resistant to it.

Speaker 2: And so I have to really just try to constantly be in tune with them. And then, like in therapy, be good about repair. So following a rupture with repair is really what's helpful in supervision, too. Because you can't always tell early on what they're thinking or they might nod and smile about something and seem like they're getting it and then they're not actually getting it.

Speaker 2: And you might find out later that they were struggling and they were too afraid to say it. But I don't take any of that stuff personally anymore. I've learned that that's just part of our relational dynamic that you have to work out with them and it usually works out throughout the semester.

Speaker 1: Okay. Okay. Thank you. Where did I get that one? Okay. What are your considerations about students' specific supervisory needs and maybe a counselor development level when you are thinking about using supervision to promote self and relational awareness? Does their developmental level as a counselor or what they're needing, does that come into play in your decision making?

Speaker 2: You mean, so like yeah, where the supervisee is in their process and in their program? Does that have a factor in how I decide how much I'm going to enter? Yeah, it for sure does. Because someone who's early in the process is going to be really anxious and they're trying really hard to think about therapy. And if you make them too self conscious then they're going to be too out of the room and too in their head and too worried about screwing it up.

Speaker 2: And I think you have to start slower with that kind of stuff with someone. But it's not just in supervision though. It should be also in their doctorate or their program, either their MFT program or their, either masters level program. They should be getting some of that already, so they should not come totally fresh in that sense. But sometimes they do and sometimes they come without any kind of self awareness.

Speaker 2: And so it's always, it has to be individualized towards each person because some people are more open to that and some people are not. Some people are more self-reflective and then some people it seems, get into therapy because they liked getting therapy. And that doesn't mean they're naturally self-aware or are good at being, picking up on the cues of another person.

Speaker 2: So yeah, where they're at in the process is definitely a factor in deciding how much to enter into those things. Because as a therapist, I might see things in their life that they could address, but it doesn't necessarily mean now's the time to address it and that supervision is the place to address those things. So there's always a managing of seeing more than you could or should address in someone's life.

Speaker 1: Yeah. How do you, have you had experiences right on the border of that? And what's that like?

Speaker 2: Yes. I mean I, well the bad, the one bad experience I had was someone who had a lot of trauma in her life from her father who was abusive in her life. And so he was sexually abusive in her life. So when I would press in on her, on her own emotion issues, it was the harder to handle a father figure type person pressing in on those issues a little bit.

Speaker 2: And the only reason that I was pressing it on was because it was coming up with her clients, but she had a hard time with that experience. And then, so it makes me cautious with other therapists because of their own traumas. But I've had other therapists with the same trauma and it not, it didn't turn out bad like it did with this one.

Speaker 2: So it has to do with both my awareness of them and their willingness and how much of their own trauma they've worked through already. Or if it's just coming up because it hasn't really been dealt with and now it's coming up because their entering into the world of therapy.

Speaker 1: Right. So how much they've actually, maybe worked through things, their resilience and all of that might impact how they withstand that. Right?

Speaker 2: Yeah, because they would have to make sense out of the affect they were feeling in the moment. And if that's congruent with what's happening in supervision or is that a memory from the past? And be able to differentiate between what it feels like right now in supervision and what it felt like when I was a little girl being abused.

Speaker 2: And it's not the same dynamic, even though the emotions could be triggered. But the problem for the supervisor, for like me, is I won't know that until it comes up that that's someone's story. And so it's always walking this fine line between what's therapy and then what's supervision and it's always a fine line.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I think you're right about that, especially when we're working with self-awareness stuff.

Speaker 2: Right.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So sometimes as supervisors, we have some intuition about maybe a student's, maybe even at the beginning when we haven't had much experience with this particular student, with their attitude towards supervision or towards authority or something like that. Does that ever come into your awareness or consideration when you're deciding whether or not you want to go to the self awareness exploration with the supervisee?

Speaker 2: Yeah, it would definitely be a factor. It might be more of a factor in how, but not if. Because if it's impacting the client, that's my first responsibility, is to be thinking in terms of how is this client getting the best care that they can? So it would be inappropriate for me to avoid it because of that issue. But it would be a factor in how, how it conceptualize the process and then how I would address it with the supervisee.

Speaker 2: Because if I know they have an issue with strong male figures, I'm not going to go straight at them in a way that would trigger that, push that button. I would address that and address it in a way that would be more of, I would say, as an invitation rather than an accusation.

Speaker 1: Yeah, that makes sense. Invitation for exploration.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Right, right. Rather than accusing them of doing something wrong, I want supervision to be a secure base to explore from. So I would make that an invitation to explore something, rather than the accusation that they're somehow harming their client.

Speaker 1: Yeah, makes sense. Okay. So the next one, you kind of mentioned a little bit, but I think there's more you can say about this. How are supervisees' clients part of your experience of deciding to address self and relational awareness in the supervisee?

Speaker 2: Yeah, so the client is actually the top priority. And so, especially at a university counseling center where I'm working for the school on behalf of the client. So the fact that I use a lot of unlicensed therapists as my therapist is just a way of making it affordable. Which means I have to order that by priorities, which is I order them by, what's the client's needs and what's the therapist needs? And then, what are my needs or the university needs, third. And so I usually use that as my priority checklist.

Speaker 2: And so those conversations are about what's best for this client. And so, if the therapist has countertransference in a way that's going to harm that student or if they're struggling with whether they think they can help that student because of that kind of transference issues, then it would be something for sure, to address for the clients' needs above the therapist's needs. And I just try to prioritize it in that order. And so that's how I make those decisions. And that's probably the way that I would conceptualize it.

Speaker 2: Because like I said, there's always going to be things that you could notice about your supervisees and their life, that you could see insight into, but it may not be the right time or place to bring that stuff to their attention, if it's not immediately related to their client issue. Because I mean, it's just like in therapy.

Speaker 2: It doesn't mean because you see an issue means that the clients are ready to address it in the way that you want to. And so I don't want to go to the bottom priority, which is my own need and then push that onto the therapist. I want to see the client's need, which then shows me the therapist's need, which then shows me how I need to address it.

Speaker 1: Okay. And then if that happens, I'm just thinking, what about a scenario? What would it be like for you if you experienced defensiveness then, in the supervisee?

Speaker 2: Well, then I would go to mirror a vulnerable posture, so that they know that I'm on their team and that it's not an accusation, it's an invitation. And I'd just remind them that they can grow as much as they want. And so, I want them to leave my supervision, in the long run, when they leave the site, I want them to leave in a good place.

Speaker 2: So if they're not ready to address that issue right now, then I would just give them some grace to think about it and come back to me and talk about it when they're ready. I wouldn't collude with them and say it's not an issue. I would just say, when they're ready to talk about that issue, I'm available. Unless, it was impacting the client in a way where I had to make a decision. If they're unwilling to look at it, then I might have to change that client to another therapist, but I've never had that problem so far.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Okay. Okay. So I have one more of this kind of question. Has either, and this can be either positively or negatively, has your addressing self and relational awareness in supervisees impacted your supervisory relationship with your supervisees in any way? And can you describe that?

Speaker 2: Has the focus on their personal insight stuff, has it affected their relationship? Is that the question?

Speaker 1: The supervisory relationship? Have you ever noticed an impact on the supervisory relationship, either positive, negative, anything?

Speaker 2: Well, for sure when it happens in a good way, for sure I get positive feedback for those things. When it's happened in a, I don't know how to say it. If it's happened in a way where it's created a rupture and I've had a good repair with them, that's always been helpful, too. Because just like in, I think in therapy, rupture and repair is probably the most powerful thing that happens in therapy.

Speaker 2: So it happens that way in supervision too. So if I am missing them and I push them in the wrong way, they have hurt feelings about it and then I follow up with them. If I'm in tune with them and see they're somehow, they're changing in some way and then I follow up with them and then create a repair, a reparative experience with them, then it's always really helpful.

Speaker 2: So the times that it's been not good, I usually don't find out for a while because they don't share it. Because if they do share it, I'm quick to go to the repair model. But the ones that haven't worked and the one that I had the bad experience with, I didn't find out for six months after she left that she really had a problem with something.

Speaker 2: So it was harder for me to be able to repair with her six months later, when she hadn't really communicated any problem with that issue. She really just, I mean, went to numbness and dissociating, I guess. It's the only way I can make sense of it now. So if there's a problem, it's not a problem if there's opportunity to repair. So generally the only times that leave me with a bad feeling about it, is if I don't really get the opportunity to repair.

Speaker 1: And so when you say, when you've had the opportunity to repair, it's been good. Does that mean it's enhanced the bond of the supervisor, hence the trust? How could you describe good?

Speaker 2: Yeah, I would say that. I would say it does. It creates trust because that's really, creates security and security has to do with the quality of the relationship and in this case, the supervisee's belief that there will be an attuned response to their need if they express it to me. So they build confidence in the fact that they can share something with me and get the response they're looking for. And that's built over time and especially when there's rupture and repair.

Speaker 1: Okay. So that's pretty much most of the questions except for, is there anything else that you can fill in with or anything else that you want me to know about how you experience using supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees? My overall research question.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Well I mean, just reiterating what I said already, which is that I think it's really important. It's an important part of supervision and it's the, it's probably the part that they're going to remember the most from supervision. It's also a fine line because, like I said, as some people have a hard time walking that line between what's therapy and what's not and what's supervision.

Speaker 2: And so to me, really the difference that I've made in my own therapy from supervision is about how much I focus on the affect of something rather than the insight. And so in therapy I would go affect and heightened affect and then maybe give insight. In supervision, I stay in the insight and I'm not trying to get them to connect to a lot of affect. And so it is self awareness, but it's not prolonged staying in affect. They might feel it, but that's not my goal.

Speaker 2: My goal isn't to heighten the affect and then for them to receive comfort, which they might get in therapy. So I'm not saying, "How does that make you feel?" And all that kind of stuff. I'm just giving insight into where that might be connected to your past, but not really focusing much on affect. And that really, to me, is the line between supervisory role and therapeutic role, is how much you're trying to stay with them and join with them in the affect.

Speaker 1: And that's something that's completely comfortable for you to do in most cases, was what I'm hearing.

Speaker 2: Well, the insight part for sure in supervision. And well, the other part too, in therapy. It's just when they get, when they start to mix is when it gets confusing. If they're, if they start to feel a lot of emotion in the room, in the supervisory room, right then, then that's where I have to walk a line between, do I stay more in insight or do I encourage them to feel all those emotions that they might be feeling?

Speaker 1: Okay. Okay. Okay. Well that pretty much concludes what I have for my questions.

Speaker 2: Okay, great.

Speaker 1: And what I'm going to do is, sometime in this next week or so, I'll send you a quick follow up email just to ask if you've had any other thoughts and that's all that I will need. And again, I appreciate so much you taking the time out to do this even when you had an emergency in your day.

Speaker 2: Oh, no problem. I'm glad to help you out. I look forward to seeing your research and what comes out. And so you're going to write it and be done by June, do you think?

Speaker 1: I think so. I'm probably going to finish these interviews up and then write it up. And I've got the proposal, up to the proposal done already. And so, and I've even got some of the methods, but I have to go back and fill in the actual, you know.

Speaker 1: And I don't know how long it's going to take because I mean, I've never gone over qualitative interviews and horizonalization and texture and whatever. I have never done that. So it's my first time. So, but my advisor, I think she thinks I can do it and walk in graduation in June. So, yeah.

Speaker 2: That's amazing.

Speaker 1: And that'll be five years. So that's not a short amount of time. [crosstalk 00:29:43]-

Speaker 2: No, you'll be ready to be done by then.

Speaker 1: Right. Because the only good dissertation is a done dissertation from what I, so yeah.

Speaker 2: That's true, that's true.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: How many interviews are you doing?

Speaker 1: Well, probably between six and eight. And eight people from five C said that they would help me out with it, which is awesome. And so, and then there's CESNET and I was, but I just have to figure out what I'm doing a little bit, day by day.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And I'm not transcribing by myself, so that's kind of, take some of the pain out of it. But yeah. Well, thank you.

Speaker 2: You bet. I look forward to seeing your research when you're done.

Speaker 1: Thank you. And I'll see you on the LISTSERV.

Speaker 2: Okay, bye.

Speaker 1: Okay, bye.

Speaker 2: Bye bye.

Participant #6

Interviewer: Okay. And then I have it transcribed, and your name isn't on here anywhere, and so then I can go over the data, and then you're given a number, and it's all kept really confidential.

Interviewee: Okay, sounds good.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: [inaudible 00:00:22].

Interviewer: The first question is a general what are your general thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Interviewee: So what does it mean to me to be doing that for them?

Interviewer: What does it mean in general?

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: What are you trying to do when you do that? Whatever comes up for you, yeah.

Interviewer: And this has to do with things ... you can touch on like is it important, why is it, all those of kinds of things.

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean, I'd feel like the interns that I supervise are already on the track of other awareness, and so obviously as I listen to them share case information and different dynamics, I want to lean into that even more, helping them to have more awareness of what's happening for their clients, but I think what they maybe aren't as skilled at is kind of understanding what's happening them in the process and/or ignoring that and not seeing that as important.

Interviewee: I definitely kind of want to enhance their other awareness for sure, but I feel like for their empathy and their kind of skills already, they're already kind of equipped in that way and open to more, but it does feel a little more delicate at times to ask them what's happening for them and then using that information in the session as well.

Interviewee: By delicate, I just mean tricky. Because supervision is such an interesting of being in their life in a deep and intimate way but not being their therapist, but yet what's happening for them is really significant to what's happening in the room in the session.

Interviewee: I think that's something that I'm consistently kind of aware of as I'm hearing them share what's going on in the sessions and where they're getting stuck or different things that are coming up for them, and so I think that's probably something I bring in supervision that is, I feel like, is really important and that they would have a little more difficult time giving to themselves without the supervision process.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay, thank you. Is this something that you do kind of regularly? In this question, I want you to describe your overall experience using supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees. I'm going to get into more specific questions and how it feels, but is this something that is a part of your practice often, or indirectly?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Yeah, okay.

Interviewee: Yeah, I would say it's a regular part of supervision. I have three out of the four supervisees who are very open, and then I have one who's a little more defended, and so it doesn't mean I don't bring it in that session, I just sort of kind of navigate those waters differently. But yes, I would say that's part of the regular part of our supervision.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. Describe any thoughts or feelings you have related to the supervisee response that you are aware of when using supervision to promote self and relational awareness. This might relate to these different types of supervisees that you're describing, open versus [crosstalk 00:04:38]-

Interviewee: Ask the first part, ask it again.

Interviewer: Describe any thoughts or feelings you have about supervisee response that you are aware of when using supervision to promote self and relational awareness.

Interviewee: I think with the majority of them, I feel very kind of welcome to make those observations. I feel like those observations are wanted and that they are very much self growth oriented people, and so they're ready to look at that. That feels good. That feels like ... To me, that's like double the impact of the counseling because it's going to have an impact in the therapy and for the client, but it's also going to have an impact for the counselor with their increased awareness or identifying a blind spot or something that's stuck in them. I love that because I feel like I am helping them. I'm helping the client, but I'm also helping them, and so that I feel good about.

Interviewee: The other where I feel a supervisee being more guarded, it's interesting because she's super friendly, she's super outgoing, she's very competent, but it feels like it's a shame trigger for her when I make suggestions that more on a deeper, more personal level. I feel like the same reaction kind of pushes me back out. It feels tricky. I feel like I have to tread lightly. I don't think it's really significant content that's at stake. I know that's sort of a judgment.

Interviewee: If it was something that was like, "Gosh, this is an ethical problem," we're not navigating these waters, I'm just going to tell you what we need to do here. Because it's these other dynamics, I feel a little more apprehensive and like I'm just navigating different waters.

Interviewer: Can you say more about the apprehensive?

Interviewee: Yeah. I feel apprehensive to ... I guess, again, I feel like I perceive that she might think I'm making a mountain out of a molehill, but maybe what she's bringing up might be considered a minor point and for me to kind of keep pushing for deeper in that could be there be maybe potentially a reaction of, "Oh my gosh, this isn't that big of a deal. Come on, let's keep talking cases," you know? I feel apprehensive about that.

Interviewer: Okay, about how she might respond, right.

Interviewee: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: This next question, similar but different, how do you experience the relationship between you and the supervisee when you've used supervision to promote self and relational awareness?

Interviewee: I feel really great about it. I feel like it deepens the relationship between the two of us. I have a supervisee who, based off of a roadblock that he was hitting in therapy with a client, decided to go ... he was connecting it to some past experience for him and didn't realize they were creating a roadblock with a client and in therapy in general with the work he was doing.

Interviewee: He asked me for a couple recommendations of counselors in the area that I thought were competent, and he made an appointment within a couple weeks and has been going to therapy consistently for the past few months. He just, even this last week, reported back after just a really significant couple rounds of EMDR, this new level of freedom that he feels and connection to the work that he's doing and affirmation of the work.

Interviewee: That's just an example of it's very rewarding to be on that journey with the therapist and supervising in that. There's just like ... that's really cool. I'm not wading into the details of his past stuff with him but that he felt comfortable bringing that up, pursuing that, following up with his own therapy, and then wrapping around and telling me, "Wow, this is making a significant difference," and I see that actually just in his affect. I see it in his openness, his confidence, and that's been really cool.

Interviewee: The other two that are more open to the self reflection are ... there's just an openness in the relationship and a trust in the relationship with them that feels really good. There's just a real open access. In the situation where I feel more hesitant, I think surface it feels good. Like, she's doing good work. I highly recommend the work that she's doing with people. I see the outcomes being [inaudible 00:11:08] favorable outcomes, and it feels like there's more shallowness. It doesn't feel as deep. It doesn't feel as vulnerable. As a result, it doesn't feel quite as connected as the other two, or the other three.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. Thank you. I'm going to shift into questions sort of just aimed at your experience of deciding to you supervision in that way. Kind of like when you're maybe deciding to go there. I'm going to kind of slow down that process of maybe what you go through as you decide to make those interventions, and I know it feels like autopilot and we just do it, but I'm just trying to slow it down and see what supervisors go through when they're thinking about that.

Interviewer: Describe what you are aware of in yourself as you are deciding to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees. It might be easier to think about somebody who is harder to bring it up with at first.

Interviewee: I'm thinking about one who may be ... she tends to be a little more receptive, but I also needed to sort of see the pattern, and so I heard several times her make kind of statements about her own boundaries around her time management or her client load or her client type that she felt comfortable taking on and that I consistently saw her overriding that and accepting more clients than she said she wanted to or types of clients than she said she wanted to.

Interviewee: I think I heard her kind of start to say those things pretty quickly in our supervision relationship. Like, "I'm never going to see more than one couple at a time. They're just so draining." A week later, she has three new couple clients, and I'm like, "Huh, what was that?" Then I've seen it with, "I only want to see 15 clients a week and never work Wednesdays," and then it's like, "Well, I guess I could see those clients on Wednesday," so it was seeing the pattern before I jumped in, so to speak, and said, "Hey, what's happening there?"

Interviewee: I think I did the first time around the couples and was like, "Hey, I think it was just a couple weeks ago you said ... What's going on here?" And she just kind of [inaudible 00:13:48] it off. I think I ... [inaudible 00:13:55]. I think I kind of took that as a cue to keep me back a little bit, and so it took a while for me to continue to see those things happening in other categories, and it was a few months later that I kind of had the courage. I think it was like, there's that balance of I'm your clinical supervisor, I'm not your manager. I'm here to help you, not tell you how to run your practice.

Interviewee: At the same time, I am seeing her express a desire or a value in crossing it, and I'm wondering what that's about. I think what was happening inside of me was wanting to really make sure I was seeing what I was seeing, make sure I was approaching in a way that wasn't a management or micromanagement of her but just really kind of bringing it up. Like, "Tell me more," out of a place of curiosity.

Interviewee: It took me a while [inaudible 00:15:01] later, after a couple different observations that were similar, and she was able to talk about wanting to help everyone, feeling a need to help everyone. Kind of that be everything to everybody, and saying no was being [inaudible 00:15:25] devaluing them. So it started to get to some stuff.

Interviewee: Obviously I think the payoff was good that we got to have a real conversation about it, and [inaudible 00:15:38] some good underlying stuff, but it was I felt hesitant, and it took me a while.

Interviewer: Yeah, it sounds like you had to go through some internal process, kind of confirmation of what you were seeing, and letting it add up over time and things like that to do that.

Interviewee: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. The next question I think you partially might have covered, but you can tell me if someone more comes up. It's what are you aware of? What thoughts, feelings, experience, or considerations are you aware of? That last one was related to yourself, but this next one is related to the supervisee when you're deciding to address self and relational awareness. You might have talked about that quite a bit, but this is like considerations about that specific supervisee when you're making that decision in your mind or slowing that process down to go there.

Interviewee: So what am I ... Say that, so ...

Interviewer: Yeah, I did write this question very well, but what thoughts, feelings, experiences, or considerations are you aware of that are related to that specific supervisee when you're deciding to address self and relational awareness?

Interviewee: Yeah. I'm thinking of two others right now. One was really young or new in the practice. She had just graduated and just getting started. So thoughts and considerations were more just about mental in the [inaudible 00:17:29] for her and somehow I think that influenced her to be more of a [inaudible 00:17:35] in more of a ... You know how you shift roles as supervisor, eventually ending up when they're in the profession as your colleagues, but you kind of start out as a teacher and a mentor and move towards them being more of a colleague.

Interviewee: I think considerations I've had for different have been around developmental and just being able to give lots of benefit of the doubt that this is new, and new experiences, and new situations. Another is he's male so there's a difference there, and so just navigating ... There more of an immediate connection I feel with females, and so that was my first intern who was male. We're talking through cases around relational issues and issues around sexuality, and so I was aware of he's talking to me as a female, as a supervisor, and just being aware of that. I felt like that created some ... I needed to learn more and get more understanding and build the relationship differently before kind of moving in in different ways.

Interviewer: That's interesting. That brings up the question, "How would diversity issues impact your experience doing this?"

Interviewee: Mm-hmm (affirmative), yeah.

Interviewer: The next one is ... The question is, "How do you experience the supervisee when deciding to adjust?" When you've done this, is there differences that you have experienced in maybe the supervisor/supervisee?

Interviewee: Mm-hmm, and so differences I've experienced in their responses and reactions?

Interviewer: Yes. Yeah. [crosstalk 00:20:06], yeah.

Interviewee: ... self and other awareness.

Interviewer: Yeah, that change things.

Interviewee: Definitely ... I'm thinking more in terms of other awareness now instead of self awareness. I think I've been feeling more about that right as we've been talking, but I think what I can offer as supervisor is some objectivity. Maybe see something in their client that they're not seeing and something maybe they brought up as a minor point or as just part of the narrative but that it really resonated with me but doesn't seem like it's really a big part of the treatment or whatever.

Interviewee: I feel like those insights I can bring about what the client could be feeling or experiencing or why they might be reacting the way they are. I think that definitely adds that perceived value to the supervision and to my role. I experienced the interns being really grateful for that additional perspective. I think it does change things for the positive.

Interviewer: Okay. This one you touched on, but it's one of my questions. What are your considerations about student supervisee needs and developmental level as a counselor when you're thinking about addressing self and relational awareness in supervision? How does their developmental level, or what they're needing from you at the time, impact your decision to go there?

Interviewer: It might be easier to think about experiences you've had doing this with students who are different developmental, counselor development levels.

Interviewee: I feel like I'm much ... What's coming up for me is that I feel like I'm more active in that mentoring kind of phase when they're in those earlier developmental stages. I feel like that really sets the tone for our relationship and builds the trust and the connection that then they sort of in a way kind of wean off of. I've seen it time and time again where they are maybe emailing me between the sessions or wanting a five minute phone call after a session when they're new in practice. I hardly ever get those types of emails or between session calls when they're just about ready to be fully licensed. Just the confidence, their feeling of self confidence and helping to grow that in them.

Interviewee: Anyway, so I feel like I probably actively offer more in the earlier developmental stages and then pull back as I see them really coming into their own and really reflecting on clients and themselves as they go on. Then I augment or supplement or whatever the word is as they continue to develop. That's kind of the dynamic that's coming up as you ask the question.

Interviewer: Okay great, perfect. You have just about three more questions. Just want to kind of let you know where we're at. The next question is, I'll read the question then I'll explain it, "What are you experiences regarding specific student attitude towards superversion when thinking about using supervision to address self and relational awareness?"

Interviewer: On the one extreme you might have a supervisee that has kind of a negative attitude or something like that towards supervision. Another extreme, somebody who's really optimistic. Does that affect you in any way when you're thinking about using supervision and going to those kind of personal places with someone?

Interviewee: It's hard because I think the interns that I have felt be most resistant to supervision have been in a group context. That adds a different level of, this is not the right word but, confrontation. I don't want to confront them in front of the group. Confront, it feels a little strong.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewee: There's that added dynamic of, "Other people are here. I don't want to be shaming. I don't want to perpetuate a defensiveness because there's other people and there's going to be maybe embarrassment around that." I feel like the folks that I've worked with who have had more of a resistance around supervision have been more in that group context so that just added a layer of trickiness for me, and it [inaudible 00:26:09] something that we would maybe I would collaborate with a colleague, and then together we would pull that student aside and do some supervision outside of the group around the issues that were coming up.

Interviewee: I can remember a student specifically that was very defensive to supervision, and to correction, and to that kind of stuff. I haven't really experienced a lot of active resistance in the private one on one, but tell me the question again. It was about navigating that?

Interviewer: Yeah, if attitudes towards super vision might impact your ... Yeah, not necessarily how you would navigate it but if it impacts it, yeah.

Interviewee: It was interesting. One of the interns that I was supervising, she ended up getting her LPC, but she still needed supervision for her LMFT hours. I felt after she got her LPC and she still had six months of supervision left, I did feel the attitude of, "Man, why do we got to keep doing this? I'm already licensed." It was kind of a feeling of, I don't know, just like this is just more of a thing we got to do for her to meet the credential.

Interviewee: I did offer some alternatives for her. She was getting specialized certification in EFT, and I said, "Maybe for this next six months of hours, would you want to work with an EFT certified supervisor so you can actually gain some really relevant," you know, and I just wanted to be like, "Hey, I'm here for this. I want to continue on. I just wanted to kind of highlight." I felt it was almost like a checkoff. You know, let's check this off versus there's real value here.

Interviewee: I wanted to give her a choice. Maybe there's someone you could feel like you're getting more value from if you have to do this. She was like, "No, I get value with you, and I," you know. I [inaudible 00:28:35] we've been doing this for five years, and we have. Very slow boat to being licensed. I think I want to make those dynamics, kind of put them on the table so we can both kind of look at it, but I can just say it sometimes can be a little tricky.

Interviewer: Yeah, okay. How are supervisees/clients a part of your experience of considering addressing self and relational awareness in supervision?

Interviewee: So how are their clients a part of the process?

Interviewer: Of, yeah.

Interviewee: Of me [crosstalk 00:29:19].

Interviewer: Of you deciding to go there, yeah.

Interviewee: I think if I don't feel like the clients are getting what they need because of something that's happening in the supervisee, if I feel like they're maybe not going to make the progress or get what they need then I think that really informs. That would be a quick driver for me to say, "Okay, hey, what's happening here? What's preventing this?" As much as our role as supervisor is, being there for the supervisee, and our role is really taking care of clients via the supervisee.

Interviewee: If I don't feel like the clients are being served well, then that's going to be a big driver for me saying, "We can't just let this go." I think that's a big motivation.

Interviewer: Okay. That is pretty much wraps it up other than our last question. Is there anything else that you would like me to know about what it's like for you to form this part of supervision?

Interviewee: I think it's really what makes supervision special and what sets it apart from this being just like a, "Yep, we're checking your hours off the list. We're moving you towards this professional goal of getting licensed that you want to get." It's what really makes supervision what it is, and I think sometimes there's an association that supervision is just about, "Hey, we need to play by the rules, and we need to do the thing we need to do to get where I need to go," but I think the supervision of getting into the process and the self awareness, other awareness. I think that's where the value comes, and that the most helpful too, again, the client and then also to the therapist.

Interviewee: Honestly, to me as the supervisor if I'm like, "Why am I struggling leaning into this?" There could be triple value there. Where it helps me overcome something in my life. Anyway, so I think the supervision just there's such a great dynamic there around promoting the self and other awareness. Anyway, that's that.

Interviewer: One thing that I didn't directly ask you but that I am really question about, does it ever bring up anxiety for you? If it does, can you talk about that a little bit?

Interviewee: Yeah, I would say if I'm honest there is probably a low grade I feel like I'm monitoring. I'm monitoring you, I'm monitoring me, I'm monitoring the clients. So there's this, I don't know, this low grade ... not anxiety but just monitoring, and lot of things, and holding a lot of things, and wanting to be sure I'm hearing right and doing right and navigating. So yeah, I think I am aware of the delicate nature of things, and I'd want to tread lightly, but I also do want to tread.

Interviewee: I do feel anxiety around walking that line, if I'm honest. [inaudible 00:33:30] supervision, like being aware of who else is in the group and what's going on. If it's an individual and they're at this developmental stage, I'm being aware of that. You're kind of holding a lot and walking a line, and I desire to do that well. There is some uncertainty/anxiety as I do that.

Interviewer: Okay. I like what you just said. You're kind of holding a lot, and walking a line, and trying to do it well. I think that captures it pretty well. Yeah. I might ask you if I can quote that later on when I write my article.

Interviewee: [inaudible 00:34:13], please do.

Interviewer: You said I could?

Interviewee: Yes, absolutely.

Participant #7

Speaker 1: Yes. Thank you. Yep. And so I'm going to, what I'm trying to get at is you're, I'm trying to slow down that process of what you experience when you, at those moments when you use supervision to expand counselors, self-awareness or relational awareness about what's going on with the client or what's going on in themselves. So I'm just going to repeat that again. I want to know what it's like for you. Both the thoughts, the feelings, even like sematic, like I get my butterflies in my stomach or just even all of that stuff. What it's like for the supervisor to go there? That it's not something that's been focused on like how to do it, what we use to do at when we do it? All of that's been focused on, but what it's like for the supervisor hasn't been.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: So it's a little...

Speaker 2: To get your supervise to become more self aware of what's happening, is that what you're asking?

Speaker 1: Yeah. So,

Speaker 2: I'm sorry. In a session?

Speaker 1: In a supervision session? So when you're thinking, "Oh, I think I need to maybe help this person, maybe something's going on here", what goes on for you? And I'm looking at two different things. For the Oregon State research, you actually have to do two studies. I'm doing one interview, but I'm going to be extracting different material. And one is about how you decide you're going to go there with the supervisee. And one is it about your experience when you actually are doing it?

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Okay. So I have a bunch of questions. Some of them are repetitive, some of them you'll just answer probably before we get to them. And then we can kind of just slide by them. But I'm going to try and ask them the same for everybody. It's been taking no more than 45 minutes and maybe even shorter. I have about 12 questions.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Speaker 2: I hope I can give you something that helps.

Speaker 1: Yeah, no, anything at this point in time, I think I'm hearing some themes start to emerge and so it's good.

Speaker 1: So the first question is just a general overview question. What are your general thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Yeah, right so like foundation we use, like this is I run into with supervisees often, is that if they haven't done some of their own work, they can't go certain places with their clients. And every year we have six interns in our office. Almost every year we're sending folks to see somebody themselves because we'll work with them and even in supervision sometimes we'll give some direction about what we think they should do in the next session. And then invariably somebody will not do that, they will try kind of dodge that. And a lot of times that's an indication that they're not comfortable going there and they haven't articulated that in supervision and they get into the session and it doesn't happen.

Speaker 2: And so then it becomes a place where we would bring that up again and begin to have a little bit more conversation about what's going on internal to them, that's preventing them from getting there. And then riding that line again as supervisee, we're not counseling, we're not their counselor but we're recommended and maybe that they would explore some of that in some of their own work and all of the benefits. A lot of folks that we get are already in counseling or have been in counseling as part of their profession. Sometimes we are suggesting that they do that themselves when we see that coming up.

Speaker 1: So describe your experience using supervision to put itself in relational awareness and supervisees? Is this something that comes up for you regularly?

Speaker 2: Yeah, I think so. You're referring to in the supervisee, like I see something in the supervisee?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: That they're not aware of, so to speak with my clients [inaudible 00:04:12] , yes, it does come up regularly. And not with everyone. I would say every year amongst our six, this comes up this issue. It's coming up now with one actually.

Speaker 1: Is it?

Speaker 2: And, I have a female partner that works in the office with me, this license and she's supervising someone where this is an issue right now. We're sort of, she's come to me and we've talked about how we're trying to manage it, and help him become a better, a better clinician.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Yeah. So when you are thinking about going to that place in supervision. Describe any thoughts or feelings that you might have about, that might come into play that how the supervisee might respond?

Speaker 2: Yeah, that's a good question. It's a bit of a confrontation sort of thing. Feels like there's a bit of the confrontation, because we're not talking about always like a clinical skill that they might not know or some way of doing a risk assessment or something. We're talking about them as a person, but for me, like the things that that brings up are a bit of anxiety, a bit of how is this going to go for them? That's the anxiety. A bit of adrenaline. It's like, will they be able to receive that well or will they be defensive? And so I would say, I mean, mostly I'm talking around it, but that experience is very much for me in my chest and in my gut and I feel like anxiety to me like I'm going to be confronting them on some aspect of the person.

Speaker 2: And. We had a female who I would have bet you that she had her own sexual trauma. It never came up. She didn't talk to us about that. And what did she need to, but she was dancing around issues, sexual trauma with her clients and she just wasn't going into those places. And so that is an example of one.

Speaker 2: Another. I mean, just like having had supervised an intern who was really dealing with her own anxiety. And it was problematic in the session. You could watch a session and see and feel her anxiety. And so this is one that we had to confront, just to talk about what was happening for her experience in the session. And she ended up seeing someone.

Speaker 2: I want to make sure I'm getting the right things. And so like I'm thinking of another guy, actually

Speaker 1: This is great. I love it. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Three years ago we had a guy that I really think that he had ADHD and he'd never been diagnosed. I remember clearly watching video of him, he asked this great question and he kind of leaned in and this female students started to respond and he liked was like playing with his shoe and picking the rubber off the bottom of the shoe communicating, I don't care what you're doing, what your answer is. And so we had a long conversation about that experience and what that must've been like for his clients, and it later lead to some exploration in some of his own counseling later because of his inability to focus on what was happening in front of him and as a counselor, that's not a great trait to have.

Speaker 1: Yeah, I appreciate these examples and how it was with the, I think that really gives me lots of material. That's awesome. So I appreciate you talking about the anxiety and where you're feeling it and all of that too. It's exactly what I'm trying to get at because I don't think it's an easy thing to do. So to go there and I think it's much easier to stay cognitive, state they're radical, there be a gatekeeper and all of that stuff, I think.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Have you ever experienced any maybe difference in the relationship between you and a supervisee, during or after, using supervision in this way? Or does the relationship between you and the supervisee impact you're deciding to do this?

Speaker 2: I do believe I have experienced some pushback or the distance, I think of a couple. One was someone, a female who was the one about the sexual abuse and staying away from those kinds of issues and like minimizing those. But her minimization of those, I was convinced was her experience of them, which was not good therapeutically, but I was convinced it was about her own inability to go there when she probably hadn't gone there on her own. And I did feel like, I mean we keep in touch with our interns after they've gone off the track and if their in the area, particularly. They come back and visit and all kinds of stuff. But this one didn't like it. She's not far away, but she just, and I can't help but think that that came across as disapproval or like she had been thinking that she wasn't competent or something like that. I mean my intention is to make her a better therapist, but it came across that way.

Speaker 2: I had one other, and it might not fall into the category you're thinking of, but I had an intern and they were in a pretty conservative school and I had an intern who was dressing pretty provocative, not provocative, but beyond our boundaries so to speak. And wearing short skirts to be a counselor. And she was young and I mean I think just unaware. And so I did need to confront her on her dress and that was, I mean it needed to be done, but I felt like from that point on I was treated differently from her or like kind of a hurtful, she disagreed or whatever it was. At best it was awkward. I think it played out for the rest of our, for the rest of our times.

Speaker 2: I mean in even the worst of those that I've ever had was a, and intern who, I mean I just tell my interns, we just don't touch clients. We don't use touch, we don't give hugs and so on and so forth.And I had a client who was very touchy. And she, and I said, when you have your license and you can run your practice, you can make those decisions however you want, but here supervising you, I don't want you to do that. I don't do that. But I observing one day and she was like hugging the client after that, I sat down and I talked to her about that boundary and she didn't agree with me, but she agreed that she wouldn't do it anymore. But then she continued to do it and I ended up letting her go in the middle of that internship. Worked her professors at the school that she was at, they came up with a mediation plan and such for her. But that was a big example I think.

Speaker 1: So back to the one that you had to bring up the way she was dressing. What was that like for you?

Speaker 2: Oh, it was terrible. Because I mean, I have a wife, I've 5 daughters and I hate that these things are, and I work at a university where these issues historically have not been fair toward women and yet like one as a counselor, you're sitting facing your client and she's wearing a short, short skirt. Just seemed really uncomfortable.

Speaker 2: Fridays we'd have training sessions together and it felt like she was always trying to like scoot back to like make sure skirt was down low enough. I mean like, so that she was appropriate. But for me that was completely nerve wracking. Like having that conversation. And then when I did have it, I remember just feeling pretty awful about having to confront her about that. I feel completely awkward. And that conversation as a male, and completely aware of the fact that like, these conversations are always geared toward the woman and we don't have these conversations with men. So I don't know that was trying to hold all that stuff. But very uncomfortable. I was anxious about having it. And I, had it and it was accepted and she was not a confrontive person. She moved on and she responded. But I felt like fundamentally the confrontation changed her mind to freedom of the relationship that was there before. But like it was different after that confrontation.

Speaker 1: And different how? Do you know?

Speaker 2: Maybe just less free to be or to talk. I mean we're still a pretty small office. At that point we were like one hallway, we passed offices a lot with everybody in the office and so people pop their head in and say stuff. I just noticed that she was less likely after that to like say "how are you"? "how's your day"? or whatever, you know, just the soft kind of thing. I know to be honest,Maria, I don't recall in supervision anything changing after that on a professional level. I don't recall changing but it was more of an assault around the office you know in the kitchen or something.

Speaker 1: More awkward. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Kind of changed in that.

Speaker 1: Okay. Thank you. So you might've touched on some of this. Are there any? I'm wondering about the particular personality or something about in the supervisee, different supervisees and in general or specific, how their personal characteristics, or personality might impact you as you decide to address self-awareness?

Speaker 2: Yeah, good question. Yeah, I'm trying to think through those examples. I think, I mean probably like any form of confrontation there are people that I would feel easier confronting. It would feel safe to confront. They would want the feedback and I'd give them that feedback and then there are others that feel fragile, that feel like if I confronted them that they might break. Those are definitely harder for me and I mean I feel like those that, it's clear that they're safe and comfortable with feedback and get more feedback from me.

Speaker 2: Not that I don't with fragile, I have a pretty fragile one now who's, she's Indian from India and her personality and it's cultural. But I have talked to her most recently about our pacing, which is, it is very slow and methodical and even some of the space that she gives to clients feels a bit uncomfortable to me, even in the opening of a session and just sort of waiting. And I think culturally for her that's more normative. But then I'm having that conversation with her who's a bit more fragile versus another supervisee who's like, give me everything. They bringing their worst moments and going, tell me what to do differently here. You know, how can I do this better? Looking for you to give them feedback.

Speaker 2: So that's, I think the biggest point in that is that those who seem fragile or a little more insecure, more anxious are more difficult for me to give that feedback to versus those that seem more competent, solid on their feet kind of thing. To approach them is a little easier.

Speaker 1: Maybe there's a little more caution and thinking about it when, yeah,

Speaker 2: Yeah. Like for example, if it is a safe client, it will just roll off my lips in a supervision session, but for this one, I'm just mentioning this in this Indian term, I had thought about it for even a couple of weeks, I've thought it through. I need to be able to get this in somewhere with her as feedback. And we do, we do evaluations at the kind of the end of the semester, but I always say I better talk to you about it before it shows up at the end of the semester. So that was on my mind like I need to get this out and let her know work towards her changing some of that.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Great.

Speaker 1: So this is a little bit different, this question, tell me about your considerations about students needs from you as a supervisor and counselor development when you're thinking about addressing self and relational awareness and supervision?

Speaker 2: Okay. So let me understand the question better. Can you say that again?

Speaker 1: Well, yeah. What I'm focusing on is how does what you're aware of about supervisees, maybe counselor development level, like how they're developing as a counselor or what they're actually wanting and needing from you in that moment. Like, how does that impact your, I don't know, comfort level or your ability or your willingness to go there and supervision with them and bring up self and relational awareness?

Speaker 1: There's no right answer.

Speaker 2: Right. I don't know. I mean, I want to try and give you an answer that answers your question.

Speaker 2: I mean, I tend to use and try to solicit, and I do this with my clients as well, but try and solicit lots of feedback from them as well. And so I supervise our interns and then I have a few others that I supervise who are associates and they're working on their eponymous license. And those folks are not with the university. They're separate. But this guy isn't a licensed professional counseling associates. So he's required to be under supervision a couple of years. He transferred his supervision from another clinician and when we talked about that, a lot of that was because of that supervisor was very much very directive and it was like prescriptive, here's what you need to do. And so on, sort of, and I've been working with this guy now for probably, six sessions, six supervision sessions.

Speaker 2: And I put a lot of responsibility on him to bring things to me and we talk about [inaudible 00:21:04] all the client stuff went up and not all like clinical, it can be ethics and documentation, all sorts of things. But like today I did pause and just say, I want to know is this helpful for you? Like are you getting out? And he's paying me. Right. First of all, I don't know if you're getting out of the supervision time, what you need to be getting out of supervision. I don't know what he means totally. I can make some conceptualizations and such. But I also need to know that he's getting answers.

Speaker 2: I think I've also been forced, assumed to go back and question what am I needing out of this? Do I need more time just rolling through clients or ethics or how to document or do treatment plans? So I think, I mean that's one of the things that I would do with you to come back to the client with a supervisee and ask them if they're getting what they need in the session.

Speaker 1: Okay. Yeah. I'm just going to ask the other part of that. So does their developmental level as a counselor and counselor development from [inaudible 00:22:17] from the beginning of maybe practicum to the end of the year. Does that impact how you would or how you would decide to go there with them?

Speaker 2: Yeah absolutely.

Speaker 2: It is a matter of fact, I know this is graduate risk. Certainly when I'm working with a practicum student who's fresh, first clients that aren't like classmates or something, I'm a hold a more directive what I am a lot more prescriptive in what I've asked them to do. And I find myself doing a lot like putting a container around them when they walk into the room and as they move into like internship, I am giving them a little more space. We're talking to them a little bit more about some different kinds of issues.

Speaker 2: I have some second year interns who are taking the slow route, but they get more time to digest everything that they're learning and those folks, to answer your question specifically. Yeah. The longer I think that they work screws they have, the more I think I am willing to go into the questions that you're asking about self-awareness and, I say that because I am more hesitant to do that with a practicum counselor because I do feel like let them, they need to get their feet under them a little bit before they like before they're being called out on self-awareness and something that lacks a little bit in session before I might be saying, "hey, it seems like you know, limiting your ability to do this".

Speaker 2: Like they're trying to juggle, you know, literally it use it as a metaphor. Like they're trying to jump. It didn't take in rapport and just being comfortable sitting in a room with someone. Let them get a little bit of experience with that before I'm going to say something that's more about there own on self awareness in session. Who they are as a person, it helps in fact counseling. If it were outrageous then it would have to be address and it would get addressed early on.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Okay. Thank you.

Speaker 1: So some students might have that you might pick up on like a wide variety of attitudes towards supervisors or supervision or even authority. Does that ever become any kind of a consideration when you're deciding to address self in relational awareness, their attitudes towards authority or supervisors or you or anything like that?

Speaker 2: I mean with the, the two of us here and I'm male and Emily's female, two licensed clinicians here and six interns. I mean certainly times where supervisees are attracted to a certain other or they might like Emily better when they're like orientation or the she supervises better. Mmm gosh, Lori. I'm not thinking of any kind of particular here, but I bet there is.

Speaker 2: Well, here's what comes to my mind and I don't know if it's exactly it, but, so we interview them all in the spring. We hired them and I know we do at times I'll push for someone that the partner isn't as pushy about or she'll push for somebody. We'll take somebody on as a project or something like that. And I know that we've had conversations about, okay, she's going to be yours for the first semester, and so we did have one a couple of years ago who was assertive, pretty, very direct, very assertive and Annalee said for taking her, you get her the first semester and she was a little, she was a great clinician is the thing. She was a little bit, she had learned it for herself and did, she was definitely assertive but it stretched over times. Like she was taking a little bit too much.

Speaker 2: And I remember it happened that she came to me at one point and it was like thought that she had told me that she couldn't have more than 10 clients or something. I gave her another client and she came to my office and she says, can you tell me why I have another client on my caseload? Yes. Actually come in and have a seat. Because when we hired you, I told you that you'd have between 12 and 14 clients and I know you expressed your desire to have 10, but we've got lots of plans waiting. And so it felt like that's one way we managed it. She came to me in the beginning because we felt like she was a little bit threatening. It shows a little threatening. I don't know. That's what popped into my mind.

Speaker 1: Have you ever had a supervisee who just feels, this might be a little bit of a side question, but it feels like they already know it all.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yeah. How does that impact whether you're going to bring that to their awareness? Yeah.

Speaker 2: Yeah. I have to like get the person that in my mind.

Speaker 1: Yeah, of course. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Yeah. What was your question? How's that feel?

Speaker 1: How does that impact whether or not you would go to the issue of self-awareness?

Speaker 2: Oh yeah. Probably, yeah. That probably other factors involved in that. I'm thinking of a particular person, so who presented like he knew it all and did not know it all but, but acted like it was, I mean it did lead to, I mean you ask about feelings but that, that gets me kind of angry and I do get that resentful of that person. Cause then he was, he was going around the office, like trying to, some other interns had to do things and at times in sort of group staffing, trying to challenge the licensed staff to which he didn't really have much experience, but his personality was such that.

Speaker 2: So how did that impact? I felt all the more actually that I needed to address him. He felt like a bit of a threat to me that he was going around and telling other people how things ought to be done. And so I felt like as I supervised him that I needed to be more corrective.

Speaker 2: Interestingly, he's one that lives actually in our small town, still licensed and functioning and I don't see him either. He could probably walk to my office and I've never seen him around here.

Speaker 1: Interesting.

Speaker 1: I just have a couple more questions and one of them is a followup to that. Does whether a supervisor, supervisee appears sort of more open or more closed or more nervous about supervision or any of those things impact your going to that self or relational awareness with them?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I think, I mean I noted to it earlier but I just called it like fragile, like some supervisees just feel more delicate. And this is just human. I mean, right. Fronting a client who's more delicate or family member were delicate and some of it seems like there'll be able to handle it or the three even seeking, right.

Speaker 2: So we do a video review of our interns and we just did a series of those last Friday in a group. So eight of us together, well intern pulls out one of the videos that they selected of a session and we watch it together and then we've got some that are like, Oh yeah, I can wait for that, you know, and some are like dying short of breath and they don't want to do that kind of feedback, but we're going to do it. So yeah, those that are fragile, they're harder to watch their video to give them any kind of, they are harder to give feedback. I get it. It's just a little difficult.

Speaker 1: Right. So my last question is a general question. Is there anything else about this experience of using supervision to promote a self in relational awareness that you want? You can share with me?

Speaker 2: Well. Okay. Yeah. I mean all I would say was like know I've got lots of thoughts on it. This feels like a bit of, it is in my mind I'm framing it as a confrontation in a positive.

Speaker 2: Give you some feedback about that whatever. How I feel in your presence, what I'm aware of about you as a person. That has to be balanced in some capacity. That it can be very great. It can be a breakthrough for the person receiving it. It can also damage the relationship if you cause damage to the relationship. I would say in my own life constantly weighing those things out. Like, is this worth confronting? Okay, do I have enough relational collateral to confront this? The outcomes likely to get better if I confront this or process. To a degree I'm doing that with supervisees. Although the expectation is you're here to get feedback. So I mean on clinical notes, I tell them at the beginning of the year, I'm going to send all your notes back to you to read them. You're going to get them all back. I want to read them. And I don't expect you to have to write a [inaudible 00:33:13] note or an intake or anything else. You're going to get them all back.

Speaker 2: And so likewise, when we sat down and we watched a bunch of video say we're doing this as a learning process, expect I'm going to say I would do it this way, and I'll even say she'd do it that way and everybody else. And we might do it a different way. And to some degree there is a better way to do it but there are probably multiple ways of going about it. Let's learn from them.

Speaker 2: I have a guy right now who's super laid back. And when we interviewed, I thought this is great. He's like, he'd be a great counselor. He's just kind of got that natural persona you feel pretty safe with him. But as time has progressed that laid back, this is hindering his ability to be, cause it's like too laid back. Where are you going with this clients or what direction? So where is that? That piece going and addressing the part of him that is a personality trait it needs done in turn to become a better counselor or he wants to some skills to make that, to make himself a better counselor.

Speaker 2: Okay. I don't know what else or things that come up in that. Yeah. I'm not thinking of anything else.

Speaker 1: That's okay. Oh no, this has been great. You've given me.

Speaker 1: I can tell there's a lot of things in there that are going to be really helpful and all I'm going to do, the next thing is in a couple of days I'll probably send you a followup email, just says, have you thought of anything else? You know that you and that is, that's it. That's my second interview.

Speaker 1: So that gives you time if there's anything else that comes up. But otherwise, no, I really appreciate your answers, your thoughtful answers and I feel like I'm, I'm looking forward to going over the transcript in and doing that.

Speaker 1: So thank you so much for your time. I hope this was okay for you?

Speaker 2: Right. Yeah, this is good so I'm glad we were able to make it happen.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Thank you so much.

Speaker 2: Good luck with the transcribing in the writing part too.

Speaker 1: I know. Yeah.

Participant #8

Lori: Okay. Okay so I'll start with the general. In general, what are your thoughts about what it means to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Well, honestly for me, it's sort of the only way to do supervision. And partly ... I mean, I think I have to at least mention this, that this is ... It's the context from which I was supervised, and so for me, I feel like it's in my supervision DNA. That for me, it was such a transformative experience that I don't know ... I almost can't imagine doing it any other way, or feeling like what I had to offer would be as valuable as if I'm open to the possibility of personal transformation as a part of our professional transformation.

Speaker 2: So again, I think I had an experience ... I mean, I'll just tell you this, just to have context. But I had an experience when I moved to Oklahoma 21 years ago, where I went to ... I was in the process of doing reciprocal licensure, and so I had to be under supervision for a period of time. And so I went and looked for different supervisors, and I met with a woman, just in one session, who I had some things that were going on personally; my dad was dying of cancer, I had a situation at my work site, which was brand new to me, and with a co-worker that was really difficult. And actually, now I look back and he was actually in a manic episode and was very abusive. And I couldn't make sense of it. And so when I went to meet with this woman, I became tearful when I shared with her, kind of the work stress; the personal stress that was impacting my ability to be effective as a clinician.

Speaker 2: And she quickly handed me a tissue box and told me that would be not something we would talk about in supervision, because supervision is not about our personal stuff. And it was really all I could do to pull it together and end the conversation and get out of her office, because it was so painful and it was so disorienting to me. And because I was new to Oklahoma, I didn't understand that that was sort of the ethos here; that every supervision training that I went to, they would talk about how you do not engage in any personal material. And I mean, it was this hard and fast way in which of thinking about this, and sort of a nuanced understanding about the difference between therapy and supervision that takes into account the personhood of the training therapist. It was sort of this black and white approach.

Speaker 2: And so for me, I mean, I ... It was definitely a disorienting experience, because my experience was so rich in supervision in Chicago that I just didn't even know how to put my mind around it. So I did find a different supervisor. I didn't, obviously, ever pay that woman a dime. And I did find somebody, and she was wonderful and very containing of kind of what was going on for me. But she was a psychologist, and so I felt like part of my ambition in the LPC world in Oklahoma, to really kind of rethink what does it mean to be a holistic supervisor that is helping our trainees understand the complexity of what we're dealing with shows up in the room whether we want it to or not, and we have to be mindful that it's our job as supervisor to help them manage that and examine that in a way that understand the integration of how whatever's going on for me is impacting what's happening in the client, or it might have a parallel process going on, or all kinds of things. And if I don't have any of that data because I'm trying to be hard and fast about not knowing what's going on personally for them, then I've just missed a huge part of what could catch them up and make them not helpful to clients.

Speaker 2: So that's a lot of rambling. But I do feel like that ... And so actually, now I teach the supervisor training for the state, and sort of my ... Not my vengeance, but my sort of like, "No! This narrative will not continue." Because I don't want people to have that same experience. So just really trying to help people recognize that, in this field, I mean, it's so incredibly important that we are on the forefront of our own minds, and what's going on for us is in the forefront of our own minds, and that we are able to reflect on that with another professional to be thinking about [inaudible 00:07:51] show up in spaces that [inaudible 00:07:56] be helpful. So I don't know if that got [inaudible 00:07:59] or not, but that's [inaudible 00:08:06].

Lori: Yeah. No, it's great. I am having a bad connection right this minute. I'm going to try and move my computer a little bit. But no, it's great. I think that we are kind of on the same page. Moving from California to Oregon, I did all my training in California, and it was very steeped in psychodynamic and countertransference and stuff. And coming to Oregon, it's very not so. But, yeah. My internet connection's really bad, so I'm going to move.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Lori: Let's see if I can do it out here. Maybe it'll be better.

Speaker 2: I was just checking to see if I could see mine.

Lori: Your connection?

Speaker 2: Yeah, my connection looks like it's full bars.

Lori: Yeah, yours ... I think it's on my end, somehow. I think ... Is this a little bit better?

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Lori: Okay. Yeah, I'm really not sure why. But okay so thank you. That was great. Now, I'm going to get ... So what is, then ... My general research question, and I'm going to get more specific, but the overall question is describe how you experience, as a supervisor, using supervision to promote health and relational awareness in supervisees. So anything from a sematic feeling, I think I went through this, to emotions to thoughts. How do you experience it?

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). I would say that probably what happens for me physically is this sort of what happens similarly with work with clients, is that I feel both this excitement and sort of a emergence of compassion for the complexity of my supervisee. I find myself leaning in. I find myself kind of shifting in a way that is more therapeutic. I think, in an effort both to be available in the moment, but also to model what it means for somebody to step into vulnerability. Because my feeling with supervisees is that when they cross over to feeling like they can say the things that are going on, it is a big jump for them, because they are working so hard to be seen as professional and competent and for them to give me a piece of what's happening for them personally, in ways in which it might be problematic in their work, I guess for me it sort of is this bizarre combination of both excitement, like, "Here we go. Here comes our good possibility," and also just, at times, feeling very compassionate for the dilemmas that they're in and ways in which they're impacted by their personal circumstances and ways it's getting triggered in the work that they're doing.

Speaker 2: So I don't know. So I mean, I guess I think I feel like ... I mean, I just feel this hypersensitive engagement when they show up in that way, because I just feel like it's like somebody stepped up and is getting ready to rappel, and I am holding a line. You know? And it's my responsibility to help them get down safely and to know that what they're doing is absolutely what they need to be doing. So this idea, I want them to be safe, I want them to feel safe, and I also want them to know that I see them, and I see what they're doing is brave.

Speaker 2: And so I just ... I mean, it's kind of exciting for me. I don't know if that's ...

Lori: Yeah, it sounds like you have an empathy for them, in that position.

Speaker 2: Yes, yes. And I think it comes from my own experience, where that was a big deal for me to be vulnerable with my supervisor and let her know I didn't have everything together. And her response to me was so compassionate that, for me, it just feels like it was a game changer and enabled me to just be more reflective of myself in all of my work. So ...

Lori: Yeah. Okay so the next question is ... so this is about ... Well, the question is describe any thoughts or feelings that you have about how a supervisee might respond, that you're aware of, when you're thinking about super supervision to promote this kind of awareness.

Speaker 2: Okay, ask me that again.

Lori: So different supervisees, you might know them and you might be anticipating how they might respond. And this is a question about how your thoughts about how they might respond might impact your experience doing this. Either your experience as you're deciding to do it, or your experience as you've jumped in and started. Specific supervisees who might have different response.

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lori: And different [crosstalk 00:14:15]

Speaker 2: Well, I mean, I do think things like ... Yeah, I think for some ... I mean, for some that I've supervised, I mean, they're maybe not operating from a dynamic perspective with clients, and so they're looking to be more directive and tangible in the room, rather than using their relationship. And so sometimes I think for me, I feel like the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee sort of models that. They want more direction from me, or tangible things to do in the room; as opposed to leaning into an experience with us. And I think for me, I feel like it's just a matter of ... At least my experience has been that it's just a matter of also being patient with their process and recognizing that for some, it may feel not safe yet, that I have to earn the right to be able to be a safe place for them. And that clearly, some are more defendant than others about what that means.

Speaker 2: And so, I don't know. I feel like ... I will tell you, sometimes I feel a little bored when I've got supervisees like that who are not really wanting to look at themselves, and they just want to sort of check the box of supervision and have me tell them, "Do this, do this, do this with your client next time," instead of talking about how they are experiencing the client, or what are they imagining might be happening for them. But I don't know. For me, I guess just the amount of people I've supervised, I feel like at some point in time, they become ready for that kind of transformative work. And whether it be they have a personal crisis in the time we're working together and then it comes forward and they have an experience, or they work with clients long enough to recognize that they are going to be more effective if they are relationally attuned. And so they become more curious about themselves.

Speaker 2: So I don't know. I mean, sometimes there's boredom, but most of the time it's just sort of like I feel like we got to get through this kind of way of doing things in order for them to feel safe enough to be able to lean in a little bit more.

Lori: Okay. Okay. Have you ever noticed, and what would be your experience of a shift in the relationship between you and the supervisee when you've done this kind of supervision with them?

Speaker 2: Oh, I think there ... Yes. I mean, I feel like there's a huge shift when they're able to lean into that vulnerability and trust me with it. And I think there's a ... For me, there's a huge shift. And I really try to also think about kind of developmentally where they're at. I mean, for candidates for licensure, I mean, we've got two years together. And so I feel like it's sort of like working with a client, this sort of idea that initially, it's just, "Are you safe? Are you safe?" You know, "What can I get to alleviate my initial anxiety?" And then as we sort of walk into this, it feels like there's just this deepening of our connection and a deepening of the ways in which they're thinking about their work with their clients. And so it just changes the texture of even what they bring about their clients, when we are in that space.

Speaker 2: And I would say that over time, I have to be really intentional about continuing to reinforce that they're doing their own personal work in therapy and that that's the more textured work that they're going to do, but that there's a way in which we're looking at ... I mean, they might initially need to tell me about kind of whatever is getting triggered or what's in their life that sort of gets in the way or gets activated in their work. But really, it's their job to get into the weeds with someone else so that then they can bring it back and we can keep talking about it in sort of this way, not this way. You know? All the way down.

Speaker 2: And so I would say ... But then as time goes on, I mean, I'm pushing out of that towards the end of our work together, because we're going to become colleagues. And not that I'm not going to know what's going on in their life, but I'm not going to contain it in sort of a ... I mean, it doesn't feel like the intense vulnerability is as ... I mean, it's kind of like, again, that rappelling metaphor. I mean, they've got it. They figured out how to push up against the mountain and they know how to get down. And they don't need me to stay at the top and help them know it's safe, to really go there. So it's more me kind of going, "Yeah, I see you. I see what you're doing, and you're doing a good job at it."

Speaker 2: So I don't know. [inaudible 00:20:36] it's hard to describe, sometimes. Isn't it?

Lori: The relationships, yeah.

Speaker 2: This might be why there's a gap in the literature.

Lori: Yes. Yeah. It is-

Speaker 2: It's hard to put into words.

Lori: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. So I am going to ask a couple questions about sort of what goes into deciding to make those kind of interventions in supervision that will promote self and relational awareness. So the first question is, describe what you're aware of in yourself, as you're deciding. And this requires really slowing down that process and sometimes it's helpful to think about some supervisees where it might have been difficult to kind of bring this kind of conversation to supervision. Like, "Are you aware of anxiety," or you mentioned boredom, or maybe just anything semantically, or anything that ... Yeah, overall experience about deciding.

Speaker 2: I know for me, one of the challenges in this position, as the Director, has been ... Well, there's a couple of pieces. One, I have to be in the place where I'm available. And so I think there's time when I recognize I'm in too much of an emotional frenzy within my own body and containing too many things that I have to sort of quiet that down in order to be available for a supervisee. And sometimes I'm not successful in doing that; I'm sort of just checking it off, trying to get them in and out.

Speaker 2: And so I think when I'm recognizing that we're sort of edging on something that's important ... I'm just thinking about this right now, in light of one of my supervisees, who's sort of on the front end; trying to think about kind of her process and ... I mean, it's felt a little bit like that. And so it really requires me being in a space that's ready and available.

Speaker 2: I think the other piece of it that's been interesting for me is freeing up the space for them to talk and recognizing that I'm also, even though I don't see myself this way, they see me as the employer. And so sometimes I have to work through some of that; both within myself, sort of acknowledging it, that that's their experience, and then also sometimes explicitly acknowledging that with them; what does it mean to feel safe enough for us to go to certain things. And I do make decisions about whether or not they continue on. I mean, so that ... All of those things are present in the room.

Speaker 2: And so for me, sometimes it's making it more explicit. Again, I think I've traveled off and I'm not sure I'm answering your question.

Lori: I think you started off by saying ... wanting to make sure that you're in a space that can really kind of contain yourself going there. And I really appreciate that response. I think that that's so true, yeah.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah, and I do think I ... I think what I'm getting at is sometimes there's so many layers of dilemmas. And I, at times, need to, for myself, sort of acknowledge them. I mean, acknowledge them within myself, but also at times make them explicit in the room so that it's safe enough for us to kind of get through to the other side. And I think for me, what comes to my mind is this idea of when things move, is when I really invite them to move. I think supervisees need an invitation, because they don't know what it do. I mean, they've gone through ethics in graduate school, and so they're afraid. They don't want to do anything wrong, they don't want to say anything wrong. So I think sometimes it's me leading into the invitation of them telling me what I think they're really wanting to tell me so that I understand what is happening for them.

Speaker 2: And it just comes different ways. And I think tears, sometimes are things that I observe, or a holding back of tears. Certainly, if there's sort of a continued defensive response, I might be a little bit more soft and curious about that. And so those kinds of things, I think, are the little things I look for and try to respond to.

Lori: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay. Okay. Tell me if you feel like that you've already answered this question. This question is about ... That question was about what are you aware of in yourself. This next question is about what are you aware of, related to specific supervisee when you're deciding to address self and relational awareness.

Speaker 2: Yeah, I mean, I think that I guess it's kind of what I was saying in my last little bit; was just really paying attention to their own affect and inviting them to say more about it. Inviting them to explore their mind when they're getting stuck with feeling defended. Those are the kinds of things that I'm thinking about.

Lori: Are there any types of supervisees, in your experience, that it's more difficult to bring these things up?

Speaker 2: Yes. I'm trying to think how I ... Yeah, I mean I feel like for some, well certainly supervisees who have been kind of resistant to doing their own personal work, I definitely think represent a challenge. It doesn't last for very long. So I mean, we really ... Just, we all, in our center, we all talk about the fact that we all go to therapy, and so it's just become ... I mean, but I think that would be really hard, ongoingly, to work with somebody who is not sort of engaged in their own interpersonal work, because then they don't really know what I'm talking about. And so I think for me, it's been people that have more of a defensive intellectualization. I mean, they want to stay in their head, they don't want to think about how that impacts them emotionally, physically. They just want to know how to do the job.

Lori: What's that like for you, when you come across those people?

Speaker 2: I get irritated. I mean, I think if I'm honest, it's irritating at times. But typically, I do my own consulting when I've got that kind of thing going on and try to figure out how do I engage my own compassion for this person and that the defense that they were utilizing is one that is helping them stay afloat.

Lori: Right.

Speaker 2: And certainly I think when we've got ... I find for me, Lori, that it's hard for me now to supervise interns who are in graduate programs, because I think they are so defensive. Because they're constantly proving themselves intellectually by the papers they're writing and the theories they're thinking about. And so for me, it's hard to do this kind of work with people that are still in grad school. I find it much more rich and textured when I'm working with ... And I've got two years, two to two and a half years with people who are candidates. So I have an intern right now, and I'm just tired. I'm just tired of ... I mean, every time I'm [inaudible 00:30:14], I'm like, "Ugh." You know? But I get it. I mean, she's ... Everything's so new and it just feels, I think, so scary. So I think that I have to be respectful of kind of where people are, but yeah. I think that's my best response.

Lori: Okay. And you touched on this a little bit, but this question asks what are your considerations about the students' level of counsel development that you're aware of; any considerations about what their needs or their developmental level as a counselor is when you're thinking about addressing self and relational awareness in supervision.

Speaker 2: I didn't get that. That question was all broken up.

Lori: Okay. Yeah-

Speaker 2: Was the question something about the developmental needs?

Lori: Yeah. The level of counselor development and how that impacts your decision of what and how to bring up self awareness, relational awareness. Yeah.

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lori: My connection's not good again, so ...

Speaker 2: Yeah. I mean, yes. I think I'm thinking about that all the time. I shouldn't say all the time, but I'm trying to think about that as much as possible. Again, I think back to ... I think when people are in the throws of grad school, at least for our program, they're working adults. And so they're working jobs, they're going to grad school, they've got families, they're trying to do internship. And so there's just this way in which any human being that's spread that thin has got limited bandwidth. And so for me ... And I think they're so new that they're trying so hard just to keep it all together. So I definitely am very careful about not pushing too hard, but also ... But thinking about things; we have a self-care contract that we have interns sign. It's also a self-compassion contract, just about what does it mean to lean into learning and not knowing and what does it mean to use our staff as a resource and a guide and what does it mean for them to meet their limits and be able to communicate them to their supervisors and the other staff there.

Speaker 2: So we try to do that kind of holistically as a center, but then also to try to remember that, as I'm working with them one-on-one, kind of remembering where they're at and what they're doing is really a Herculean effort right at the moment. And I think with candidates, I'm thinking about things developmentally, like they're emerging into the profession, they're uncertain. Are they making connections with other professionals? How can I help best resource them to be involved with different trainings or to be involved with different advocacy groups that are along their same interest line, so they get a broader breadth of experience and support? And then really pushing them to do some things, like making some professional decisions around getting paperwork done and all those sorts of things so that they can literally walk out and not have this on their mind. I mean, those are some of the things that I think initially, I'm really ... tasky things I'm thinking about, as far as self-care, as they're emerging into this field. So I don't know.

Lori: Okay. I just have three more questions. So the next one is ... So think about if you've ever had, and you may not have had, supervisees that have a really good attitude about supervision, versus supervisees whose attitude might be negative relative to authority figures in general of supervision, or anything. What are your experiences regarding specific student attitudes towards supervision when you're thinking about using supervision to enhance self and relational awareness? How does that impact?

Speaker 2: I mean, I think this is more ... I only have had one intern, and it was a long time ago. Excuse me. That sort of had this attitude like, "I don't need you." And it was early in my career, and I was kind of like ... I mean, I think for me it was very ... I found myself feeling very defensive. And I do think it was, again, early in my career. It was 20+ years ago, and so I did a lot of supervision of my supervision, because I was brand new at it. I really have not had that experience since then. And I do think it's partly because I'm a part of a broader group of people; that we all are modeling. I mean, every week all the licensed staff consult with each other. We show up and share our cases, often times with our supervisees in the room. And so I mean, we've just sort of normalized that this is what you do, and it's good and it's so important. And so I don't feel like I get that kind of resistance.

Speaker 2: I've heard from others ... I mean, I've had other people who are newer supervisees have a similar experience that I had early on. And to be honest, as the Director of the counseling center, sometimes they're interns, I just want to slap them.

Lori: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I mean, that's just the truth. I'm just like, "You don't get it!"

Lori: Yeah.

Speaker 2: And that this person is offering you space, and you are being a [inaudible 00:37:20]. It just makes me crazy. And it's only been like ... We've had one or two of those that have just been really, just so resistant to leaning in and getting the help they need. And I think it's, on some level, translated to the careers that they've ended up having or not having.

Speaker 2: So I mean for me, at this point, I just feel like you can't ... This work is not for everybody. And I'm at the place now where I just am able to kind of go, "If they can't show up and recognize how important this process is for them, I don't know how they're going to show up for clients."

Lori: Yeah.

Speaker 2: And so I don't know that ... I mean, we try to work with them. I mean, with the individuals that I'm thinking about, we try to work with them. One of them, actually, we had to terminate her internship, it got so bad. The other one, we got her through, but whew. It was not fun. So, yeah. And one of them, I think we really worked with her on kind of what ... She wanted to be in the helping field, but I don't know that she was really equipped to be in this type of helping field. And so her supervisor worked with her a lot on ways in which she could use her degree to be able to be useful and helpful, but not maybe as a therapist. And so she's actually working, doing more psycho education stuff, which is perfect for her, because she just wants to stay in her head. She doesn't want to be emotionally available for clients.

Lori: Right.

Speaker 2: And I'm not even sure she has the capacity to. I mean, I think she may actually be on the spectrum, but very bright. And so we just really tried to encourage her to find a place in the field that would make sense for her, because she was very anxious in the room when the affect was present. So that was ... Yeah. So I haven't had a ... I'm kind of picky about who I supervise, so I kind of get this ... You kind of know, at this point, when you meet somebody, it's like, "Yeah, this is not going to go."

Lori: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Speaker 2: I'm not taking them.

Lori: Yeah. I know what you mean. I know what you mean. I mean, this is just a side bar, but one of hardest things for me in supervision is when someone says, "I'm really open. I really want to hear whatever you have to say," but their vibe is just like, "Ah," you know? Just very guarded. You know what I mean.

Speaker 2: Yes.

Lori: And to me, that's one of the things that makes me anxious. I'm like, "I know I'm just going to be ... It's going to be an ongoing push and pull," kind of, yeah.

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lori: Yeah.

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lori: So one more question, and then a general question. So how do ... Let's see. Where is it? How are supervisees' clients part of your consideration when deciding to use supervision to promote self and relational awareness?

Speaker 2: Oh, I mean I feel like that's huge. I mean, because I love it when they connect the dots. You know? Because often times, it's whatever's happening for the client that triggers something that's going on for them. And then when they're able to work through that in supervision and then take it back to the client the next week and they see the shift in the work because of what they've just done; to me, that's the gold stuff. And so they get it. I mean, I don't think you can get it until you get it. You know

Lori: Yeah.

Speaker 2: And so I definitely feel like that is absolutely the byproduct of the work that we're doing together, is that I know that the ways in which I'm making space for them enables them to make space for others. And so it just feels like, as supervision gets richer, so does their work with clients and they see the correlation. I mean, that's ... And to me, that's why I supervise, because it's like it duplicates, triplicates whatever my efforts. I mean, I can't see all these clients, but it enables me to continue to launch people in the field that will make the work be accessible to more people.

Lori: Right. Touch more people. So you're considering clients, what's going on with clients is a big influencer on if you're going to go there with supervisees, you'd say?

Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lori: Okay. So my final question is just, is there anything else that comes to mind about your experiences using supervision to promote self and relational awareness in supervisees?

Speaker 2: Sorry, my dog.

Lori: It's fine.

Speaker 2: Hey. I don't know. I can't think of anything in particular. I mean, I can't imagine what it would be like if this was always completely just academic exercise; supervision, that it just was checking boxes and reading case notes and telling them what to do or not to do, talking about theory. I mean, all those things are important, but I think if that were all that it was, I wouldn't be long for this work. I just think the emotion pulls it all together. And so the vulnerability pulls it all together. And it just gives it all context. So I don't know. That's the best way I can describe it.

Lori: Well, I can tell-

Speaker 2: I mean, it's back to my stupid ...

Lori: Go ahead.

Speaker 2: Back to my rappelling exercise. I mean it's like you got to stand at the top of the cliff and you got to tell them what they need to do, what they're going to expect, what the gear is that they need; all the things. You got to explain all that. But when they go over the side of the mountain ... Have you ever rappelled before?

Lori: Hm-mm (negative), no.

Speaker 2: Have you ... No?

Lori: Hm-mm (negative).

Speaker 2: Oh, my word. I mean, just that feeling when you're standing at the edge of the cliff and you have to go backwards; you have to go backwards and you have to trust the belayer at the top, not only that the equipment's going to hold; so the theory is going to hold, all the things I've learned are going to hold and hold me in a space, and that I've got somebody at the top that's going to hold onto me. But ultimately, I have to drop. I am the one that has to drop. I have to drop into this and really understand the complexity of this experience for myself and my clients. For me, it just is ... I mean, to me, that's just where the ... If it was just me standing at the top of the cliff telling them what o do and what they're looking at and all those sorts of things, I would be so frustrated. So I don't know. That's ...

Lori: Yeah. Yeah. No, that's great.

Speaker 2: I hope [inaudible 00:45:50]

Lori: Yeah, I can tell that you live and breathe this stuff, and it's great that we got to set up this time, because I think that you said a lot of really important things. And your empathy for the counselor and what they're going through is just really obvious, too. Yeah and so what ... I really appreciate you taking the time to do this. I'm going to send you-

Speaker 2: Yeah, sure.

Lori: The only other thing is, in a couple days, I'm going to probably send you a followup email and just say, "Did you have any other thoughts about this," and give you an opportunity to write those down.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Lori: Other than that, that is all I need. And now I get to start doing my data analysis. So hopefully by the time I get to see you guys next, I'll be all done, hopefully.

Speaker 2: That's exciting!

Lori: Yes.

Speaker 2: So we'll call your Dr. Lori.

Lori: Yes. It's been a long time getting there.

Speaker 2: That's awesome.

Lori: Yeah. So-

Speaker 2: Good for you. That's so exciting.

Lori: Well thank you so much. It was fun getting to talk to you and visit.

Speaker 2: You bet.

Lori: And again, I appreciate it. And it looks like it's getting dark there.

Speaker 2: I know. I don't know. The sun's coming in in a weird way and hitting my camera. I don't know why it's doing that. It's so strange.

Lori: Yeah.

Speaker 2: So, anyway.

Lori: Well, you have a great rest of your evening.

Speaker 2: Okay. All right, thanks, Lori.

Lori: Thank you. Okay.

Speaker 2: Bye-bye.

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