

# Supervision Philosophy

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My counseling theoretical approach is an integration of the Adlerian and feminist perspectives, and therefore it seemed logical to work towards applying this perspective to my supervision style. Since beginning my work as a supervisor in 2007, I have been practicing from a Feminist and Discrimination model integrated framework. At times I utilize core components of Adlerian theory related to the exploration of behavior as purposeful and the need for belongingness while emphasizing self-awareness through personal challenge in order to foster professional development in an encouraging and empowering way. My focus as a supervisor is on assisting the developing counselor increase their confidence as they work towards becoming a competent professional through the co-visioning of the supervisory relationship.

Attention to the supervisee's developmental process is a core component of both Feminist and Discrimination models. Part of Feminist supervision includes appropriately attending to the professional needs of counselors-in-training as well as their comfort level with the supervisory relationship and their own clinical skill (Worell and Remer, 2003). Therefore, assessment of supervisee skill level and understanding is continuously infused through the process. Societal issues and personal biases are also explored collaboratively during supervision. The Discrimination model addresses four areas of focus for supervisee need and development (Borders and Brown, 2005). Those areas are counseling performance skills, cognitive counseling skills, self awareness, and professional behaviors. Knowing where my supervisee lies within these four areas helps me determine what role is necessary within the supervisory relationship. Attending to these areas assists me in attending to the growth of my relationship with supervisees in a way that is respectful, egalitarian, and strengths-oriented.

Within the role assumed by the supervisor, the four stages of Feminist supervision can be applied as outlined by Porter (1994). By attending to the stages of the supervisory relationship, I will be "assisting supervisees in developing culturally responsive therapy approaches that... include introducing a culturally sensitive, cross-cultural perspective, a socio-cultural framework

and an analysis of oppression; exploring the supervisee's own biases, stereotypes, and racism; and including a collective, social-action perspective in healing” (p. 43). Issues related to systems of oppression are particularly important as they impact the lives of clients and counselors in different and integral ways that ultimately have an effect on the counseling process. Therefore, I think it is necessary to discuss cultural bias as it pertains to client conceptualization and treatment.

When assuming a supervisory role, I make sure to address the supervisee focus area through a Feminist lens. In essence, I attempt to apply the Discrimination Model in supervision from a Feminist foundation in order to develop a strengths-based egalitarian relationship. This unique approach is catered to my personal style in relationship to my beliefs about learning and professional identity development. I expect supervisees to develop their own professional goals and come to each supervision session with a plan to collaboratively address each goal they have set for themselves. In order to assist in this process, I typically ask to view tapes or participate in live supervision, request they write case conceptualizations, or engage in other interventions or activities appropriate to the counselor-in-training’s developmental process. Most importantly, I endeavor to create a safe, supportive atmosphere in which the supervisee can feel comfortable exploring their role as a professional counselor and what that looks like for them.