

Professional Supervision for pastors: New, Now and Necessary

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My interest in professional supervision:

- Who pastors the pastors?
- Grounded & growing churches
- Ugly stats
- Risk factors for FIEC
- Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision...

What is Professional Supervision for pastors?

- A regular, contracted, confidential, professional meeting
- Attends to the personhood of the pastor as it intersects with their ministry practice
- Theologically and psychologically informed



What is Supervision: an interruption of practice?

“supervision interrupts practice. It wakes us up to what we are doing. When we are alive to what we are doing, we wake up to what is, instead of falling asleep in the comfort stories of our routines and daily practice.”

Ryan, S (2004) Vital Practice. Portland, UK: Sea Change Publications.

What is Supervision: Pithead time?

“British miners in the 1920s fought for what was termed ‘pit-head’ time – the right to wash off the grime of the work in the boss’s time, rather than take it home with them.

Supervision is the equivalent for those who work at the coalface of personal distress, disease and fragmentation”

(Hawkins and Shohet, 2000)

What is Professional Supervision?

- A structured ***process*** which facilitates and ensures adequate exploration of the matters in hand
- Led by ***a trained person*** who enables the boundaries of the supervision process to be upheld; safeguarding an approach that is comprehensive, professional and relevant
- ***Agenda is driven by the supervisee;*** supervisor supports and guides.

Research with Sydney pastors shows the following themes in usefulness of Professional Supervision:

- *For accountability and challenge*
- *For receiving practical advice and support*
- *To assist with examining ways in which personal and spiritual issues interfere with their ministry.*
- *To receive overall support and strengthening in their ministry.*

Lock, N (2014) *Pilot Survey into pastors Attitudes towards Professional Supervision amongst Sydney Anglican clergy*. Unpublished manuscript.

Negative Aspects of NOT Receiving Professional Supervision.

- *It's a terrible thing. Chaps crash and burn.*
- *By the end of my 23 years in parish ministry I felt it was a great disadvantage not to have had regular supervision.*
- *There is no (place) for associate ministers to talk. I have felt very isolated.*
- *It's been unsystematic: more would have been helpful. Peer groups aren't challenging enough.*

Lock, N (2014) *An Exploration into the Nature of Reservations Concerning Professional Supervision amongst Sydney Anglican clergy*. Unpublished manuscript.

Is it Professional Supervision preventative?

*“For practitioners, the benefits of supervision include **supporting** those working in isolation (Clough 2003), assisting practitioners to cope better with their work and workplace (Edwards et al. 2005), **developing the competence** and knowledge of the practitioner (Kleiser & Cox 2008) and **reducing burn-out** (Edwards et al. 2006). For patients, it has been suggested that supervision has a positive effect on patient outcomes.”*

Martin P1, Copley J, Tyack Z. (2014) Med Teach. 2014 Mar;36(3):201-7.

Is it Professional Supervision preventative? (2)

“Even highly trained clinicians need supervision to work through the deep emotions... that might lead to unwise enactments”

“The supervisor can act [in] supporting the therapist in maintaining or recovering a professional perspective”

Gutheil, T. G.(2008) Preventing Boundary Violations in Clinical Practice. New York: Guilford Press.

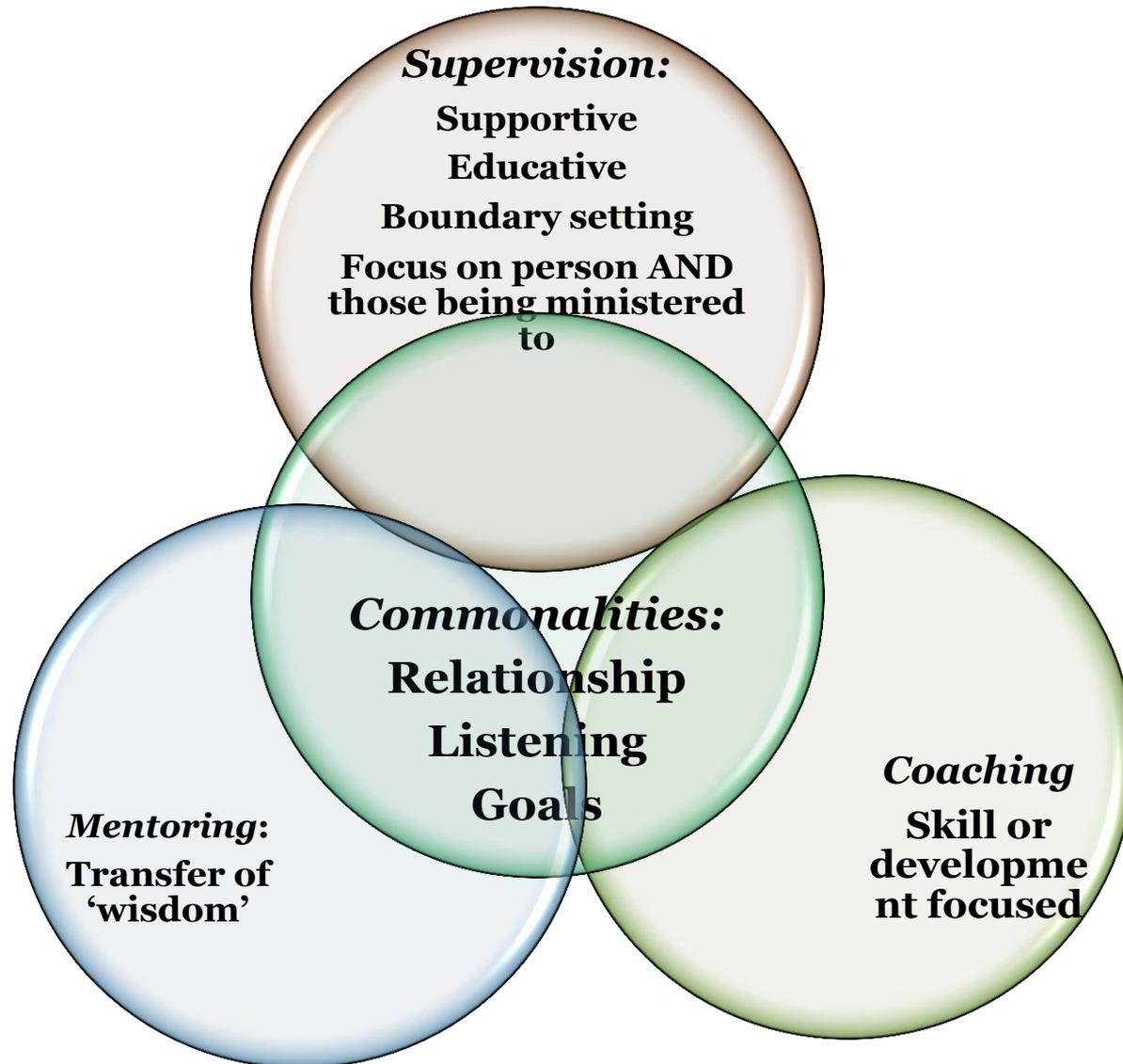
Efficacy: Supervision and Burnout

Francis and Turton reviewed attitudes towards professional supervision amongst Anglican pastors in UK and found:

- a link between having a positive attitude towards engaging in reflective ministry through supervision and having a “significantly higher level of personal accomplishment”
- **That the practice of reflective ministry led to lower levels of burnout and stress.**

Leslie J. Francis and Douglas W. Turton, “Reflective Ministry and Empirical Theology: Antidote to pastors Stress?” in Moore, Mary Elizabeth, and Hermans, Chris A. M., *Hermeneutics and empirical research in practical theology : the contribution of empirical theology by Johannes A. van der Ven* (Brill, Leiden ; Boston, 2004).

Supervision vs Mentoring vs Coaching



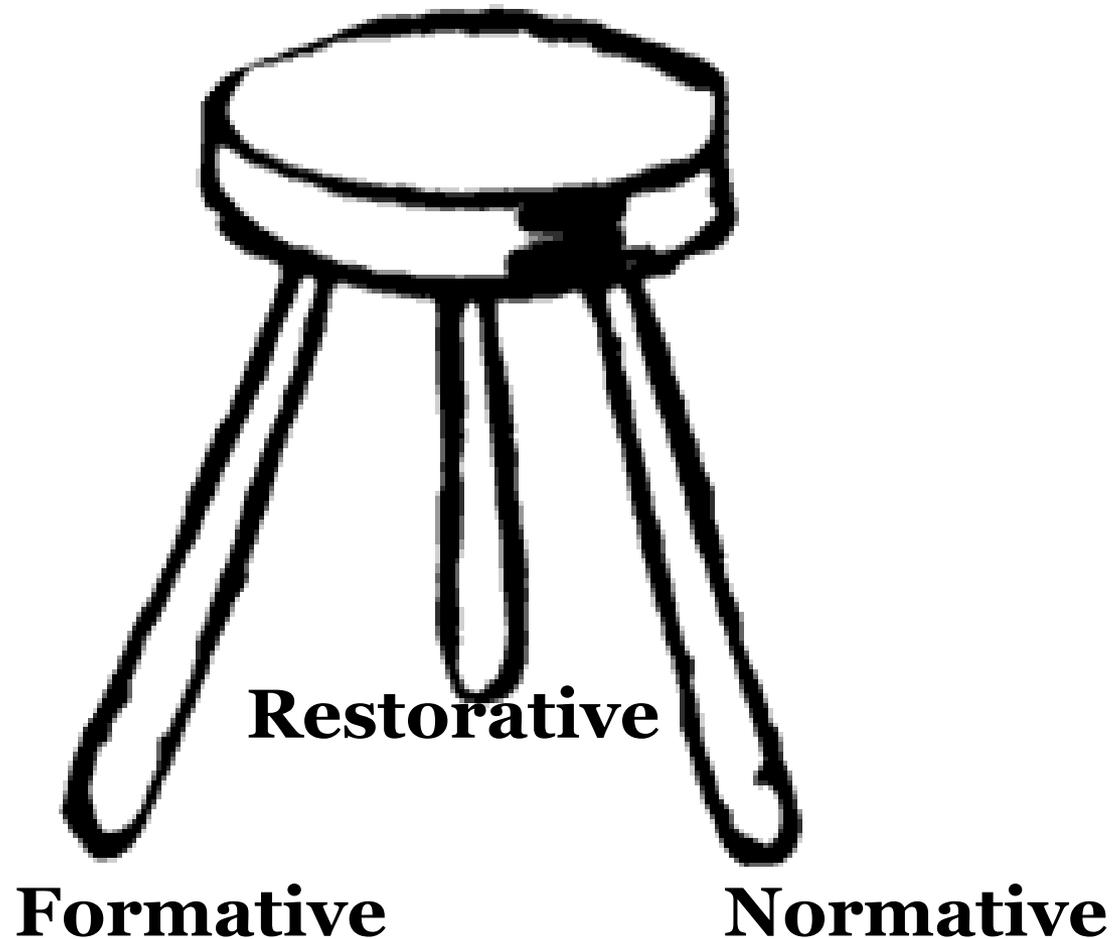
What is Professional Supervision(2)?

Has 3 main aspects:

- Supportive
- Educative
- Boundary setting

Each supervision meeting may attend to one or all of these aspects, as is pertinent for the supervisee on that day.

Three aspects of Supervision



Reference: Inskipp and Proctor



Supervision Demonstration



What kind of learning: Critical Learning

*Critical Reflection is a central principle
“Perhaps even more central to adult learning
than elaborating established meaning schemes is
the process of reflecting back on prior learning to
determine whether what we have learned is
justified under present circumstances. This is a
crucial learning process egregiously ignored by
learning theorists.” (Mezirow, 1990)*

What kind of learning: Emotional Learning

“A prerequisite to developing a critical reflective capacity is acquiring the ability to recognize, acknowledge and process feelings and emotions as integral aspects of learning from experience . Further, it is feelings that are often the trigger for reflective exploration, and by exploring one’s feelings, greater self-awareness and change in meaning structures occur.”

TAYLOR, E. T. Transformative learning theory: a neurobiological perspective of the role of emotions and unconscious ways of knowing Int. J. Of Lifelong Education, Vol. 20, No. 3 (May–June 2001), 218–236

What kind of learning: Transformational

‘The deepest form of learning used in supervision is transformational learning which combines both personal and professional learning. In transformational learning, supervisees reflect critically not just on their experience, but on the way they construct their experience.... They learn from it and go back to their work with new insights and new behaviours. This is supervision at its creative best.’

Carroll, M. (2008) ‘Supervision and transformational learning’ in *Psychotherapy in Australia*. Vol 14, No 3, pp 38-45

What is Professional Supervision: where Transformational Learning occurs

Transformational learning is dependent on supervisors providing:

- *the relationship and environment to enable supervisees to stay in **optimal learning mode**;*
- *a focus on **experience** as central to learning in supervision;*
- ***critical reflection** as the mode of learning involved.*

Good supervision should result in **action**: changed ministry practice that arises from the discussion during the session.

A Safe Holding Space

‘Supervision provides a safe, holding environment where, through wise conversation and creative attentiveness, individuals and groups can co create a deeper perspective and wisdom, that can lead to transformation’

Holton, G (2010) *Wisdom’s Garden: a Metaphor for Cross Professional Supervision*

Training in *The Soul of Supervision*, eds Benefiel, M & Holton G.



A Safe Holding Space



Need more information?

Where to find a supervisor:

- Email Nicky Lock nlock@csu.edu.au for St Marks' Recommended Supervisor's list
- Transforming Practices (all pastoral supervisors):
<http://www.transformingpractices.com.au/>
- Australasian Association of Supervisors:
<http://www.supervision.org.au/>
- Christian Counsellors Association:
<http://www.ccaa.net.au/>

On Supervision:

- https://nswact.uca.org.au/media/1676/professional_supervision_dec2011-final_rohan.pdf
- *On Being a Supervisee* (2011): Carroll and Gilbert