

Hi, I'm Dr. Mish, and you're listening to the craft of supervision. Onto the next episode. Let's go.

So welcome back, folks, this is the first episode for 2023! Wow, you know, last year for me went so quickly, I was astounded, really. So, I started off last year with studying a lot for my Viva for my doctorate, and I got awarded that, which was amazing. And I'm really pleased, I'm still thinking back now, I think, 'Wow, that just felt like a bit of a whirlwind'. But yes, delighted to have done that last year, and also to finish the year with launching Supervision Institute. And what has shocked me most about launching it was, even though I'm really enthusiastic about shining the spotlight on supervision, I wasn't prepared that other people would be so interested in it as well. And that's really been a bit of a delight for me to be honest. Yes, I've been thrilled by people's interest and coming alongside me in the journey of how Supervision Institute will evolve.

So, for the moment, I'm thinking about how best to keep shining the spotlight on supervision and bringing value to supervisors, so that we can examine and identify parts of our practice that we need to address or revisit, and to remain in a curious position. So, just to remind you that that's essentially the aim of me setting this up, is to highlight the invaluable work that clinical supervisors do across the psychological professions, and across the wider allied helping professions, because it really is a crucial role. And I think there are a lot of assumptions that are made about supervision, And also, there are a lot of joys and challenges that come with the role. And, one thing that I'm doing this year is inviting guests on to my podcast. So, I've already got a few guests sort of in the bank really, I have already done their interviews, and they'll be coming out at various points throughout the year. I'd really like to get some more guests, so if this is something that you're interested in, and you think as a supervisor, you'd like to contribute towards having a chat about supervision, or if you're someone who's, had supervision, and you sit in the supervisory chair, and there are things that you want to highlight that would be useful for the supervision world to know then, yeah, just give me a shout, you know where I am.

But this episode, for today, again, start highlighting the role of being a supervisor, and how do we look at remaining curious about our practice, because I feel that there is a potential for a supervisors to do some sort of training around supervision. Then we embark on our supervision practice and offering this out to the psychological professions and, allied health professions and caring professions. And we offer this out. And yet, I just wonder how often we actually get the chance to sit down and reflect on our supervisory practice. Now, there should really be supervision of supervision. And I really think this is a key area for us as supervisors to make sure that we're, we're including this in our work. And I wonder how much supervision off supervision we need. I'm not actually sure that there are official guidelines as to how much we need? I think, across the professional membership bodies, I think it is advised that you have supervision of supervision. But unlike supervision for counselling and psychotherapy, there's not a kind of benchmark for how many hours you should need. So I do wonder, how do we know we need to know, or how do we know about the areas of our practice that are out of our, out of our gaze, out of our kind of frame of reference, and that can be really hard, really hard to go well, 'How do I know what I don't know?' And this is why we need supervision of supervision and in some respects, I suppose, there is a question around well, when does that stop? Who's the ultimate supervisor? Where do they,

they situate themselves? And who do they go to, for their own supervision, because I'd love to find that out.

In fact, one of the things that I was reflecting on recently is I have the privilege of talking, spending some time with Professor Michael Carroll. This was a few years ago. And, you know, I went to see him, and just was able to spend time with someone who, I personally think has been incredibly influential and valuable to the supervision profession. And I would, if you've not read some of his books, or engage with some of his work, I'd really encourage that. And what I'll do is, I'll link his book in the show notes, so you can find him when you're ready. But I had the privilege of speaking to him, and I asked him about, where does he go for his own supervision? Like, where's the kind of use was kind of like at the top of his game, I suppose, really. And I just wanted to know, well, how does he, how on earth does he get the support that he needs? And how does he get that supervisory gaze on his work. And what was interesting to me, is that he spoke about sharing some space with other supervisors who were at a level of practice and experience that reflected his own. And this might sound, you know, slightly like a, like a secret club, of supervisors. But actually, what he was talking about was the value of having a peer supervisory relationship, the work and your reflections on the work could be examined. And I'm really interested in this as an idea.

So, one of the things I'm thinking of, for going forward with Supervision Institute is how we get to promote a kind of joined up way of examining our work and what we think about our work. And this is why really, I started thinking about something called, what I've called Supervisor Circle. For those of you who are interested, or already signed up for it, my intention is here. And essentially, Supervisor Circle is an online space that I'm going to facilitate bimonthly, it's free to attend, and it will be a place for supervisors to discuss general themes about supervision work. And obviously, we won't be talking about details or supervisee specific examples, because that won't necessarily be the space that we can do that. But it's certainly a chance for us to reflect, to connect with each other, offer a bit of support, just for supervisors really, because I just think we do an essential role. So each meeting, I've got a list of them on my website, so feel free to have a look, each meeting will be about an hour. And really, we're going to create a space where different themes can be brought, we can just discuss what it's like to be a supervisor. And I'm hopeful this will be a really, really useful space for supervisors to come to. So if that's something that interests you, I'll put the link in the show notes. The first one will be on, I believe it's the 18th of January, and then I've got them scheduled bimonthly after that. And we'll just kind of take a review and see what we want to do with the space. But you're very welcome, if you're already practising as a supervisor, you're very welcome to come along, the more the merrier, really. And we'll see what happens with that.

So, part of my thinking around, 'How do we reflect on our space?' also meant that I wanted to give back to supervisors. So I created a CPD, a Professional Development Booklet. And this is free for you to download, you can either do it as part of a, an hour, a reflective hour that I've got available on the website, or just, you can just listen to a quick introduction video and then just download it straightaway. It's totally up to you how you approach this. But one thing I'm thinking of doing is running it as a bit of a live event so that we can, as supervisors again, come together, reflect on what we know about our work and the elements that we feel like we need to improve on, and how do we then seek out, seek out those, those areas of professional development that we might need? I guess in it, what I'm asking you

to consider as a supervisor is how do you know what you don't know? Because often I find that I'll get a lesson of how much I don't know about something in the supervisory space. So, for example, a supervisee might come in and start talking about a particular issue that they found in their work or something that they want to discuss regarding a client. And I'll think to myself, 'God, you know what, I don't really know that much about that.' And I'm generally transparent in supervision and go, you know, 'This is not an area that I'm overly familiar with,' but I will go and do some learning, and still explore what that means for that the supervisee, in terms of their understanding of it.

I think it's really important that we don't necessarily ask our supervisees to be a place of education, I don't think they should necessarily be our teacher. I think they will be our teacher in a way, because, obviously, we learn from our work all the time. But I do think it's a bit of, it's a bit of a shame, really, when a supervisee comes to you to ask for your support and to explore an issue. And if you're sat there going, 'I have no idea about that issue,' and then ask the supervisee to educate us. I kind of feel like that's a bit shoddy, I'd be interested to see what you all think really. I'm not saying that we need to know everything. And I'm certainly recognising there's limitations into how much knowledge we have. And then that also brings up for me, that's the question of, 'Is having generic supervision okay? Do we need to start encouraging our supervisees to go and find a specialist?'

So, for example, when I was working with children and young people, I had two supervisors, I had one that I took my adult clients to, and I had one that I took my youngest clients to, my children/young people clients. It was really, really valuable for me to have that separate space, working with someone who's got vast experience in working with children, young people, had specialised in this area. And I felt like I was able to really investigate my own learning as a supervisee. And my practice, and make sure I was on top of safeguarding, and the kind of red flags that come up, and holding that space, and being creative in that space as well. And it was a really, really useful time for me, basically. And I'm not sure that I would have had such a rich learning experience as a supervisee, if I just taken all of my work to one supervisor. Even though that supervisor is vastly experienced, I'm not sure I would have had the, the wide experience that I did, if I just gone to one person. And it was, there was something for me that really stuck with me about, supervision being a place where you sometimes need someone with that particular expertise. And, I worry sometimes that having generic supervision that covers everything might not meet the needs of the supervisee. So, one of the things I'd encourage you to do as a supervisor is to really think about, 'What is it that I'm offering in supervision?' And, 'What are the bits of my practice that I need to improve on? Or just get some basic information on.' Or just say to my supervisee, 'Actually, I'm not the best person for you to have this consultation with, and I would encourage you to go somewhere else.'

Because what struck me about offering supervision in a very broad-brush sense, is that I wonder if it clashes somewhat in terms of what we offer as psychological professionals. Because when we're looking at positioning ourselves as a psychological professional, we tend to well, this is my experience, I tended to start off my professional role offering quite a wide range of practice, so, saying that I could work with a wide range of things. And then I realised this was, I can't do everything because that's, I can't, you know, I'm not, I'm not an expert in all things. And it was perfectly okay to say, I can't do things. So, for example, one of the things that I don't tend to work with is eating disorders, because I find that is a real niche area that needs a lot of expertise. So, if someone came to me wanting to

address that issue, I wouldn't necessarily think I was the best person to help them. And I would seek out someone else to be able to refer on to or, just look at my areas of competency. And one of the things that is really important when we embark on this work is to look at our competency levels and, know what they are so that we are working at, we're working in good practice and we're being ethical practitioners. So, the conflict for me having supervision which is very broad-brush, is that are we then working in our competency, and I'm not always sure that we are. And that might be quite controversial, I suppose. What I'm asking you to do if any of you are still with me, and thinking, 'Yeah, maybe I need to think about this,' I really would encourage you to go, 'What are the areas of supervisory practice I feel quite solid in, in terms of my knowledge and my experience, and I feel confident in offering that supervision work, and what are the areas when someone comes in?' And I'm like, 'Oh, I'm not really sure about that,' or, 'This is something that I've not heard of,' or, 'I'm not sure how I feel about working with that issue.'

I suppose what I'm inviting you to do as supervisors is to really have a think about where you are in your supervisory practice, what supervision you offer, what areas of your own practice do you feel that you are, you specialise in perhaps, or you may be an expert in. You may have just a particular interest that you then will be able to offer that as more specialist supervision. And my question is, is do we need specialist supervision? Maybe. But it's worth having a think, because maybe we do. And maybe we don't, who knows. But I really, really want to encourage these questions around supervision, it's too important to our work, not to examine it, not to question it.

And also, just want to shout out some of the, the areas of expertise that I see out there in the supervision world. And this is something that I'm hoping I will be able to, again, shine the spotlight on. So, as supervisors, if there are areas of supervision practice that you could provide particular, dare I say, expertise consultancy, on. There, we use those words. But yeah, let's use them. You know, let's shout about our work, shine the spotlight on those particular areas of specific interest that we have, or particular expertise. And let's not shy away from shining our light.

And really, that's all I wanted to share with you today. Thank you once again, for coming alongside me on this journey that I'm taking into, into supervision and the wonderful, joyful and challenging world of supervision. And I hope this episode has been thought provoking. Do look out for any events that I'm running that might help you start thinking about the work that you're doing in supervision, and the areas of practice that you want to do more work on, kind of elevate your skills, and the work, the work that you want, to kind of consolidate your knowledge, you know, I'm hopefully going to be holding lots of events this year, that will once again shine the spotlight on the incredible expertise of supervisors. And come along, check them out, do sign up to my mailing list, if you're not on it, just go on to supervisioninstitute.com, sign up to the mailing list and I send a newsletter out every month so it's not too taxing. It's not a very long one either. It just basically highlights some of the things to look out for and I'd love to include you on that. For those that are already on the mailing list thinking of joining when I'm doing any of my events that are a fee-paying event, I will be offering particular discounts for those that are already signed up to the mailing list. So, if you're interested and you want to save a bit of money as well, just head on over to supervisioninstitute.com, sign up to the mailing lists and yeah, look out for my newsletter. I welcome your feedback as usual.

And if again, if you want to be a guest just give me a shout and anything you want to speak to me about the wonderful world of supervision. I'd love you to get in touch. But that's me for now. Go carefully and I'll see you next time.