

THE EXPERIENCES OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY
SUPERVISORS AND SUPERVISEES

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the nature of marriage and family therapy supervision from the perspectives of supervisors and supervisees. Two supervisors and four supervisees in an AAMFT-approved doctoral program participated in in-depth interviews focusing on their previously recorded supervision sessions. Results indicate that supervisees and supervisors tend to punctuate their experiences in supervision along an intersecting continuum of role and relationship. Supervisees experienced a high degree of anxiety during supervision and were particularly concerned with the issue of dual roles. Supervisors experienced themselves as empowering the supervisees to awaken to their own potential and avoid being viewed in an all-knowing position.

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Chapter One:

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Supervision is well established as a significant facet of the applied training and development of professional family therapists (Everett & Koerpel, 1986; Liddle, 1982; Piercy & Sprenkle, 1986). Supervision is considered the vehicle which "transmits the field's values, body of knowledge, professional roles, and skills to new clinicians" (Liddle, Breunlin, & Schwartz, 1988, p.24). Within the field of family therapy, supervision has evolved as a prominent subsystem. It has grown exponentially in the last decade, producing publications, conferences, and specific criteria for approved supervisor status (Liddle, 1988).

Despite the growth of supervision, research regarding the topic has lagged behind (Liddle, Breunlin, & Schwartz, 1988). Everett and Koerpel (1986), in their review of research on MFT supervision, found that "data with regard to almost any aspect of family therapy supervision . . . are essentially nonexistent" (p.67). They conclude that "the impetus to examine carefully and critically the internal processes of supervision has not yet emerged" (p.71).

While the impetus to conduct research on supervision may be lacking, there is no shortage of theoretical information on the "approaches, pragmatics and contexts" for supervision (Liddle, Breunlin, & Schwartz, 1988). The entire spectrum of theories on family therapy supervision, supervision techniques, and the use of live, video tape,

team, one way mirror, etc., have filled the journals (Everett & Koerpel, 1986; Liddle, Breunlin, Schwartz, & Constantine, 1984; Piercy & Sprenkle, 1986). It seems that with theoretical information dominating the literature it would be vital to understand the conceptual frameworks that are reflected in what appear to be different approaches to supervision.

Kuhn's (1962) concept of paradigm serves as a useful vehicle to understand the conceptual framework behind the supervision literature. Kuhn believed that "scientific communities are bound together by various bonds and commitments"; he called these scientific paradigms. Morgan (1980) has expanded on this concept to say that "the most fundamental of these bonds rests in the world view which scientists share" (Morgan, 1980, p.607). In regards to supervision, apparent contrasts in theoretical approaches, techniques and contexts may conceal a common paradigm or world view that underlie the examination, explanation, and practice of supervision.

Assuming such a shared world view does exist, then it is possible that the supervision literature, whether intentional or not, represents an effort to substantiate and perpetuate basic ontological and epistemological assumptions that correspond to this world view. The problem in identifying these world views or assumptions is that while all research, theoretical or otherwise, is driven by core assumptions, they are rarely made explicit.

If research on supervision, though sorely needed, is consistently mandated by the same established set of core assumptions (paradigm), it

will not address the more fundamental need to expand our vision of supervision. The danger in operating from a single paradigm is that it omits the way in which we participate, understand, and anticipate the process of supervision, thus creating a feedback cycle that is closed to new information. To provide fundamental alternatives to this cycle, research is needed which is informed from a different paradigm.

This study attempted to show through a review of the literature that supervision has been predominantly perceived through a functionalist paradigm. This functionalist paradigm "is based upon the assumption that society (in this case supervision) has a concrete, real existence, and a systemic character oriented to produce an ordered and regulated state of affairs" (Morgan, 1980, p. 617).

Knowledge of supervision from the prevailing functionalist paradigm "implies a need to understand and map out . . . structure, and gives rise to the epistemology of positivism, with an emphasis on the empirical analysis of concrete relationships in an external world (Morgan & Smirich, 1980, p.493). The core assumptions of this approach are seen in an example from the recent work of Mead (1990) "if the supervision variables that predict therapist changes can be manipulated, we can begin to control the supervision process . . ." (Mead, 1990, p.3). The functionalist paradigm which has dominated the literature has led to a preoccupation with roles and supervision outcome rather than an awareness of the meanings ascribed to the supervision process by those who participate in the process.

This study offers an alternative approach to understanding supervision based on an interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm is "based upon the view that the world has a very precarious ontological status, and that what passes as reality does not exist in any concrete sense, but is the product of the subjective and intersubjective experience of individuals" (Morgan, 1980, p.609). In other words, an individual can't step outside of his/her own subjective experiencing in an effort to have a direct objective connection with the world.

What we frequently refer to as reality is what we believe exists outside of ourselves. We tend to place greater scientific value on what we think exists outside of ourselves and devalue what we call our personal subjective experience (Laing, 1967). It could be said that, from the perspective of the interpretive paradigm, individuals by way of their subjective experiencing have a personal objective reality. Because we are limited by our personal objective realities we can never know the objective nature or reality of any phenomenon. The interpretive paradigm encourages understanding the "process through which multiple realities arise, are sustained, and are changed" (Morgan, 1980, p.609).

The interpretive paradigm approaches reality as a projection of individual imagination and emphasizes understanding the process by which humans construct their worlds (Morgan & Smirich, 1980). This perspective would challenge research that aims to specify and put in a tangible form "objective" knowledge (Morgan & Smirich, 1980). The very

grounds for defining what constitutes knowledge (epistemology) from the two positions are fundamentally different, with one placing emphasis on objectivity that may exist outside of our subjective experience (functionalist) and the other on experience that acts as our personal objectivity (interpretive). The purpose of the reported research was not to describe accurately the "reality" of what takes place in supervision (nor to debate the question of whether objective reality exists), but to characterize the ways in which supervision was experienced by supervisors and supervisees who participated in the same supervision session.

Purpose of the Research

Watzlawick (1984) has said that the most dangerous delusion is that there is only one reality. This study aimed to make a contribution to what passes as reality in the field of supervision on both a micro and macro level of understanding. At the macro level I hope to challenge the current trend to view supervision from one set of epistemological and ontological assumptions by providing an alternative view to the process of supervision. At the micro level while the purpose of this study was not to produce an "objective" accurate account of the process of change in supervision, the hope is, as von Glasersfeld proposed, that once individuals become aware of the ways in which they give meaning to or punctuate the contexts in their world they can attempt to bring about change (von Glasersfeld, 1984).

As suggested by Atkinson, Heath, and Chenail (1991), the goal of research is "to create novel observational experiences from which new views of the social world can emerge". With this in mind, "research could be thought of primarily as a process that facilitates conditions ripe for a flash of insight" (p.163). It is the unique and "irregular" experiences of the participants in the study that can be valued for their potential to generate flashes of insight and alternative views of the supervision process.

Research Question

The research question in this study is: What are the experiences and interpretive meanings of supervisors and supervisees as they view themselves in the supervision process? The question is as open-ended as possible to allow the multiple ways in which participants experience and give meaning to supervision. The participants' responses revealed their personal models of reality, i.e., their personal objectivity. The reporting of the participants' experiences revealed the ways in which they enabled and limited their perception of and participation in supervision and the actions they made based on these experiences and thus the process of creating their own reality of supervision (Harter, 1988).

The results of this study may shed some light on the personal models of reality used by the participants in the study. Hopefully, the participants' experiences will perturb other supervisees and supervisors to examine their own experiences in supervision. Increased awareness in

the way we interpret, punctuate, and give meaning to our world will lead to increased options to maintain or change those patterns.

Limitations and Summary

This study makes a contribution to the way in which supervision can be conceptualized by operating from a set of core assumptions. An interpretive non-traditional paradigm offers an alternative view to a functionalist paradigm and is also limited by core assumptions. These assumptions as outlined above do not address the topic in the same way as other paradigms would indicate. Based on the blueprint of analysis by Burrell and Morgan (1979), two other paradigms for social science, radical humanist and radical structuralist, have equally important contributions to make. It is with this in mind that the interpretive paradigm be understood as nothing more than one view used to help explain our world.

The application of the results in this study was in understanding how individuals construct the process of supervision. The similarities in the constructs of supervisors and supervisees were examined, thereby laying the groundwork for further exploration of the contact point where one individual's construct meets another's.

Chapter Two:

Underlying Assumptions And Literature Review

Constructivist Framework

Individual Constructs.

The underlying assumptions for this study are grounded in constructivist epistemology. A constructivist view contends that what can be "known" is what individuals invent rather than what we are able to discover about an "objective reality" (Maturana & Varela, 1987; Watzlawick, 1984). The search for "objective reality", according to Maturana (1988), is nothing more than a quest for a compelling argument. The arguments that individuals make for the way reality is or what individuals invent as knowledge can be seen as the way they draw distinctions between thoughts, feelings and behaviors (Keeney, 1983).

The two basic premises of radical constructivism, according to von Glasersfeld, are: "1) Knowledge is not passively received either through the senses or by way of communication, but is actively built up by the cognizing subject; 2) The function of cognition is adaptive and serves the subject's organization of the experiential world, not the discovery of an objective ontological reality" (p.83).

These constructivist assumptions emphasize that the observer can not be separated from what or who they are observing. Keeney and Ross (1985) give the example that "listening to what a family therapist claims he perceives in therapy tells us more, or at least as much about the therapist (the observer) as about the family (the observed)" (p.12). In this study I operate from the same assumption that what the

supervisor or supervisee tells us is going on in supervision tells us as much about the supervisor and the supervisee as it does about supervision. This assumption applies in the same way in that what observers (researchers) of supervision say about supervision says as much about the observer as it does about supervision. In the case of this study, supervisors and supervisees were observers and offered descriptions and interpretations of their own experiences, rather than observers describing supervision.

Although constructivist assumptions have rarely been used in research, some indications have been made about the responsibilities that such a perspective would need to undertake. Constructivism according to Segal (1986) has the "unpopular job of shattering the fantasy of an objective reality" (p.3). Similarly von Glasersfeld's (1988) thoughts are that "Mankind's plague is the conceit of knowledge" and that "radical constructivism is an effort to eliminate that conceit" (p.83). Keeney and Morris (1985) offer a more pragmatic suggestion that constructivist research "becomes a task of re-examining (i.e., re-searching) what one did to construct a particular reality" (p.548).

Following these constructivist suggestions for research, I focused on the way in which supervisors and supervisees organize and describe their experiential world rather than attempt to discover the "real" world of what supervision is. One way to get help in this process of "re-examining" how supervisees and supervisors construct their reality of supervision is to review the literature that pertains to the

perceptions and beliefs of supervisors and supervisees. This information appears later in this chapter.

Collective Constructs.

These assumptions argue that individuals hold onto their theories and concepts of knowledge to the point of becoming slaves to that knowledge. The process of developing knowledge can be a subtle and unconscious operation, one that von Glasersfeld describes in part to be an unconscious assimilation or misinterpretation (1988):

This pattern of maintaining categorizations, concepts and indeed, whole theories until some experience makes their adequacy questionable, is a universal pattern from the constructivist point of view. The difference is that, where theories and concepts that have proved useful in the past are concerned, there is a considerable vested interest in maintaining the status quo. That is to say, the proponents of a theory will assimilate new experiences [into their theory] as long as they possibly can, even in the face of considerable perturbations (von Glasersfeld, 1988, p.85).

Based on the constructivist assumption that supervisors and supervisees bring with them their conscious awareness of what the supervisory process is or should be (theories and models of therapy), they are also involved in an unconscious assimilation process which contributes to the way in which they are learning to define supervision. From these assumptions, once a supervisor or supervisee develops a vested interest in a particular theory or concept about supervision, they are likely to expend energy in maintaining those theories and concepts. The theories and concepts that supervisors and supervisees defend may be representative of what they have learned is important and

not a reflection of their lived experience. In this regard, supervisors and supervisees may unknowingly be participating in an unconscious maintenance of the status quo (in this case what the process of supervision is supposed to be). Studies that utilize a confirmation methodology will reinforce popular categorizations, concepts, and theories and will do little in discovering new ways to conceptualize supervision that are grounded in supervisors' and supervisees' lived experience.

Von Glasersfeld's (1988) concept of a universal pattern of maintaining concepts and theories is similar to Maturana's (1988) concept of consensual agreement. Applying their concepts to this study, I propose that there may be certain theories, concepts, or some collective consensual agreement in the field of family therapy about the nature of supervision. I reviewed the research and literature in the field for trends and the appearance of consensual agreement that may be part of a supervisor's or supervisee's vested interest in maintaining a currently popular position, i.e., the status quo.

Interactional Constructs.

Constructivist assumptions prescribe a search for the moments when an individual's belief of how he/she or an event should be is not congruent with his/her experience of the same event. These moments can be found when an individual is surprised or gains new insight or awareness into his/her thoughts, feelings, and actions. The focus from

these assumptions is not on objective understanding but on awareness of our subjective experiences.

Von Glasersfeld (1988) describes this different type of understanding as "the map or paths of action and thought which, at that moment in the course of our experience, has turned out to be viable for us (p. 87). By focusing on the experiences of supervisors and supervisees, what they consider to be viable constructs of supervision will become apparent.

The challenge in constructivist research is that it is not enough to simply know that two people will view the same event or phenomenon in different ways. The points of convergence and divergence in those constructs are essential. This dictates that research take into account the interaction between one individual and another. From a constructivist position, this interaction is defined as "pure constructs of the partners in the relationship" (Watzlawick, 1984, p.238). Constructivists have gone to great lengths to ensure that their views are not confused with a solipsist view in which the world would be made up entirely of one's own constructs with no reference to an external world. Constructivists are simply saying that as humans we have no direct access to an external objective world, including the world of others.

Von Foerster (1984) eloquently explains the concept of relationship from a constructivist epistemology when he writes that "the solipsistic claim falls to pieces when besides me I invent another autonomous organism. When this happens neither myself or the other can

be the center of the universe. It is the meeting place between myself and the other that I create my identity" (Watzlawick, 1984, p.59).

Guided by this notion of the meeting place between two individuals, I reviewed the research and literature that explored the reciprocal and interactional aspects of supervision.

Literature Review

The literature and research in supervision was explored in this section from three different construct perspectives: collective (consensual constructs); individual (supervisees' and supervisors' constructs); and interactional (meeting place between two individuals' constructs). The literature review of the experiences of supervisors and supervisees was an aid in understanding the elements of outside influences, individual diversity, and reciprocal interactions on their experiences. The literature review also served as a way to examine the degree of fit between the literature and the assumptions of a constructivist epistemology.

Consensual Agreement.

I reviewed the literature and research in supervision for consensual agreement. By familiarizing myself with the current supervision literature, I got a feel for how supervisors' and supervisees' experiences may be influenced by their colleagues and leaders in the field. Since "truth" generated through research is considered to be observer-dependent, examining the literature provides a

window into current biases or preferences for a particular point of view. The dominant paradigm or prevailing point of view influences the research questions, methods, and the results currently in use and has a direct relationship with what passes for common knowledge about supervision. Understanding the paradigm that drives a research study is as informative, if not more so, than the actual results of a study. If research has an effect on the development and understanding of supervision, then the prevailing paradigm and the corresponding assumptions of knowledge have a direct or indirect influence on the way in which supervisors and supervisees experience supervision.

I began my search for consensual agreement by looking at how supervision has been defined. The literature has defined supervision in many different ways, according to various theoretical and personal perspectives. Mead (1990) has identified and condensed five key elements that appear consistently in the literature into a single definition of supervision: "(a) an experienced therapist, (b) safeguarding the welfare of the clients by (c) monitoring a less experienced therapist's performance (d) with real clients in clinical settings, and (e) with the intent to change the therapist's behavior to resemble that of an exemplar therapist" (p. 4). Mead's (1990) definition is representative of the current literature, which omits the relationship aspect of the supervisory process. In Mead's definition, the supervisor should monitor the therapist's behavior with the intent to change it so it resembles that of an exemplar therapist. This definition seems linear in its omission of any input from the

supervisee, let alone any influence the supervisee may have on the supervisor. In Mead's definition, the supervisor's construct of what is exemplar appears to carry greater weight than the supervisee's construct.

Sprenkle's (1986) definition is more inclusive of the relational aspect of supervision: "a continuous relationship, in a real-world work setting, which focuses on the specific development of a therapist's skills as he/she gains practical experience in treating client families" (p. 289). Sprenkle's definition punctuates the aspect of a continuous relationship. This relational component is one of the important aspects that distinguishes supervision from consultation. Sprenkle's definition is less directive than Mead's, but he does suggest that the supervisor's experience should be one of focusing on the development of the therapist's skills. The interaction or relationship between supervisor and supervisee as two viable creators of reality is not addressed.

The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) describes the supervisory relationship as an atmosphere created by the supervisor in which the supervisor "should have both the willingness and the ability to go beyond the techniques in his or her mentor role, and should be committed to respect, assess, support, and nurture supervisees' resources and strengths to create a learning environment conducive to professional development" (p.2, AAMFT Supervisor Guidelines). AAMFT seems to be suggesting that not only should supervisors know their role and perform the appropriate duties, but they should also be able to go beyond it and take responsibility for creating

an environment in which a supervisee can feel supported, respected, nurtured, and assessed. It strikes me that the image of a supervisor generated by AAMFT places a great deal of expectation on the supervisor. The aspects of nurturing, supporting, and assessing seem similar to the expectations in a client/therapist relationship.

In summary, supervisors and supervisees are informed by the literature that the experience of supervision entails being in a hierarchical position monitoring supervisees' behaviors, and developing their skills toward some accepted form of professional conduct. Supervisees can expect the supervisors to be mentors and to take responsibility for creating an environment in which they can develop into professionals.

The second way I focused on understanding the influence of consensual agreement on supervisors and supervisees was to get an overview of the literature. I looked at the epistemology (how have we come to know what we know) of supervision. I made the constructivist assumption that all previous knowledge has an effect on how we view "reality" now. We are both informed and limited by the previous literature. We are informed by the development and evolution of the field so we don't have to "recreate the wheel" and we can move forward. We are limited by our loyalties and ties to the past to continue to view things from what has become an established and accepted way of approaching the nature of supervision.

The first publications on supervision focused on how to do supervision, with little attention paid to researching the lived

experience of supervision (Liddle, 1991). (As will be shown below, this continues to be true.) Early research focused on aspects such as different training devices and approaches, such as co-therapy, the need for personal therapy and family-of-origin work for supervisees, and the contexts and settings in which family therapy occurred. As the field matured, it began combining training approaches with the various MFT theories. As the field of MFT grew, the literature reflected the questioning of assumptions and the effectiveness of different methods of supervision. Research began to link the methods that were theory-driven with outcome. Outcome was predominantly associated with changing supervisees to behave and think from a systems perspective. The research and literature appeared to be motivated by efforts to legitimize the discipline of MFT and to punctuate the different theoretical approaches within the profession.

Liddle (1991) did a comprehensive review of the supervision and training literature in family therapy. He identified the following areas of concentration in the literature over the last 15 years: conceptual and theoretical issues; methods of teaching family therapy thinking; methods of training and supervision; school or approach-specific models; descriptions of training programs; research and evaluation. Interestingly, Liddle (1991) points out that "there is no other area in training and supervision that is as important and has been so underdeveloped as research and evaluation" (p. 676). As Liddle points out, the emphasis in the literature has not been on asking what is happening in supervision, it has been on new ways of how to do it.

Other less comprehensive reviews of marriage and family literature have identified the following areas as focal points. These focal points serve as indicators of the prevailing world view or choice of punctuation that affects the supervisors' and supervisees' experiences in supervision: training context (live and video) (Beavers, 1985; Kaslow, 1977;); supervisory techniques (Liddle & Halpin, 1978); learning objectives (Liddle, 1982); personal factors and styles (Ganahl, Ferguson, & L'Abate, 1985); goals of supervision (Liddle & Halpin, 1978); supervisory methods (Everett, 1980); evaluation (Glick, Kessler, & Sugarman, 1987); training standards (Everett, 1980); and theoretical development (Glick, Kessler, & Sugarman, 1987; Piercy & Sprenkle, 1986). These reviews indicate that the supervision literature and research have focused primarily on technique, theory development, and outcome. This appears to be consistent with the hierarchical and unidirectional definitions of supervision mentioned earlier. The study of supervision as a process in and of itself seems to have been ignored in favor of connecting supervisor techniques with supervisee and client change.

The dominant focus or prevailing consensual agreement in the supervision literature is a functionalist position of reducing the human experience of participating in supervision to the identification of objective variables. This position operates from the assumption that certain isolated variables can be introduced into supervision to bring about a desired change or outcome.

Recent literature reviews have shown that research in supervision has been generally oriented towards outcome, design, and methodology.

The functionalist perspective continues to dominate the literature as represented by the recent emphasis on instruments for assessing therapists' behavior, evaluating training programs, supervisee skill development, and the effectiveness of different contexts (live/ videotape) (Avis & Sprenkle, 1990; Kniskern & Gurman, 1988; Liddle, 1991).

Haley (1976, 1988), made a significant contribution to understanding consensual agreement in the field of family therapy. He proposed that two opposing positions exist in supervisors' approaches to doing supervision. He defines one approach as "orientation A" which focuses on insight and growth, and "Orientation Z" which emphasizes solving problems and changing behavior. Orientation A is focused on change occurring in the therapist so he/she can consequently be more effective at bringing about change in families. Orientation Z focuses on assessing the family and making the appropriate intervention. In orientation A the focus is on the personal growth of the therapist and the importance of self-awareness as it relates to the clients. In orientation Z the focus is on the acquisition of specific techniques and skills for altering client's behavior.

Haley's orientations A and Z are similar to Morgan's descriptions of the functionalist and the interpretive paradigms that bound scientific communities together. Orientation Z, which emphasizes solving problems, changing behaviors through assessment, and intervention, resembles the functionalist paradigm which is based on the assumption of a "concrete reality that has a systemic character oriented

to produce an ordered and regulated state of affairs". Orientation A, which emphasizes personal insight, growth, and change through self awareness, resembles the interpretive paradigm which is based on the assumption that "reality does not exist in any concrete sense, but is the product of the subjective and inter-subjective experience of individuals" (Morgan, 1980, p.609).

While Haley's focus on supervision was intentionally simplistic, it makes the point that an individual's orientation has a direct relationship with what he/she observes, how he/she behaves, and how he/she describes and defines what he/she sees and does. Morgan focuses on the influences beyond an individual's orientation to underlying paradigm that informs communities. From Morgan's perspective, a dominant paradigm influences all who are involved in supervision, including the supervisees and researchers.

It is critical in attempting to understand the experiences of supervisees and supervisors to understand the competing world views or paradigms that exist in the family therapy field. As Masterman (1970) points out, in the social sciences there are several viable paradigms that compete for dominance. If a particular orientation becomes dominant in a field it is reflected by a prevalence in the literature. This appears to be the case in marriage and family therapy. Liddle (1991) notes, in his review of the marriage and family therapy supervision literature, that the humanistic/experiential approaches to supervision (that are representative of Haley's orientation A and Morgan's interpretive paradigm) are not as well represented.

He attributes this to the difficulty of translating humanistic/experiential methods into research and the resistance of leaders in that orientation to reductionistic methods of exploration.

In an effort to understand the experiences of supervisors and supervisees, I reviewed the literature for any consensual agreement or predominant paradigm or orientation. Reviews of the literature support the notion that family therapy has operated predominantly from a functionalist paradigm (Avis & Sprenkle, 1990; Everett, 1980; Kniskern & Gurman, 1988; Liddle, 1991). I did this by searching not for agreement in the various research results but agreement in the conceptual framework or paradigm used in approaching supervision.

I conclude that rather than being content with understanding supervision from one increasingly dominant view, more exploration of supervision from an interpretive view is needed.

Individual Experiences.

The previous section reviewed the consensual agreement or consensual constructs towards supervision in the marriage and family therapy field. Although the general consensus in the literature of what could or should happen in supervision is grounded in a functionalist paradigm, this does not mean that the lived experience of supervisors and supervisees will support that framework. Lived experience refers to an individual's response to participating in the phenomenon in question. For example, the U.S. Constitution says all men are created equal. The lived experience of certain individuals may not support the assumptions

of that paradigm. Functionalist research that does not approach supervision by examining supervisors' and supervisees' lived experiences may miss the subject's idiosyncracies which challenge the assumptions of that paradigm. The following is a review of the research that speaks to the perceptions and experiences of supervisees and supervisors. This review will test the constructivist assumption that there is a distinction between researchers' observations of supervision and participants' descriptions of their experience.

How supervisors and supervisees describe their experiences of supervision may be different from how they are observed by others and may be different from how they observe themselves later on video tape. Kagan (1983) asked supervisors to give a written description of their theory and their perceptions of what they do in supervision. He and his colleagues "were surprised to observe how different the written description by each supervisor often was from that person's actual supervisory behavior. In fact, it seemed that in most instances the written theory was, in effect, a self-admonition" (p. 69).

Sheflan (1978) also found differences between therapists' self-conceptualizations and their observed clinical behavior. These findings support the constructivist notion that what an individual perceives to be his/her own actions may be interpreted differently by observers.

Other studies expand to the differences between lived experience and observed experience. Goodyear, Abadie, and Efros (1984), in their study with master therapists, found that the theoretical orientation of the therapist has an impact on the information he/she chooses to process

in observing clients. Therapists who were not master therapists, but implied that they have integrated a particular theory when observed, report a lack of confidence in using that theory. Goodyear, et al., hypothesize that master therapists are able to operate consistently out of their own framework because they created them while other therapists are not as well grounded in those theories as they may believe themselves to be. Bartlett (1983) found similar results that therapists frequently do not display behavior that is congruent with the theoretical model to which they identify themselves.

A study by Gorman focused on the moment that supervisors intervene (cited in Liddle, 1991). She was concerned with the process of how supervisors decide on the interventions they use during live supervision. She used videotape, transcription analysis, and interviews to access the thinking process of supervisors during supervision. She found that the "training of origin" had a significant impact on the supervisors' style and use of interventions with supervisees. Her findings indicate that while supervisors may associate themselves with a particular orientation or school of therapy, previous theoretical orientations and life experiences affect the way they describe their process in supervision.

The limited amount of research on supervisor and supervisee perceptions supports the assumption that their lived experience may be quite different than how it appears to researchers and other observers.

One area of supervision research that does focus on supervisee perceptions distinguishes between the perceptions of beginning and experienced supervisees. These studies are informed by a functional paradigm to find out the differences between beginning and experienced supervisees for the purpose of evaluation and intervention. The results indicate that beginning level supervisees tend to have a greater need for evaluation from supervisors (Heppner & Handley, 1982). Beginning supervisees tend to be highly skills oriented and move towards a focus on self-development and relationship aspects (Jurich & Polson, 1986). The supervisory goals and values and theoretical orientations change as supervisees move from beginning to more experienced (Guest, 1988; West, Hosie, & Zarki, 1985). The focus in these articles is from a functionalist perspective on reducing and identifying concrete and real variables in supervisees that can be manipulated by specific supervisor behavior.

I found the literature to support the constructivist informed assumption that how supervisors and supervisees describe their lived experience of supervision differs from research findings and what may be accepted as common knowledge. The differences between lived experience and research findings, along with the diversity of experiences, suggests that there is very little consensual agreement in understanding supervisors' and supervisees' perceptions and experiences of supervision. The descriptions of what happens in supervision can vary with as many different perspectives as there are people. There appears to be more consensual agreement in the literature on how to approach the

paradigm used to research supervision than consensual agreement on the supervisors' and supervisees' experiences of supervision. The literature indicates that focusing on the experiences of those who participate in supervision from an interpretive approach would provide a new perspective and information for understanding supervisors' and supervisees' experiences in MFT.

Interactional Experiences.

I have reviewed the consensual and individual constructs related to supervision and now focus on what von Foerster (1984) refers to as the "meeting place" between the supervisee's and supervisor's experiences. As the previous section has shown, supervisors and supervisees do not always view supervision in the same ways. Therefore, to understand the phenomenon of supervision, this study focused on the way in which the reality of supervision is socially constructed between the supervisee and the supervisor.

The remaining literature review focuses on the few studies available that address the interactional aspects of supervisors and supervisees constructs. Due to the rich descriptions and interpretive nature, the qualitative studies will be presented in more detail. I include quotes from the studies rather than simply reducing them to the major themes.

As mentioned earlier, not only is supervision research in general underdeveloped, but the area of supervisor or supervisee reciprocal interaction is also perhaps the most neglected area of all. Holloway

(1982) notes that "it is evident from the literature that there are only a few studies that frame the supervisory process in other than a unidirectional paradigm" (p. 309). Traditionally, research and literature in supervision has focused on the influence the supervisor has on the supervisee. "Little empirical attention has been given to the reciprocal influence that occurs between supervisor and trainee" (Holloway, 1982, p. 309).

Holloway's (1982) observations on the lack of attention to the reciprocal interaction between supervisor and supervisee found in the field of Psychology also exists in the literature in Marriage and Family Therapy. Despite the theoretical emphasis on reciprocal and systemic interactions used in the Marriage and Family Therapy Field, the literature reflects no attention to the reciprocal influence of supervisees on supervisors. The focus tends to be on how supervisors can bring about change in supervisees' thoughts and behaviors. The literature ignores reciprocal interaction and fails to view the supervisor and supervisee as a system.

Schwartz (1988) serves as an example of the unidirectional approach of supervisors to supervisees in the family therapy literature. He suggests that supervisors utilize systemic techniques such as paradoxical interventions with resistant supervisees. From this perspective, supervisees are treated as a free-standing individual system to be changed by the supervisor. The supervisor and supervisee together are not a system.

While family therapy supervisors may not consider themselves doing counseling with their supervisees, Tyler and Tyler (1986) found evidence to the contrary. They report frequent use by the supervisor of confusion techniques, taking a one-down position to be in control, and using metaphors as a strategic maneuver.

Research has not been directed toward describing and identifying the relational process by which supervisors and supervisees co-create their realities of supervision. Liddle, Breulin, and Schwartz (1988), in their comprehensive 22-page reference list of articles on family therapy supervision, cited only two articles on the supervisor/supervisee relationship. Other reviews of the literature indicated that "virtually nothing has been published regarding supervisor interpersonal skills in the family therapy literature" (Wetchler, 1989, p.44) and that "currently lacking in the literature is any attempt to examine family therapy supervision techniques from the first person perspectives of the supervisor and the supervisee simultaneously" (Wetchler, Piercy, & Sprenkle, 1989, p.35).

One explanation for the lack of research that interviews supervisees and supervisors simultaneously is the issue of safety. I felt that interviewing supervisees and supervisors simultaneously would not create an environment that was safe for supervisees and supervisors to fully express themselves. Lowenstein, Reder, and Clark (1982) suggest that supervisees experience a high level of stress and that trainees commonly are concerned about the impression they give to their supervisors.

Liddle's (1991) comprehensive literature review revealed that a limited amount of attention is paid to the supervisor/supervisee relationship. He indicates that relationship is an overlooked aspect of family therapy supervision. Although there has been very little research to explore the supervisor/supervisee relationship, there have been suggestions for more attention to be paid to this aspect of supervision from representatives of what Haley refers to as the orientation A group (Heatherington, 1987; Lebow, 1987; Minuchin & Fishman, 1981).

When supervisors' and supervisees' perceptions are studied together concerning the same supervision session, some interesting differences may emerge that would not be found had they been studied separately. For example, a study by Fisher and Embree found significant differences between supervisees' and supervisors' perceptions of roles and helpfulness (cited in Everett & Koerpel, 1986). However, no significant differences were found between supervisees' perceptions of the focus of supervision or the supervisor/supervisee relationship. This suggests that with the majority of the literature on supervision being written from the perspectives of supervisors, the supervisees' perceptions of role and helpfulness is not being represented.

Kersey (1980) (unpublished doctoral dissertation) cited in Everett and Koerpel (1986), found further evidence that the perspective and experience of the supervisee is not only ignored in the literature but in supervision sessions as well. In supervision sessions no difference

between supervisors' responses to beginning and experienced supervisees was found:

Probably the most surprising finding from the results of the present study was that consistently across all variables there were no significant differences between supervision with beginning trainees and supervision with advanced students. It seemed as if the supervisors were unadaptable in their patterns of supervision and did not take into consideration the individual needs or the level of development of the trainees (pp. 108-109).

Two cultural anthropologists (Tyler & Tyler, 1986) studied the rhetoric of family therapy supervision. They were particularly interested in the talk between supervisors and supervisees about the theory and practice of therapy. They found supervisees to be going through a process of learning to understand the talk of the supervisor. The supervisees reported the process of learning the supervisors' language to be more difficult than understanding the clients. They found that although it may be to help supervisees consider multiple realities, supervisors talk in ways that are "elliptical, cryptic, oracular, colloquial or vulgar, and their language is full of obscure metaphors, meaningless formulas, obscurantisms, and jargon . . . Trainees must, more often than not, guess at what supervisors really mean" (p.244). They found that for many supervisees, "systems theory is more like a rather enigmatic parable, having only a dimly understood connection with what happens in the therapy room" (p.248).

The authors concluded that supervisees become frustrated in their efforts to think and act systemically and "tend to fall back on more familiar fairy tales of linear causality and controlling variables"

(p.254). The process of family therapy supervision is one in which the attempts of supervisees to learn the language of family therapy leaves them with an experience of "a loss of self, and feel that their identities are being threatened" (Tyler & Tyler, 1986, p.254). The authors imply that during supervision supervisees abandon their sense of self in favor of viewing the world through the privileged lens that supervisor has acquired.

Holloway (1982) investigated five supervisors and their supervisees for sequential patterns of verbal behaviors that occur during supervision. A 20-minute segment of the audiotaped sessions was coded using an adapted version of a system for analyzing supervisor-teacher interactions (Blumberg's Interactional Analysis) (Holloway, 1982). The results of the study established that there are repetitive patterns of verbal behavior between supervisor and supervisee. The following sequential patterns were shown to occur at a rate greater than expected by chance: "trainees respond with positive social emotional behavior to the supervisors, supportive communication . . . trainees respond with silence to the supervisors request for their opinions or suggestions" (pp. 313-314).

Results also indicated times when trainees' responses to supervisors' behavior occurred less frequently than expected by chance. "When supervisors delivered supportive messages, the trainee was least likely to give information, opinions or suggestions . . . When supervisors gave their opinions or suggestions, the trainees in turn were not likely to respond with information, opinions or suggestions

. . . [and] When supervisors asked for trainees' opinion or suggestions, they were not likely to receive them" (p. 315). The authors believe that supportive communication by supervisors keeps trainees talking but does not assist them in the cognitive development of their ideas. The study found that if the elaboration of the trainees' ideas is important, supervisors that offer predominantly supportive communication will be disappointed in the results.

The supervisors in the study showed three basic patterns of response: request for more information, supportive behaviors, and defensive or critical reactions. The supervisors tended to respond with a supportive communication message to a variety of differential messages from the supervisee. These supportive responses promoted positive emotional behavior in the supervisees, however it did not elicit cognitive behaviors, i.e., opinions and suggestions. The other repetitive pattern in supervisors was to use defensive or critical messages in response to supervisees' similar behavior. Another significant finding was that when supervisees requested information or an opinion from the supervisor, the supervisors tended to respond with a request for more information.

Holloway (1982) concluded that the "generalized response of supportive communication by the supervisor must be questioned; although it promoted positive emotional behavior, a worthy outcome, it did not elicit equally important cognitive behaviors from the trainees" (p. 315).

Holloway and Wampold (1983) followed up Holloway's previous 1982 study by focusing on 9 advanced doctoral student supervisors and 30 supervisees from an on-campus counselor training clinic at a midwestern university. The study was designed to further identify patterns of verbal behavior on judgments of supervisor and supervisee satisfaction. The results indicated that "Supervisors give low evaluations of supervisees that show negative social emotional behavior"; "Supervisees give a positive evaluation to supervisors when they follow the supervisees' expression of ideas with a request for more ideas"; "Supervisors and supervisees devalued the excessive use of supportive communication particularly within the context of the supervisees' positive social emotional behavior"; "Supervisees devalued supervisors asking for information in response to supervisee requests". The supervisors' and supervisees' evaluations of behaviors showed that the supervisors' most frequent responses were devalued by both the supervisees and the supervisors. In conclusion, the authors state that the behaviors that received a positive evaluation by both the supervisor and supervisee were the precise pattern least likely to occur. In an effort to explain the low evaluations of the supportive communication of the supervisors, they conclude that "basic assumptions of the analogous relationship between the supervisory and counseling interview are in question"(p.234). When they speak of assumptions from counseling they are referring to predominantly supportive behaviors and interactions. Their findings imply that supervisors need to discover interactional patterns other than giving opinions or supportive behavior if they want

supervisees to show signs of cognitive development. Their findings that supervisors give low evaluations of supervisees that show negative social emotional behavior draws attention to an interactional dynamic between supervisors and supervisees. If supervisors are concerned about evaluation it seems they would go to great lengths to avoid expressing any negative social emotional behavior.

Martin, Goodyear, and Newton (1987) did an intensive case study of one supervisor and one supervisee in a doctoral counseling program over an eleven-week period. They used a best/worst strategy to gain qualitative and quantitative data from both the perceptions of the subjects and of observers.

Qualitative data for the supervisors' and supervisees' assessment of their best and worst session over an 11 week period was derived from transcripts, logs, and conversations after the eleven-week period of supervision was over. The supervisee identified a "critical incident" in the "best" supervision session to be "confessing both his impatience and feelings of unworthiness." She felt that this was significant because "He revealed very personal information and was helped to see it differently." The supervisee also commented that "the session became for me what I want to do with clients, which was greater risk taking."

The supervisor felt that the self-disclosure of the supervisee threatened the boundaries of their relationship. However, he felt that this was used positively to deal with the supervisees' issues of transference of her father's critical opinions of her actions. The worst session for the supervisee was when she felt she failed in her

attempts to include the supervisor's personal process, to make evaluative comments with the supervisor, and when her attempts to use a different model than her supervisor were resisted.

Hutt, Scott, and King (1983) did a phenomenological study on the supervisees' positive and negative experiences in supervision. They found that negative experiences in supervision tended to be overly focused on emotional aspects of a negative relationship. When there was a negative relationship, the supervisees perceived the supervisors as being inflexible in their style of supervision. They experienced anxiety, frustration, anger, mistrust, disrespect, and a lack of honest self-disclosure on their own part and the part of the supervisors.

When supervisees were in a negative relationship, they responded by protecting vulnerable areas of themselves and were hesitant to reveal "certain problems, conflicts and negative feelings to the supervisor" (p.121). The supervisees felt "resentful of supervisory authority [and] relatively powerless in relation to the supervisor" (p.121).

The supervisees anticipated criticism from the supervisors and managed their anxiety with different forms of resistance. They learned "avoidance tactics to manage unsatisfying interpersonal relationships" (p.122).

The most positive aspects of supervision identified by the supervisees were "mutual self-disclosure" and, in particular, "supervisor self-disclosure".

The supervisees desired a relationship that would meet their needs for "structure and support as well as autonomy". They found it helpful

when they were able to learn how to "assess interventions in terms of therapeutic impact on clients rather than in terms of supervisor approval".

Heath, Fine, and Tharp (1991) presented a qualitative research project at the 1991 AAMFT conference, entitled "What Supervisees Think". The researchers interviewed 10 supervisees on what they thought about the supervision process. The purpose of their study was to "give a glimpse into the reality of the therapist". Part of their research was to categorize the different agendas that supervisees bring with them to supervision. The researchers were motivated to find out more than what supervisees wanted and to explore what their experiences were. They identified themes as "the things that therapists hold strong beliefs about". Prior to interviewing, the supervisees, or therapists as they are referred to in this study, were read the following purpose of the study:

Of the hundreds of books, articles, and book chapters on family therapy, only a handful have been written from the perspective of the therapist, thus the supervision literature has developed a myopic view. Most of it portrays supervision as it is seen by the supervisor. We have two purposes . . . to gain a greater understanding of therapists' experience in supervision, [and] to invite supervisors to consider the therapists' perspective when discussing the supervision process (Heath & Tharp, 1991).
(reprinted with permission)

The researchers found the following themes: The first theme from this study is "we want a relationship based on mutual respect; we want mentors". This supervisee prefers it when there is not a "clearly defined hierarchical boundary" and the relationship is more "collegial."

He thinks that a mentor relationship should be more like an apprenticeship than a teacher/student relationship. He likens a supervising mentor to Robert Bly initiating a young man into manhood, "To put in the energy necessary to develop a real relationship with a supervisee that in itself, I think . . . makes the environment safe for the supervisee to grow and to be exploratory . . . [it is not] if a supervisor hides behind technique and status . . ."

The second theme found was "supervisors don't have to be a guru". The supervisees wanted supervisors to know that they don't have to have all the answers.

The next theme was identified as "supervise us or evaluate us--not both". The following is an example of this theme given by one of the interviewees. Supervision is different if

your supervisor doesn't have the power to hire and fire you 'cause if they do then I think a whole different dynamic is introduced. If it is just a co-worker who has been there longer, a different relationship can develop. But if it is somebody who has an interest in having you think like them then you have to decide what is important to you, do you think like them or do you keep your job? It's similar to a student in a school and a supervisor in that this person has some control over your destiny and that makes it a very paradoxical relationship.

(new interviewee on the same theme):

Through my first five years, post-Masters . . . all my supervision, this is a structural thing in clinics, was done by my boss . . . The person who reviews my work and there's money attached . . . so although this woman was really good at trying to keep that separate and was always very supportive, the whole time I was in supervision with her I think that I felt like I couldn't be totally there and honest with all my experiences with her because I knew that this was a person that was going to judge my work monetarily and promotionally. I always felt like that inhibited me so

what I tried to do was get a lot of supervision outside of my workplace . . . where I felt I could be more open and have more disclosure about my experience.

The next theme was identified as "assume that we are competent we are already hard enough on ourselves." The theme that followed was "tell us what we're doing right, affirm us, empower us."

The following is an example of one of the interviewees regarding this theme:

There are ways to say things, even critical things that can be said in a way that is empowering . . . new therapists tend to be really nervous about how good they are, criticism can really make them feel even more insecure, more anxious and less able to do a good job. I think it is important to empower that they can do it, they can find it for themselves, they just have to work at it or develop it.

The next theme is "make it a human experience". One of the interviewees suggests that supervisors would learn to "Be sensitive to promoting trust and confidentiality in the relationship. He advises supervisors to ask, "what is your position with them? The situation in which you're supervising this person? Does it promote honest disclosure?"

The last theme is "we want different things and sometimes what we want changes." The heart of this theme was that the needs of supervisees change and need to be frequently reevaluated. In summary, the researchers felt the most important aspects of the supervisees' experience revealed the need for a respectful relationship and more communication between supervisor and supervisee.

Although there has been a general lack of research on the perceptions and experiences of supervisors and supervisees on the reciprocal nature and interaction process in supervision there have been authors who conclude from their own theoretical and clinical studies the need for such a focus. The following are some examples.

Albott (1984) expressed the need to explore the "actual effect" of supervisors on supervisees. Bartlett (1983) feels that the effectiveness of supervision may be influenced by the mediating factors of gender, culture and personality. Carey, Williams, and Wells (1988) believe trustworthiness is the most salient credibility factor operating in MA-level supervision. Moy and Goodman (1984), in their model of the relationship process in supervision, suggest an interaction pattern that moves from a cordial, trusting, almost peer relationship to a more apprenticeship relationship. Winokur (1982) observed an omission in the literature to focus on supervisors' experiences and the need for supervisors to discuss their relationship with supervisees. Gougen (1986) has stressed the prevalence of supervisory ambiguity. Strinhelber, Patterson, Cliffe, and LeGoullon (1984) have emphasized the need to evaluate the relationship between the supervision relationship and client outcome. Tousley and Kobberger (1984) have focused on how differing sets of supervisors' and supervisees' expectations can profoundly affect the supervision process.

To this point I have focused on the articles that approach the interactional constructs of supervisors and supervisees from a

predominantly interpretive paradigm. The following articles are grounded in a predominantly functional paradigm, but still address the interactional aspects of supervision.

Wetchler and Vaughn (1991) surveyed a randomly selected group of 280 AAMFT approved supervisors and 266 supervisees to find their perceptions on the supervisors' interpersonal skills. The supervisors and supervisees were asked to identify, from memory, a critical incident in a previous supervision session and choose, from a checklist (developed by researchers), the interpersonal skills used by the supervisor. Supervisors identified the following interpersonal skills as the ones they used most often, during a critical incident, "provides direction, confronts when appropriate, helps the supervisee assess own strengths and growth areas". From the same list of interpersonal skills, the supervisees identified the following, "provides direction, provides constructive negative feedback, builds supervisees' confidence".

In a previous study (Wetchler, 1989) using the same instrument, the supervisees were asked to give their general perceptions of effective supervisor interpersonal skills. The results were different from those used during a critical incident. In this study "respects the supervisee" was identified by supervisors and supervisees as the most effective interpersonal skill. The difference in these results indicate the degree of variance depending on the question which is asked and the supervision circumstances. There appears to be no hard and fast rule about what is most effective in supervision.

Rabinowitz, Heppner, and Roehlke (1986) surveyed 22 beginning practicum students, 9 advanced practicum students and 14 doctoral interns for their perceptions of the most important issues and the most important supervisor interventions at the end of each weekly supervision session and at the end of supervision. Concerned with an overemphasis of outcome related studies of supervision, the authors decided to do an exploratory and descriptive study of the supervision process. They separated their study into two parts: the most important issues and the most important interventions. Despite their intentions to do a descriptive and exploratory study, they limited their subjects' perceptions of important issues to one of twelve choices and seven possible categories to choose the most important intervention.

Results of the study showed that the two issues most important to supervisees were "developing a treatment plan", and "getting support from my supervisor". Issues identified as least important were "being non-judgmental" and "becoming aware of personal motivation". The two most important supervisor interventions as judged by the supervisee were: "supporting, reassuring, nurturing" and "directing, advising, teaching". The two least important interventions were "restating, summarizing, clarifying" and "challenging, confronting, disagreeing". Because the participants responded on a weekly basis, the data were analyzed for developmental changes. These showed that towards the end of the semester supervisees tended to give higher ratings to "restating, summarizing, clarifying". The supervisees were at different levels of experience and valued different interventions at different times. The

researchers were surprised with the similar ratings for support by both the beginning and advanced supervisees.

Wetchler, Piercy, and Sprenkle (1989) surveyed a randomly selected group of 318 Approved Supervisors of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and 299 of their supervisees on their perceptions of the effectiveness of several supervisory techniques and interpersonal skills. Results indicated supervisees gave the highest ratings to the categories of "respect the supervisee", "helps supervisee assess own strengths and growth areas", and "encourages development of personal style".

Comparisons between the supervisors and supervisees indicated that the "supervisees had a greater preference for techniques that generate greater interpersonal proximity and allow the supervisor to demonstrate therapeutic techniques. The three techniques for which the supervisees had higher ratings 'Individual case consultation', 'Demonstrate specific therapy skills for supervisee', and 'Do co-therapy with supervisee', allow for more interaction between supervisors and trainees and facilitate modeling" (p. 45). Supervisees gave higher ratings than supervisors on "shows enthusiasm" and "provides constructive negative feedback".

My review of the literature on supervision indicates that a predominantly functional paradigm has been used. The perspective of the supervisee and the reciprocal interactions of supervisees and supervisors has not been adequately addressed. The relationship between outcome and different methods, techniques, and theories is currently at

the forefront of the marriage and family therapy literature on supervision. The research topic of supervision as a unique process between two people has not been addressed.

The historical roots of a functional paradigm have left its mark on the tendency of research in supervision to reduce the experiences of supervisees and supervisors to quantifiable categories of prediction. As stated by Giorgi (1975), from a functionalist perspective "the priority is given to the measurement perspective, and in order for something to be measured, only its tangible aspects can be apprehended, and thus the indices itself of a phenomenon become more important than the phenomenon" (p.291).

Chapter Three:

Process

One of the goals of this research was to examine the different ways the experience of supervision can be personally constructed, thus perturbing any rigid patterns of epistemological or ontological assumptions about the nature of supervision that may be held by the reader. This goal was similar to an approach used in systemic family therapy where clients are offered an alternative "belief" or "reality" about the problem that concerns them rather than a solution or prescription for solving the problem. This then allows those concerned to discover their own solutions (Wright & Watson, 1988). Similarly in this study the aim was not to provide a prescription or solution for doing supervision but to offer alternative beliefs and realities about supervision through the experiences, i.e. the multiple realities of those engaged in the process of supervision.

There is a plethora of literature on how to do supervision in marriage and family therapy from various theoretical approaches and styles. However, this information is not grounded in the experiences of supervisees and supervisors. It is my belief that before alternative views of supervision can be offered, the current meanings given to the supervision process must be understood. These meanings must be understood not at the macro level but at the individual level of experience. Wright and Watson (1988) emphasize that the first stage of any systemic interview should focus on the individual's "explanations, interpretations, and attributions of meaning and intentionality for

their own and other members' behaviors" (p.422). It is my contention that the beginning stage of interviewing supervisees and supervisors for the meanings they give to supervision have been ignored while suggestions and interventions for doing supervision have moved ahead rapidly.

Efforts to generalize the meaning and behavior of supervision may have a certain dehumanizing element that ignores the voice of variation found in individuals. Borrowing from symbolic experiential family therapy model we are reminded that "the personalized distortions or interpretations of events are as important as, if not more important than, the facts. The description provided by one family member does not need to agree with that given by another. The distortions reveal the simultaneous experience of multiple meaning levels. The symbolic level challenges our logical, rational side" (Keith & Whitaker, 1988, p.443). This study attempts to be sensitive to the issue of generalizations about what supervision is or should be. Generalizations may not only distort our understanding of supervision, but preclude the study of it as a human experience. To date, the majority of research on supervision has approached supervision as an expected and calculated response according to established norms and variables.

An assumption of this study was that participants' experiences of actual sessions provide insight to the ways individuals remember, respond, translate, and create supervision. By focusing on supervision as a human experience, the study revealed multiple meaning levels. Therefore, this study concentrated on how supervisors and supervisees

give meaning to the supervision process by interpreting their own actions, feelings, and thoughts of actual sessions.

Sample

The AAMFT is seen as the organizing body of family therapy. It sets guidelines to designate approved supervisors and programs. Theoretically, the supervision that takes place in approved programs should represent the highest standards in the field. It is also highly likely that at some point these supervisees will go on to be the next generation of supervisors. Their experience of supervision will have an impact on how they perform supervision with the next generation of supervisees. The sample for this study consisted of supervisors and supervisees from an AAMFT approved doctoral program in marriage and family therapy.

Students in the doctoral program from which the participants were drawn were asked at an already scheduled student group meeting to take part in this study for this dissertation. I informed the students of the nature of the study, provided a handout on the methodology (see appendix A), discussed the historical development of the idea for the study, and discussed the issue of confidentiality. Supervisors were contacted in person and by telephone when asked to participate in the study. The participants consisted of the total number of students in the practicum phase of their program (four) and their supervisors (two). All individuals asked to participate in the study agreed to do so.

For the purposes of confidentiality, only a limited amount of demographic information on the participants is presented to the reader.

The supervisees were three white males and one white female. All had masters degrees before entering the program. The degrees were in social work, family and child development, agency counseling, and divinity. The ages of the supervisees ranged from 32 to 40. Experience in providing therapy ranged from 1.5 years to 11 years. The supervisees had worked in hospital, agency, academic, and private practice settings. The supervisees identified their theoretical framework as Gestalt, Experiential; Strategic, Family of Origin, Feminist; Systemic and Constructivist; and Systemic, Hypnotherapy, Existential.

The supervisors held doctorate degrees in family and child development. The supervisors were white males over the age of 55. They each had over 15 years of experience as a supervisor in an academic setting and over 25 years of clinical experience. The supervisors identified their theoretical framework as Brief Solution Focused and Systemic.

I consider myself, as the researcher, to be a part of the sample in this study. My life experiences, coping styles, and beliefs will impact the information that I choose to punctuate and the way that I present it. Therefore, I will include personal information that may assist the reader in understanding how my values influenced my interpretation of the data.

I am a white male 35 years old with four years of experience as a therapist in a clinical setting. I worked part time for six months as a family therapy supervisor in a state agency. I consider my theoretical orientation to be Symbolic/Experiential and Existential. I tend to

value direct communication between supervisor and supervisee and respond negatively to calculated interventions to change the supervisees. I am attracted to issues of therapist self-disclosure and countertransference and have some bias to believing that supervisors could be more aware of these issues. I am more comfortable with theoretical models that are relationship oriented and tend to think that supervision needs to have a strong relationship component to be successful.

All of the supervisees were full-time students in the fourth semester of their program and registered in their second of three practicum classes. The participants were paired as supervision dyads prior to this study as a regular part of the program policy. Each supervisory team normally met for 1 hour a week. The teams used live and videotape formats in supervision at their own discretion. Typically, supervisees were in charge of what tapes they would bring to supervision. For the purposes of this study they were asked to use a video format for two sessions per team.

The method of discovery for this study was a special interview procedure based on a training technique developed in the early 1960's by N. Kagan and his colleagues (Kagan, Krathwohl, & Miller, 1963) called the Interpersonal Process Recall (IPR) (Kagan & Kagan, 1990). Despite Kagan's focus to use the IPR as a training method for counselors, others have recognized its research potential (Bergin & Strupp, 1972; Kiesler, 1973) and have given it different names such as videotape reconstruction and videotape inquiry (Knudson, Sommers, & Goding, 1980). For this study the concept of the IPR format was used to create a context for in-

depth interviews. The IPR method was chosen and adapted as for this study because of its strengths to stimulate recall of "fleeting impressions and reactions which would ordinarily be forgotten or merged into more global perception" (Elliott, 1986, p.503).

The equipment used for the interviews was a video camera to record the original supervision sessions, a VCR with a remote control for the participants to watch their sessions, and a notebook to take notes during and after the interviews. The interviews were videotaped for later review.

Originally a semi-structured interview format was designed to focus on a full range of possible experiences in supervision. I decided that this would limit the participants in their responses. An open-ended approach was used which allowed the participants to identify what they considered important and significant in supervision. The participants were asked to watch a videotape of a previous supervision session and stop the tape at any point that they felt something significant had occurred in the session or any thought or feeling they wanted to express in the present moment. Significant was defined as any thought, feeling, or behavior they wanted to comment on. Once the participants identified what they considered to be a significant experience, I encouraged them to explore their thoughts, feelings and actions in more detail.

Information Collection Procedures

The information collection process began by gathering verbal permission from the participants to videotape their supervision sessions. The participants were notified in advance of which of their routinely scheduled supervision sessions would be videotaped. A meeting was then scheduled to review the videotape of the supervision session. Interviews were conducted in therapy rooms at the MFT program's clinical facility. Each counseling room had a mobile videotape machine, a remote control, monitor, and camera for videotaping. All participants were informed that the interview would last for 90 minutes.

The interviews began with informal conversation. I was familiar with all of the participants and some time was spent reacquainting with each other. The participants were given written guidelines for the research process and provided time to ask any questions (see Appendix A). Confidentiality was discussed and the participants signed a written consent form to participate in the research and to be videotaped (see Appendix A).

The video camera was turned on and the interview began with participants being encouraged to stop the videotape at any time they wished to describe a significant experience. Significant experience was defined as any distinction in the participant's feelings, thoughts, actions, desires, statements, or body movements, or those perceived of in their counterpart that they defined as important. When the participants stopped the tape I encouraged them to reveal detailed information related to the segment they identified as significant. The

participants were acknowledged for their responses and encouraged to continue reviewing the tape. They were told they could stop the tape as frequently as they desired, using "fast forward" and "rewind" at their discretion. At the end of the interview the next supervision session and interview was scheduled for taping.

Grouping of Information

Following the suggestion of Bogdan and Biklen (1982), analysis of the data was not done until all the interviews were completed. With all the interviews recorded on videotape, and process notes taken during and after the interviews, little was lost to memory.

Before collecting data it is hard to have a concrete understanding of how the data will be analyzed. The manner in which the data are analyzed is dictated by the specific nature of the study and the information gathered. McCracken (1988) suggests that, "The exact manner in which the investigator will travel the path from data to observations, conclusions, and scholarly assertion cannot and should not be fully specified. Different problems will require different strategies. Many solutions will be ad hoc ones" (p.41). I found that the majority of information on qualitative research is theoretical and the examples of how to do data analysis are vague and fuzzy. Qualitative research is also under-represented in the professional journals of marriage and family therapy. I started my study with a beginner's understanding of how I would interpret the data.

To analyze the data I adapted McCracken's (1988) five-stage analysis process to fit the specific needs of my study. The first stage involves treating "each [significant] utterance in the interview transcript in its own terms . . . the treatment of each useful utterance creates an observation" (p.42).

The process of the first stage began by performing a thematic analysis of the participants' descriptions by reviewing the interviews several times to familiarize myself with the data as a whole. The videotapes of the interviews were watched in their entirety. A second viewing of the tapes was made and notes were taken both verbatim and as summaries of long passages. An audio recorder was used to get the participants' responses during long passages or with participants that spoke too rapidly for me to transcribe. I stopped the videotape frequently to take notes. I also used this time to write in the margins impressions and hypotheses about the patterns in the participants' interactions. I was careful to record the numbers that appeared on the videotape counter that corresponded to the written notes. This allowed me to easily go back later to review particular segments. After the two reviews were complete, my notes and the audio tapes were transcribed. From the review of the videotapes and the transcription notes I was able to reduce the data to the "significant utterances".

In the second stage the useful utterances gathered in stage one are related back to the transcription notes, videotapes, and research literature. This process generates a new grouping that moves from the significant utterances to what McCracken defines as observations.

I viewed this second stage as a process of contracting the beginning data to a more manageable and refined set of data. With this new list or refined set of data I related it back to the videotapes and transcription notes to see if the broader, more general term now being used was still representative and inclusive of the participants' experiences.

In the third stage of analysis I examined the interconnectedness of the observations that were found in stage two and critiqued them on their own merit. In stage two the observations were connected to the literature and the data. The observations themselves now become the focal point and the transcription notes are only referred to for checking on ideas that are generated by the observations.

At this point the data were going through a transformation process from the very specific information that I started with towards more generalized categories and themes. The remaining observation groups or categories were expanding while the detailed information was being contracted into fewer and fewer categories.

The fourth stage of analysis involved viewing the previously generated observations in relation to one another. Satisfied that each separate category of observations was representative of the participants' experiences, they were analyzed collectively for consistency and contradictions in the themes. Finally the observations were combined into the final groupings of observations that are presented as the themes of the participants' experiences of supervision.

In summary, I have presented an outline of the qualitative process I used to explore the experiences of the supervisors and supervisees. While this outline provides the reader with an understanding of the structure used to arrive at the themes, it does not provide a detailed account of the process used. I provide a more detailed account of the actual process used in identifying the themes in Chapter Four.

To further aid the reader in understanding how the themes emerged from the data, Chapter Four includes excerpts from the participants' videotaped comments. This provides the reader with the opportunity to judge the appropriateness of the themes and to interpret some of the data through his/her own filters.

Chapter Four:

Discoveries

The following is a presentation of the results found in the data analysis. The fundamental significance of supervision has been well-documented in both marriage and family therapy literature and the literature in other helping professions. Despite the consensual agreement that supervision is a significant aspect of the marriage and family therapy profession, there is a paucity of research on supervision (Everett & Koerpel, 1986). The research that has been done is largely theoretical and uses researcher-generated variables to distinguish significant aspects of supervision. What has been missing is an attention to the lived experiences of supervisors and supervisees as it emerges from actual supervision sessions. The purpose of this research was to explore the experiences of supervisors and supervisees.

In addition to researching lived experience, this research methodology has three distinct advantages over previous methodologies. First, it presents a conjoint view of supervision. Second, the supervisors' and supervisees' experiences are focused on the same videotaped supervision session, not supervision sessions in general. Third, the supervisors and supervisees were able to be observers of their own experience.

Before presenting the findings, I would like to remind the reader of the interview process and clarify the methodology used to identify the emerging themes.

Supervisors and supervisees were given a remote control and asked to stop the videotape whenever they believed something significant was happening in the session. They were then asked to describe in detail what they felt was significant about that particular point in the session. The participants punctuated a diversity of experiences from the sessions, ranging from cognitive explanations of the task-oriented aspects of the supervision session, to the emotional aspects of their relationship with their supervision partner.

As the participants watched themselves on videotape they were able to identify patterns of interaction they were not previously aware of. They reported that they were surprised and informed by what they saw. This process stimulated their memory of thoughts and feelings they were having in the supervision session. The interviews allowed the participants to re-experience what was happening in the sessions, while at the same time allowing them to step back and observe themselves from a distance. In a sense, this allowed the participants to be researchers of their own experience.

My analyses of the experiences generated in the interviews were based on the qualitative research suggestions of McCracken (1988), Giorgi (1987), and Marton (1988) and are outlined below.

I began by reviewing the process notes which I took during and after the interview. These notes helped me recall the flow and feeling of the interviews. I wrote brief notes about the points that the participants identified as significant. These notes called my attention to the places the supervisors and supervisees tended to stop the

videotape and I began formulating hypotheses about possible broad themes. Keeping these hypotheses in mind, I approached the next stage of my analysis which was to view all of the videotapes of the interviews and make transcription notes.

I made hand-written transcription notes of the interview sessions, which were later typed. I used the videotape counter to mark lengthy passages and changes in ideas. This allowed easy access to further review of specific passages. I viewed the videotapes a second time, while following along with the written transcriptions, to check their accuracy.

Next, I re-read the transcription notes and made a list of the repeating key concepts, words, and phrases which I call "significant utterances" (McCracken 1991). The process notes and the transcription notes were then combined into an extensive, single list of key words and phrases. This list represented the culmination of the participants' experiences. Using this list, I read over the transcription notes making a frequency count of the phrases and words that were repeated in the participants' descriptions of their significant experiences. These repeated words and phrases were collapsed into a new, smaller list.

As I re-read the transcription notes with this new condensed list of the significant utterances, I began to notice that the comments of supervisors and supervisees frequently centered around two possible themes. The first possible theme involved the thoughts and feelings of the participants as they related to their supervision partner. The

second possible theme appeared to be personal and professional growth of the supervisee as it related to the client(s).

I began to focus on the first possible theme by rereading the transcription notes for further evidence of a theme. I found that the participants described a broad range of positive and negative experiences. Some examples of the words used in the descriptions of negative experiences were; vulnerable, fear, [lack of] trust, imposing, risky, disengaged, and confused. Some examples of the positive experiences described, were; connected, affirmed, engaged, sharing, empowered, focused.

After reviewing the transcription notes with the condensed list I asked myself "What do these words all have in common?" After thinking about this question for an extended period of time and sharing it with colleagues, I reached a decision. These words appeared to all gravitate around the participants' description of their experience of "relationship". To understand the words in the context from which they emerged I went back and read the flow of the transcription notes to ascertain the appropriateness of the theme "relationship". In addition, I reviewed the videotapes for the fit of the theme of relationship to the participants' experience. After reviewing the videotapes and transcription notes, I was convinced that the theme of relationship accurately represented the experiences of the participants. Numerous subsequent reviews added further confirmation to my hypothesis of this theme.

Confident of the accuracy of the relationship theme, I turned my focus to identifying the theme which connected the area of personal and professional growth of the supervisee as it related to the client(s). Some of the key words and phrases in this category were affirmed, challenged, collegial, empowered, validated, acknowledged, [professional] self-disclosure, direction, exchange, confidence, contribution, dual role, competent, strengths, positives, self-perception, reaffirming, role, available, professional. I did an analysis of these key words and phrases employing the same process used to identify the theme of relationship. These words appeared to all gravitate around the participant's description of their experience of the process of empowerment.

I coded the transcription notes into the two themes of the "Process of Empowerment" and "Relationship". The next step was to discover any sub-themes that were in these two main themes. I re-read the significant utterances that were now coded into the two main themes and grouped them together, i.e., under the theme of relationship I grouped together the words "vulnerability", "trust", "afraid". I experimented with different words that would accurately describe all the words in each group, e.g., guarded to describe vulnerability, trust, afraid. I received feedback on the different descriptive terms by sharing them with participants in the study and professional colleagues in the academic and nonacademic community. I eventually settled on words that I was confident described the participants' experiences. These words became the sub-themes. I then used different colored

highlighters to code the transcription notes according to the sub-themes. I then re-read the transcription notes to examine the fit of the sub-themes. Some of the sub-theme titles that seemed appropriate for the key words and phrases now seemed awkward upon my review of the transcription notes and video tapes. I made slight changes in the sub-theme titles and re-coded the transcription notes accordingly. Eventually, I decided on the themes and sub-themes which appear in this chapter.

Some of the experiences of the participants stood out from the themes and sub-themes of Empowerment and Relationship. While they had elements of empowerment and relationship, they warranted the status of separate themes. These themes were Regression and Flexibility. Not only did these themes stand out from the other experiences of the participants, they also stood out from the literature.

In summary, the analysis of the data was a process of contracting my observations of the participant's experiences into a smaller number of categories. I began by constructing the interview data into all the key words, phrases and concepts in the transcription notes. I collapsed these into a smaller list of the words, phrases and concepts that appeared most frequently in the transcription notes. This smaller list was related back to the transcription notes and expanded into the two broad themes of Empowerment and Relationship. These two themes were then collapsed into the smaller grouping of sub-themes: role, collegiality, dual-roles (for empowerment), connection, responsibility

(for relationship), and the separate themes of flexibility and regression.

As I reviewed the videotapes and the significant utterances I was struck by what appeared to be contradictions in the participants' description of their experiences. The participants' comments suggested that any single experience of supervision is not exclusively positive or negative, rather it contains positive and negative aspects. I began conceptualizing the participants' contradictions as part of their changing needs, depending on a variety of personal, situational, and relational circumstances. The same behavior perceived as positive in one circumstance was perceived as negative in another. These "contradictions" added to the richness of the study because they were not thrown out in an effort to identify a single positive or negative variable in supervision. The purpose of this study was to show the complexity that is part of the supervisors' and supervisees' experience.

When I began this study I was already personally familiar with all the participants in the study. I had been supervised by the supervisors in this study (S1 and S2) while a student in the program and was a colleague one year ahead of the supervisees in the study. I had some knowledge of the different attitudes, beliefs, and therapeutic approaches that each one brought to supervision and therapy. During the course of the interviews I became more familiar with the particular lens each participant used to view the world. Their preferences, beliefs and desires concerning supervision were well known to me by the end of the interviews.

The constructivist epistemology which has guided this study informs me that the way in which an individual thinks about and makes sense of the world around them has a direct relationship with how they interact and will later define their experience. My observations supported this constructivist notion. For example, I noticed that if an individual thought of him/herself as supportive and encouraging that is what they would point out and see in the videotapes. On more than one occasion, the participant's beliefs and interpretations about a behavior or interaction was not shared by his supervision partner and at times was viewed in a completely opposite manner. It became clear that if I was going to understand the participants' experiences of supervision I would need to pay strict attention to the ways in which the participants repeatedly emphasized and defined their beliefs and expectations about what went on and what should happen in supervision.

To assist myself in understanding the unique approaches of the participants to viewing and defining supervision I made this a part of my process notes during and after the interviews. These notes commented on the particular styles, beliefs and approaches used by the participants. These included observations of the tendencies of the participants to emphasize certain aspects of supervision such as what should or ought to happen, what was significant and why, etc. These notes, in combination with the video tapes were helpful in providing insight into the lenses through which the participants viewed supervision.

As outlined earlier in this chapter, significant utterances were used to identify the emerging themes of the participants' experiences. The unique ways in which each participant experiences the different themes provides a window into the limits of his lived experience during the supervision process. For example, how they define or come to know what their role is (their epistemology of role) affects what they think can possibly occur in supervision. The possibilities for different experiences are expanded by their epistemology of role. The themes in this study are viewed as the meeting place between one person's reality (epistemology) and the reality of another person. When the epistemology of one person bumps into the world around them or another individual, it becomes their reality. The remainder of the chapter will focus on the realities of the participants as it pertains to the various themes. The names which appear in this study were changed to protect the identity of those who participated in the study.

Anxiety

I identified anxiety as an additional theme among the supervisees' descriptions of their experiences. The supervisees' descriptions of anxiety were so pervasive they warranted separate recognition as an underlying theme of experience. I am punctuating anxiety here as a separate theme, but my understanding and conceptualization of anxiety is that it is an integral part of all the supervisees' descriptions of their experiences.

As I reviewed the videotapes and significant utterances of the supervisees, I noticed that they repeatedly commented on how they held back information from their supervisors for fear of some form of retaliation from their supervisor. Process notes that I made in the margins of the transcription notes reflected on the supervisee's hesitancy, guarded stance with the supervisor, and accommodating behaviors. I understood the supervisees' anxiety to be an underlying theme in the way they described their various experiences of empowerment and relationship. I am presenting anxiety here to draw the reader's attention to the prevalence of anxiety and the tendency of the supervisees' experience of anxiety to color the majority of their experiences and descriptions.

The supervisees frequently pointed to sections of the session where they felt unsafe or anxious about the interaction that was occurring between themselves and the supervisor. Anxiety that they would expose some weakness to their supervisor was a prevailing attitude that affected the supervisees' approach and description of supervision. The supervisors, on the contrary, made no mention of feeling anxious with the supervisees. The following quotes are examples of some of the participants' experiences that generated this theme.

The supervisors brought to supervision a level of comfort in what they will do and how they will spend the time with the supervisees.

S2 saw his relationship with supervisees as being free of anxiety because he says he is not overly focused on performance or outcome. He was confident in his focus on establishing a supportive and encouraging

relationship. S2 did not have the same experience of anxiety in figuring out his relationship or role that supervisees struggle with.

S2 - People take risks when they feel comfortable doing it, when they're not demanding too much positive outcome . . . if over-focused on outcome people are not going to take a lot of risks . . . There are not many places that you can take risks with support, like you can here. Students are given support and encouragement to take risks . . . I tell supervisees they have my support. I don't think of our relationship outside of supervision as threatening and I don't expect it to become so in supervision . . . I believe it is incumbent on me to respect the student's reality about that setting [therapy session], same as student respecting the client. I never deliberately try to pose a threat or make a student feel they did something that ought not be done . . . [The] supervision session itself operates under the assumption that the student is not threatened . . . I feel perfectly free to ask anything I want to because the relationship with the students is one that, after a few times, they should know I don't really pose a threat to them . . . Students have never given me any indication that they feel threatened.

S2's statement that students have not indicated they feel threatened was in contrast with what his supervisees told me. Although

they never expressed it to him, they indicated that they indeed felt threatened. Perhaps they didn't mention it because they didn't feel safe in bringing it up.

Like S2, S1 was confident in seeing himself as creating an environment that reduces the supervisees' anxiety.

S1 - I'm supporting him. . . He can take risks. [He] doesn't have to worry about doing the right thing . . . Therapy isn't having the right answers or techniques.

The supervisees filtered their experience of anxiety in supervision with a very different world view from the supervisors'.

T1 entered supervision with the anxiety of finding professional validation outside of himself.

T1 - I think, I came here saying to myself that I want either confirmation that I was an imposter or confirmation that I am in the right place and I can do competent work . . . That has to do with competency, the imposter syndrome that someone . . . when it gets to the highest level of education that we can get to, is finally going to expose for us that we are in the wrong field, that we don't really have any business doing this kind of work we call therapy. If we can just keep on looking long and hard enough we will eventually find the person who is competent and capable enough to expose for us things that we're still doing wrong and can tell us what to do to change it or how to make it right. The imposter syndrome has with it the idea that it is just a

matter of time before you get discovered that all this stuff that you've been doing really has been a big waste of time or a facade even and I'll mess peoples lives up after all. I've got so many years of post-graduate experience, I've got so many supervision hours, I've got credentials, I've got a certificate on the wall that says I'm licensed to do private practice and deep down in my heart I think, "I'm not ready to do this, I don't know jack shit about this and if people really knew that they wouldn't make appointments to see me".

T4 approached supervision with anxiety about not getting his supervisor's approval.

T4 - I want him to acknowledge me. Acknowledge would be a big part of it. Approval is a big word, that's it, that's the big one. I want him to like me, not disappoint him, I want his approval.

Like T1, T3 was anxious about appearing competent to his supervisor. T3 avoided sharing his emotions, confusion, and important issues because he was anxious about the safety in doing so.

T3 - I struggle to be competent and connected. One way to be competent is to not be connected . . . it was like, "You know I really want you to think a lot of me . . . I want you to really think that I'm a good student and that I know my stuff and that I can apply my models" . . . But then . . . supervision is where I need to say "[I] don't get this, this

is really a struggle ". . . it doesn't feel ok to be emotional and he's trying to give me permission to be emotional. So he does respond, but it feels more risky to bring up something that really matters . . . So that is still happening for me in my head, I don't know if that is a carry over into the session for him . . . Maybe he doesn't feel safe either or not aware of the process. Maybe he is on automatic and has not stopped to look at it.

T2 approached supervision with the anxiety that his feelings and personal issues that he preferred to keep private would be exposed. T2 was also anxious that his responses would not please his supervisor and he concealed his confusion.

T2 - I am anxious if am I doing a good job . . . and of him [S1] getting close and will that be safe . . . safe from being attacked . . . [S1 might say] that my feelings are not ok . . . they are getting in the way . . . you are not doing this person any good. I can handle all of that. I am anxious of the manner he is going to travel down that road of analyzing my feelings. There is a shift [in the interaction] from content reporting of the case to a different level, to my own issue or agenda . . . He shifts to my place in life . . . I had to change my focus from client to me--that is a pretty big shift . . . I get more anxious when that happens . . . That's more difficult, vulnerable. I could talk about the client all day, but . .

. he is going to talk about me. Not only about me but about my feelings. My memory is it takes me about a half hour to get to a feeling . . . [I'm] not surprised he asked me again, wish I was better at it . . . Don't always know [what I am feeling] and not always good at communicating it or free enough to say it . . . [Felt] anxious that I didn't answer his question . . . Don't want to look confused . . . don't want to admit . . . I am confused.

During the interviews I became aware of the contradictions in the supervisors' and supervisees' experience of anxiety. When supervisees pointed out sections of their supervision session where they felt anxious, I was not always able to connect it to what I was observing. As I asked for more clarification it became clear that sometimes the supervisees were talking about what they were afraid might happen with their supervisor and not something that did happen. Their assumptions or beliefs about what could happen in supervision were not grounded in any actual experience that had taken place with their current supervisor. The supervisees frequently reported that their behavior of withholding information for protection was not based on anything their supervisor had done and was probably not necessary. Further discussion revealed that when the supervisees did offer information that they were hesitant to share, it was a positive experience and often improved the quality of the supervisory relationship.

Despite the positive experience of opening themselves up and taking risks with their supervisors, the supervisees continued to experience anxiety and take a protective stance in supervision. During the interviews I would frequently ask, after a supervisee's concern had been expressed, "Have you brought that issue up with your supervisor?" The answer was consistently "no". Supervisees made choices in the sessions to limit their self-expression based on an assumption or belief of the supervisors' response rather than their actual experiences with the supervisors. I define the supervisees' dichotomy between belief and experience as "conjecture". The following are examples of this process:

T3 described how his anxiety informed him to protect himself with his supervisors yet he acknowledged that his supervisors did not specifically give him cause for concern, and in fact he may have been safer than he thought.

T3 - I feel like I need to be tough . . . like I need to present this veneer to make it through this process. 'Cause I . . . feel like . . . when you do it in a different mode than what they're all familiar with you can get nailed. Not that I have a history with these particular people to be nailed, but my other history has shown me that. In my lowered position I don't think I can do that . . . if they don't think, that I think, I'm competent enough, then it sets it up different . . . Part of me would like to sit down with him and say "I have had this insight" and it will be

received confidently. Part of me feels if I did that, his response would be "that is wonderful!"

Interviewer - Is there anything based on your interactions or your experiences with . . . [supervisor] that would indicate that [it's not safe to show your vulnerability]? Have you had a bad experience with that with him?

T3 - No, and probably if I was more open with him he would be more open and get into it, you know . . . It is more my anticipation of what he would do than based on my experience.

T1's anxiety of being perceived as competent and capable accompanied his positive experiences of sharing his vulnerabilities.

T1 - I don't recall having any sense of feeling threatened or having exposed myself or becoming vulnerable in a way I was going to regret in the future. So in that sense it was probably reinforcing for that to continue to happen . . . Still there's a small voice inside that says "Just keep watching till you see what changes now" . . . I want his general perception of me to be, I am capable . . . It doesn't really matter what else he remembers about the details of any conversations.

T4 commented on trusting his experience of S2 rather than his beliefs. T4 was operating on the assumption that if he asked for approval of what he wanted to do, his supervisor would interpret this as rejection and be disappointed and possibly angry.

T4 - I now think I could say to S2 "I wanted your approval (for my theoretical approach)", I didn't tell him what I was feeling because I didn't want to disappoint him (about not wanting to use his theoretical approach). I could have that conversation with him now. [I] don't think I could of said that before this [interview process]. Now I think I could have had his approval pretty easily . . . I think the consequences to pissing him off would be minor.

It appears that the supervisees came to supervision with many preconceived ideas and notions that they needed to be cautious and self protective in supervision. Before a supervisor even begins to work with a supervisee he/she faces a multitude of past experiences that the supervisees bring with them that will affect supervision. These may come anywhere from interactions with parental and authority figures as well as past supervisors.

Supervisees consistently described the fear of being found out as an imposter or not having the answers. These fears become a part of their decision making process of what is safe and not safe to share. If made to choose between appearing competent and exposing one's

vulnerabilities it would appear that the participants in this study would make all efforts to appear competent.

Supervisees indicated that what they were showing their supervisors on the outside was very different from what was going on inside of them. They feared disappointing their supervisors and seemed to desperately want their approval. Their fear was not only of being exposed to their supervisors professionally, but that some flaw in their characters or personalities would be exposed. It seemed that some of the supervisees' fears were ones they bring with them to supervision from previous life experiences. Each supervisee, when asked if their current supervisor had ever done anything that would indicate a need to fear them, indicated that they had not. Despite this awareness, they continued to be suspicious of their supervisors.

Considering the lack of self-disclosure on the part of the supervisees one has to wonder if the supervisors were aware of the covert fears the supervisees are experiencing. The supervisors' descriptions of supervision painted a picture of a safe, trusting environment in which the supervisees could self-disclose any aspect of their professional and personal life. If the supervisors were aware of the supervisees' fears, their descriptions did not indicate the intensity with which the supervisees experienced them and the extent to which these fears colored their interactions and decisions.

The supervisees appeared to come into supervision with needs from the supervisor. The supervisees wanted the supervisors to validate them, approve of them, and let them know they are not incompetent

impostors. At the same time they described that they felt threatened by the supervisor and exposed only a limited amount of themselves to the supervisor. The supervisees appeared to be in a double bind. They wanted to expose themselves so they could learn and be validated, while at the same time they were presenting themselves as impostors in their efforts to avoid being seen as impostors. Supervisors were asked to give them what they could not possibly give them--a belief in themselves as competent and capable. The supervisors, however, seemed to see themselves as doing just that--trying to give supervisees what they could not give them. The supervisors appeared to be put in a double bind not only by the supervisees but by themselves. By the same token, the supervisees are also in a double bind if they believed the only way to be competent was for it to come from the supervisor.

The Process of Empowerment

In recent years, the term "empowering families" has become popular. Perhaps it is due to some connection to the popularity of the term that the word empowerment was used frequently to describe the participants' experience in supervision. Supervisors frequently identified being engaged in the process of empowerment as times when they were "supportive", "encouraging", and "attentive" to the needs of the supervisee. This included both the supervisee's personal needs and clients' concerns. The supervisors' descriptions were similar to AAMFT guidelines mentioned in Chapter II.

For the supervisors, empowerment went beyond being supportive. They were concerned with assisting the supervisees in acknowledging their own competency as professionals, i.e., they wanted the supervisees to realize that "they knew more than they thought they knew". When the supervisors talked about empowering the supervisees, it wasn't about giving them answers about clients or about themselves, it was directed at assisting them to find their own answers.

Supervisees also described empowerment as a significant aspect of their supervisory experience. The supervisees described themselves in the complementary position of being the recipients of empowerment from the supervisors. They also described supportive statements and encouragement as empowering. Some of the supervisees found it most empowering when they were contributing equally to the supervision process, i.e., what they had to say was important to the supervisors.

As I reviewed the video sections that had been identified as empowerment, I noticed that the supervisors did not describe empowerment as a process of giving power to the supervisees. They described it as a process where they would help the supervisees recognize their own abilities and positive aspects. It is as if the supervisors are trying to give the supervisees something that they believe the supervisees already have and need only awaken and pay attention to themselves. Interestingly, the direction of empowerment was usually described flowing from supervisor to supervisee. There was little mention of how the supervisees may empower supervisors.

The supervisors offered the following descriptions of their significant experiences that I have identified as the process of empowerment:

S2 - I'm here to help him develop and push him . . . I'm trying to get him to identify with resources that he may not be aware of . . . [It is] important that he get in touch with those times that what he does makes a difference . . . It was important how he felt about what he was doing because he was competent. I think that it is useful for him to say that about himself, to know in future situations that he can manage difficult situations . . . How to help T4 get some change so he won't be stuck and how to help him feel comfortable with the lack of progress . . . Supervisees aren't always aware of their competencies. Supervisors get them to recognize and know that about themselves . . . The supervisee is looking through a microscope (at the case), the supervisor can look at it from a telescope.

S1 - I get him to affirm himself by the way in which I ask . . . questions . . . When he doesn't accept it [compliments] I see it as a challenge . . . I'm addressing the issue [of his] . . . accepting a compliment . . . this will free him with his clients . . . [I am] comfortable in complimenting him, seeing him grow, supporting him, trusting he will handle the specifics of the case . . . Trainees'

effectiveness is dictated more by confidence than training or model or knowledge . . . How he feels about himself as a therapist will carry over into different situations . . . I was being accepting encouraging, simply supporting him in what he is saying . . . My goal is to try to affirm him as a professional, more than just a student. I am trying to be consistent that he knows more than he thinks he knows . . . get him to affirm himself. I'm wanting to say to him "it is ok to be comfortable with being lost."

I found it impossible to identify just a few descriptions of the supervisees' experiences that characterized what is empowering for all the supervisees or any one supervisee. The following demonstrates the range of supervisees' experiences that I identify as a pattern of descriptions concerning the process of empowerment.

T3 - He was affirming. I was looking for affirmation. He was trying to understand me. He was concerned about my issues and interests. His challenging me indicated he was present . . . His questions [shows] he is connecting . . . I am trying out a new model and he empowers me. [What he is doing] has to do with me not just with the case . . . He is trying to give me something that is missing. He is acknowledging me, pushing me. I want [help] to develop more of . . . letting people know [more than] the superficial

part of me. [He] lets me know I am doing ok. I like it when he speaks of what it is like to be in my shoes.

T1 - I want someone to tell me when I'm screwing up . . . to be more self-aware . . . to be helpful, collaborative, open and giving . . . helpful in a questioning, inquisitive way . . . When he advises or mentors the opportunity for me to be honest doesn't come along . . . I want a relationship that is mutually beneficial . . . I remember wishing he would ask me what I would do rather than making suggestions.

T1's experience when S2 makes a suggestion was similar to Holloway's (1982) findings that supervisees responded with silence to supervisors suggestions and opinions. Holloway (1983) also found that "supervisees' give a positive evaluation to supervisors when they follow the supervisees' expression of ideas with a request for more ideas" (p. 234).

T3 - Sometimes intimacy with supervisor is the thing that empowers us in our therapy . . . Sometimes it is irrelevant what he is asking. I just want to know he is interested. I just want to be understood.

T4 - S2 is pushing me to identify some of the ways I am working, which I asked him to do. It helps me identify a part of my own process . . . I am uncomfortable with change. His pushing was helpful . . . It was also helpful when he

gave me feedback on my skills . . . One of the things I like is that he is conceptualizing what I said in a different way which helps me get clearer . . . I want supervision that would accommodate my model. I was offended and hurt that he didn't accept my model.

T2 - I . . . want to feel safe with my feelings . . . To know before the hour what track I was going down. I really want . . . someone to say "This is a difficult part for every therapist when a client comes in, they get worse before [they] get better" . . . "It's an anxious time for a therapist, everyone goes through it" . . . "Maybe you should try such and such or check this out " . . . To make sure I'm doing the right thing is . . . what I want out of supervision . . . I'm asking "do you know this model, and if so, what is it and tell me".

T2's desire for direction from S1 matched the findings of Wetchler and Vaughn (1991). In their AAMFT survey, the supervisees' most requested response from the supervisor was to provide direction.

Earlier in chapter Two I examined the different definitions of supervision in the literature to aid in understanding the influences that definitions may have on the experiences of supervisors and supervisees. During the interviews the participants frequently described their experience of supervision in terms of how they saw their role in supervision. How the participants defined their roles had a

direct impact on their expectations, behaviors, and observations of the supervision process.

This section will look at the participants' descriptions that gravitated around the participants' expectations and definitions of the personal characteristics and social behaviors of a supervisor and/or supervisee. These descriptions emerged from the data analysis as the theme of "role".

S2's definition of role includes a responsibility not only to helping the client, but also helping the supervisee to learn how to help the client in question and other clients down the road.

S2 - [I'm] not responsible [for the clients] in the sense of ownership, but role. My task is not only to help students get unstuck when it happens but to find ways that he can do the same thing for himself down the road. I feel this dual task . . . responsible for both supervisee and client.

S2 talked about his role as if it were defined for him. It was as if by virtue of the fact that he was designated the supervisor there were certain things he must do to fulfill the obligations and responsibilities of his role. Just how he was informed of the obligations and duties was not discussed.

S2 - I . . . see myself as mentor, there's something about the nature of supervision that places me in a mentor role whether I want to be or not . . .

T4 and T1's description of S2's role was very close to his own.

T4 - He (S2) had something to teach me he was going to give it to me which was [his model] I . . . think in his role as mentor and teacher it was important to him to teach me his model. It was important to him that I would want to learn that.

T1 - I have mixed feelings about how I interact with S2. I have good working relationship with him. I think he sees himself in a mentoring role . . . he feels a sense of responsibility because of that mentoring role to draw me out, encourage and critique and do the things that my mentor is supposed to do . . . There are times when I feel that he is therapizing me . . . It doesn't seem as natural--it seems not artificial but well-intended . . . This may be his self-imposed mentor role.

From S2's perspective, being a mentor was something that was inherent in being a supervisor. T1 viewed the position of mentor as self-imposed by S2 and not a position that he automatically viewed S2 holding. S2 defined his role as focusing on both the personal and professional development of the supervisee as it related to the client.

S2 - As a supervisor, I think my role is to assist him in clarifying what he's doing . . . From the therapists' point of view my role is to help him with developing himself as a therapist to understand, deal with whatever happens to be going on within him as he processes particular cases or even outside cases. I can assist the student with what's

important to him and I'm perfectly willing for him to define what's important, I think that's my role. To help him get unstuck if he gets stuck with a case, to help him learn about the application of theory, to encourage him, to challenge him, especially if I think it would be in his best interest to do something that he's not accustomed to doing or a little bit afraid to do for some reason, to push him, to encourage him in that way. From the client's point of view I think I have responsibility to help him [T1] do the very best job he can helping the client achieve his or her [own] goals. So we've got that dual focus going on all of the time. I see that as my role as supervisor.

As described by S2, role was not the same as style. S2 felt that his role as supervisor was defined for him. His obligations and duties were clear to him. How he chose to carry out those duties was a matter of personal style.

S1 defined the nature of his role as supervisor differently. He did not have the same amount of focus on the clients. S1 felt that the way in which he defined his role was non-traditional. S1 seemed to be implying that he was taught what his role was supposed to be (traditional) and he has rejected this definition for what he now uses. The different approaches that S1 and S2 used in doing supervision fit nicely into Haley's (1976, 1988) orientations A and Z. S2 represents orientation A and S1 represents orientation Z.

S1 - I have been trained to think what is supposed to go on in supervision . . . [I am] sitting here watching it and being immensely pleased that I'm not sitting there telling him where he didn't catch this or where he didn't catch that. [I am looking for] where he is excited and responsive and feeling better about himself. As opposed to [his] walking out of there going "Oh, damn I failed again".

S1's comments on the impact that his previous training in supervision had on him are supported by Gorman (1989). She found that supervisors are influenced by the models and methods they were trained in as supervisees. S1's view of a traditional role of the supervisor seemed to be one of taking responsibility for pointing out the shortcomings of the supervisee. Although it went against his training, somewhere along the way S1 came up with a new way of defining his role.

S1 - If I were into traditional ways of doing supervision I would be giving him feedback, amendments, extensions or ways to deal with the case either affirming what he did pragmatically or clinically or thinking of ideas myself that I might add to him . . . [I see the] traditional view of supervisor as overseer to cover the mistakes of the supervisee and focus on the client . . . I think my work [as supervisor] is done . . . with him, as the supervisee, not with the case.

T2, like the other supervisees, indicated that he was not clear about his role in supervision. Also, like the other supervisees, he had

a better picture of what his supervisor's role was than his own. T2 was aware of S1's preference for focusing on the supervisee rather than the client. Interestingly, they had the opposite definitions of what traditional supervision.

He is engaging my personal stuff which is more traditional psychotherapeutic supervision . . . His agenda is to look into supervisees' personal stuff. My agenda is to learn about a theoretical model. We totally miss each other.

The way in which S1 defined his role informed him not only what to look for but what would not be fruitful.

S1 - No amount of book work, no amount of reading, no amount of adding more techniques to your bag could do much . . .

How he defined his role informed him what to focus on.

. . . it seems to me, what he takes in feeling better about himself, man the sky's the limit in what he is able to incorporate and that's just exciting to me.

The supervisors seemed confident about the approach they were using in supervision. The clarity with which the supervisors were able to define their role and the behaviors associated with them were not shared by the supervisees. The supervisees did not have a model or theory for adopting the role of supervisee. They described themselves as confused about their role, making it up as they went along or following the supervisor's lead.

T3 - I'm not sure what supervision is. [The] expectations [were] never made clear. The whole thing is real unclear.

I make it up as I go along . . . I don't know what supervision is.

S2 sensed the supervisees' confusion over their role and their tendency to accommodate the supervisors' position.

S2 - The question all supervisees have is, "can I really depend on a professor [that he is] going to be there when I need him?" . . . "[I] wonder what do I have to do I need this guy's support ultimately." "What do I need to do to get it?" "What is my role?" "How do I get that professor to know I am willing to play my role?" "What does he expect of me?" I'm certain they enter supervision with [those] . . . question[s] in mind.

While the supervisees were confused about their role and attempted to follow the supervisors lead, the supervisors' experience was quite different. S2, for example, was not only comfortable with his role, but was also aware of using a particular style in his interactions with the supervisees.

S2 - . . . I'm talking about style more than role. The style as supervisor can be everything from a very dictatorial "this is the way therapy is done, do it like this", so it's didactic and it's controlling and it's probably intimidating to the person whose being supervised because they will be wondering "What am I supposed to do in this situation, am I doing what the supervisor thinks I should be doing?" Or it can be all the way down to the other end of the spectrum

which is just questioning and supportive and encouraging.

As a supervisor I see myself much closer to that end of the spectrum than the other one.

S2 seemed to be implying that if his style was supportive and encouraging, then supervisees would focus less on what they thought the supervisor was expecting them to do. My interviews with the supervisees did not support this assumption. When a supervisor used a supportive and encouraging style, the supervisees avoided bringing up negative and conflictual information that would clash with the supervisors' style.

As I listened to the participants describe role in supervision, I was struck by the similarities they had to the interactions of therapist and client. I was reminded of this on two counts. One, the way in which many clients enter therapy not sure of what they are supposed to do or say, while therapists appear confident and clear about their role. Second, there appears to be a helper and helpee aspect or subtle hierarchical nature to supervision, as if the supervisor has an idea of what would be good for the supervisee or they can give them something that is missing. The following are some examples.

S2 - Other part of supervision - is to not let T4 come in absolutely comfortable with what he has done before he got here, not to leave without a chance to stretch . . . I see this as an opportunity to practice that may not come around again. A chance to expand his skills and thinking.

S1 - Part of my process as a supervisor is to assess where they are coming from, what they need, and if I can give it to them. What is the emotional content of the supervisee and what I can give. To find positives that the supervisee may have overlooked . . . If he were not feeling confident I'd pull out from me what would help.

Collegiality

In the previous section the participants' descriptions of their experiences were found to cluster around their perceptions of role. In particular, they focused on the hierarchy of the supervisors' role. In addition to this focus the participants' descriptions also clustered around what appeared to be a non-hierarchical experience: "collegiality".

S2 defined how he viewed himself in a position of collegiality.

S2 - I don't have a desire, as supervisor, to be seen as the authority with the answers, or to show the best way for therapy to be done . . . It's [being a part of] the problem-solving, puzzle, attempt to create [together] that is fun . . . I see myself as a participant in supervision more than I see myself as an authority . . . I don't assume there is a right way. [As a supervisor] I will help enhance your way . . . [but] I don't have the answers.

S2 described his experience of collegiality as creating a context in which he and the supervisee could work together toward solving a clinical issue.

S2 - What's going on here is, from my point of view, a kind of a discussion with a colleague who is trying to figure out what is going on. I asked him what he thinks. I'm telling him what my impression was, what I thought, without any fixed idea that my impression is right. I often find myself, when things are not working in therapy, talking to a student in a way that we are both really trying to figure out what's going on . . . in a parallel role trying to work it out . . . I'd much rather be viewed as somebody who is like everybody else who has certain perceptions, experience and knowledge to bear on any given case.

T4 described how he could have an experience of collegiality with S2 while the hierarchical nature of supervision remained intact. T4's comments suggested to me that hierarchy and collegiality do not require an either/or definition of supervision nor are they mutually exclusive experiences. T4's experiences and descriptions suggested that for him supervision was hierarchical at the same time he was able to have an experience of collegiality. T4's description was similar to S2's experience that he was in the mentor role whether he wanted to be or not, yet he perceived supervision as collegial. For T4 an important element of collegiality was that he experience some reciprocity in his interactions with S2.

T4 - He saw I was doing something competent, something of value [that] he hadn't seen before so he was flexible enough to . . . entertain that he could learn . . . not just what I could learn from him, but that there was something new for him . . . We mutually became more accepting of each other . . . It's like the teacher mentor suddenly realizes there is something else to learn. I think it was an important shift or move that we were more accepting of contributing to one another, less hierarchical even though it's still hierarchical the quality of supervision got much better after that. It's ok to still have someone labeled "supervisor/mentor", but it feels different when the supervisor can get something out of it and I am contributing also.

S1's description of collegiality was similar to S2's in that he did not want to be seen as expert. S1 also addressed the issue that relating in a collegial way did not detract from the fact that he was more experienced.

S1 - We are at different experience levels but my goal is to relate to him in a way where he sees me not as the expert telling him what to do . . . as if I know . . . [I focus on him] as the person of the therapist moving toward a more collegial relationship.

For T3, collegiality occurred when the supervisor shared his personal struggle in becoming a better therapist. For T3 the differences in the

supervisor's experience level was seen as valuable rather than a deterrent to a collegial interaction of sharing.

T3 - Everyone goes through their own personal struggle to kind of figure out where they fit as a therapist, and figuring out models, and figuring out what's ok and what's not ok, how can you incorporate therapy with your own personal model. And I think because I'm 30 years behind where he is . . . we differ and I really recognize that and that's good, that's important. I don't want my supervisor going through the exact same thing. [In a collegial interaction] I would be saying "how are you doing this?" . . . "How are you taking these models and making it be ok?" . . . "What is the process you go through?"

For T1, the experience of collegiality was similar to sharing what was on his mind with a peer. T1 experienced collegiality in supervision when he was simply expressing himself and not looking for feedback or direction.

T1 - I wanted to stay relaxed and have a collegial peer interaction. I wasn't telling him those things (what he was doing with the client) for feedback, I just wanted him to know where I was in the moment. Thinking back I was [already] clear with what was happening or what I was interested in doing (with the case) so he really couldn't help me with what direction I was going.

S2 had the following reaction to T1 not asking him for anything.

S2 - I had the sense I was not doing typical supervision in that he was describing the session in a way he may describe it to anyone. He was not looking for anything from me. Simply telling me of a success and not even looking to me for affirmation. More like telling someone while riding in the car. My role is just to listen. No input from me.

S2 described this interaction with T1 as atypical because T1 was not looking to him for affirmation. When S2 experienced T1 as not looking for affirmation he was able to "just" listen. Interestingly, having S2 just listen was exactly what T1 wants.

Dual Roles

This study has identified the participants as supervisors and supervisees. However, they are also students, teachers, tennis partners, co-author, committee members, etc. The participants frequently commented on how the different roles they played in each other's lives affected supervision. The participants' descriptions that clustered around this experience were referred to as "dual roles". T3's description of his struggle with his supervisor also being his chairperson and professor was described in a similar manner by the other supervisees. A similar theme was identified in Heath and Tharp's (1991) study. They identified the theme as "supervise us or evaluate us, not both".

T3 - This is like my elephant, right, it's always in the room . . . particularly with your chair, he's the one who

holds all the stuff, right? It's part of the relationship so we all kind of ignore it and kind of go about our thing, we're supervising now and we're taking classes now and we're doing this now and I'm like saying "It's right here, it's right there" [the unequal power], you know.

T3 experienced the supervisors' dual roles as an interference in supervision that contributed to unequal power and inhibited his self-disclosure.

T3 - I might have to go down another level or two in terms of disclosing to him. It feels so non-reciprocal that I don't like the way that sets up more unequal power. Vulnerability puts me in a more vulnerable position. And it's not that I think he would use it necessarily negatively . . . This is my stuff, it is not his stuff . . . I feel like it's this unequal power thing right now . . . And that might be a real unfair assumption of mine (conjecture). Maybe a piece of me doesn't want to become more vulnerable to any of them right now. Which is why it is too complicated and too complex of a process having people in so many dual roles. I mean it would be great if supervision could be done with people not involved . . . (in dual roles).

S2 hypothesized that his dual role was constantly having an effect on the supervisees' experience.

S2 - At the end of each semester I am given a form where I have to rate this person in terms of performance so that is probably never out of the student's mind . . . There is some ambiguity of role assignment that clouds the certainty with which you can approach any given person . . . Supervisor is also teacher, supervisor is also, in some cases, major advisor or committee member or teacher-to-be one semester from now or friend off the campus or fellow basketball player . . . Think what a student is trying to achieve here. The stakes are pretty high.

S2's comment on the stakes being high was echoed in the supervisees' experience of their supervisors' dual roles.

T4 - I was going to have to . . . please my supervisor . . . My supervisor is also the chair of my committee. And so there's the dual-role there. So I don't want to offend him.

T1 - Who in reality is going to say anything that will screw with the minds of the clinical faculty here when we have them on our committees.

T3 - Who would honestly evaluate their supervisors when they have that much power.

T2 - Part of the dual-role is hiding confusion. Confused is not a great place to be with someone on your committee. You want to give the image that you are never confused. That is part of the down side of the supervision here . . . We could

learn a lot if we could speak up about our confusion. It would feel more engaging.

While S2 thought the supervisees were affected by the dual roles, he did not think this created a problem that was significantly different from dual roles in other situations.

S2 - I don't think the context affects anymore than is in other relationships. Parent-child, employer-employee, pastor-parishioner. Always something like this in any relationship so I am not aware of any real problems it causes.

The supervisees' experience of dual roles did play a significant part in their relationship with their supervisors and their behaviors

T1 - I discern a level of risk-taking when someone else is willing to give me feedback . . . without sugar-coating it . . . [or] concerned . . . how I am going to respond to it . . . That tells me that I can also be appropriately up front and honest with them [pause] . . . [with my supervisor there is a] power difference or . . . threat, not only is he my supervisor he is on the clinical faculty, he's on my committee, he's the chair of my committee and all these other multiple role relationships . . . protect myself in that situation [if I needed to] or not. How much can I let on what I really think about him compared to what he really thinks about me.

T3 - You are supposed to come into supervision with your cases that you really don't know what you are doing, but that makes you look incompetent . . . As my chair I want him to think I'm very competent. So, in that sense, the setup is yucky.

Interviewer - So you are choosing not to share that information with him right now.

T3 - Yes, because of his anticipatory reaction and I don't know if I want to make myself that open and vulnerable to him right now. I feel pretty vulnerable . . . right now . . . The thing that goes on in supervision with me when I am with S1 is S1 my chair, and S1's my teacher in certain classes and S1's my supervisor . . . as my chair of my committee . . . I want him to think of me as totally competent and totally cool. That's a very difficult struggle and I see that is just woven through everything because I'm trying to be cool, but I'm also trying to like get help. It's a bad setup I think . . . being supervised by someone that's in that direct controlling position.

The experience of dual roles was not brought up by S1. This does not mean that S1 did not think they were an issue, it simply means they were not a significant aspect of his experience in the four sessions that he reviewed.

The discrepancy between S2's experience of dual roles and the supervisees may have been due to a lack of communication. S2 indicated that very little direct communication about the experience took place.

S2 - It [the issue of supervisors having dual roles] probably is not addressed explicitly; sometimes there are overt communications that are linked to it, but probably not explicitly where you sit down and say "these are our respective roles. How do we deal with them and still achieve what we want to achieve in supervision?"

Connection

The supervisees and one of the supervisors frequently punctuated the significance of their relationship with their supervision partner. For the participants, supervision was more than a supervisee and supervisor getting together to talk about clients, it was an ongoing relationship between two human beings making contact with each other. The participants described a process of moving back and forth between an experience of engagement and disengagement.

Some of the participants' descriptions of the significance of their relationship clustered around the experiences of feeling another person's presence, connecting as whole person to whole person, and feeling understood. The theme connecting these experiences is engagement.

It was an important aspect of S1's supervision experience to feel engaged with his supervisees.

S1 - I have a desire to connect with him at a level that I can share myself . . . [For supervision to be] cognitive the whole time would be boring. I want the relationship to be whole person to whole person . . . Being engaged is more fun. Being checked out is waiting in line for next time to have fun.

S1's desire for supervision to be whole person to whole person is similar to what the supervisees expressed in Heath and Tharp's (1991) study. The researchers felt that the supervisees' experiences revolved around the theme of "make it [supervision] a human experience'.

S1 felt engaged when T3 was open with him and this stimulates his openness.

S1 - He just seems to me to be honest at looking at what he is dealing with. He doesn't seem to be having to hide from me. It seems to me to reflect strength that he is not having to surreptitiously evade things he wants to work on or talk the whole time during the session so we don't ever get to it [what he wants to work on] or . . . whatever kind of evasive, potentially evasive, methods, I was impressed with that . . . His openness with me stimulated my sharing.

Like S1, honesty was an important aspect of feeling engaged for T3. T3 regularly used the word "present" to describe his interactions. He felt significant moments in the session were times when he felt that S1 was present. He described being present as the supervisor's

concentrating on what he was saying and doing, "that his mind was not somewhere else".

T3 - We had a supervision session before where it was a live case and I was real protective of my client and we kind of didn't click, S1 and I. And the next time he wanted to talk about it because he was feeling . . . like I didn't want to hear the negative stuff . . . We sort of gave each other permission for me to say "Leave me alone I don't want to do this right now" and for him to say "It feels to me like you don't want to hear this." That was sort of a nice progressive step in giving each other permission to be honest . . . I think I can tell when he is sort of not there. In this session I felt that he was right there the whole time it was one of my best sessions with him. . . . Sometimes he feels less present, less interested. This time he was playful he felt more connected.

With all the attention given to supervision techniques and equipment it is interesting to note that something as simple as being present was identified as one of the best sessions. I am reminded of a suggestion given to a group of therapists by Lynn Hoffman, "Don't just do something; stand there".

For T1, engagement was exposing the thoughts and feelings that he felt he must keep hidden. Based on his experiences from the previous interview process, T1 decided in his next meeting with S2 to risk sharing his reactions with his supervisor.

T1 - I went ahead and raised the issue, the whole subject of the supervision process, what I do, and don't, reveal or expose to him or levels of trust or theme of the power differential, that kind of stuff.

The supervisees wanted more engagement with their supervisors while at the same time they struggled with their own comfort of being honest and open. However, the reasons they gave for not being open and honest were usually directed at the supervisors.

T3 explained that he was not engaged, present, and honest, if he did not think he could count on S1 being present, honest, and real.

T3 - When it's connected and it's clicking it's good and I think that is helpful. It's just that you can't count on it. I never know what I'm going to get and that's risky. That does not set up a paradigm for me to be entering the room being fully "there" . . . If I knew that I would have S1 at his engaged self I would be more willing to take risks because I would be more trusting of what would take place . . . S1 generally focuses on positive . . . it's always the positive, I never really know sometimes if its genuine or just the model he comes out of . . . He's so into . . . reframing into strengths, in a lot of ways it's sometimes hard for me to know whether it's sincere. I mean, its sincere in that I believe that's his lens, but there's no way for me to know if that's real.

T3's experience of S1's tendency to focus on the positive was similar to Holloway's (1983) finding that "supervisees devalued the excessive use of supportive communication" (p. 234).

T1 wanted to have an experience of being engaged, being open, and doing less monitoring of what he expressed. However, he seemed to wait for S2 to bring this out of him or felt that S2's need to advise and mentor him prevented him from engaging and being honest. Interestingly, when T1 does make the issue of his holding back overt, S2 responded with a question rather than a statement. T1 then shied away from the opportunity for further engagement. This exchange supported Holloway's (1983) finding that when supervisors respond with questions, supervisees tend to respond with silence or change the subject.

T1 - I don't think he perceives the self-monitoring that I have going on. Part of me wishes he would, so he would ask about it . . . The more I think about telling my truth it raises questions about my relationship with him...If he is helpful in a questioning inquisitive way, I could respond honestly . . . When he advises or mentors the opportunity for me to be honest doesn't come along . . . He said something like "What would a professor or faculty member have to do to gain that kind of trust where students, regardless of the interaction, could feel safe enough to talk about anything?" . . . I changed it, I depersonalized it and put myself in the professor role and I said "With my students . . . " (much laughter).

Hutt, Scott, and King (1983) found that when supervisees had doubts about their supervisory relationship they used "avoidance tactics to manage the relationship" (p.121).

For S2, learning, rather than being present or emotionally open, seemed to be an important aspect of engagement. He was more focused on the cognitive aspects of engagement than S1 or the supervisees. S2 was predominantly more client-focused while S1 was predominantly focused on the person of the therapist.

S2 - I don't think a person doing . . . [supervision model omitted for reasons of anonymity] needs to focus on emotion for anything other than setting rapport, establishing a "yes set" for cognitive joining . . . To me the joy in supervision is to find out what is going on with the client and find a way to be helpful.

T4's idea of engagement was to focus on his own process. This was in contrast to the style of his supervisor. T4 gave an example of how he felt the differences in their styles found some common ground that he experienced as engaging.

T4 - He seemed different . . . more focused and attentive. He was more present. He seems more interested in my process. Before he was more client focused, this felt better. He asked about my self and pushed me to identify my own process. He is more focused on my experience . . . He got excited when I integrated my ideas with his. We mutually became more accepting of each other. He

accomplished teaching me something which he liked and maybe he saw some creative stuff that he liked.

T2 described himself as "hypersensitive about safety", with his openness to engage S1 limited. This was largely due to previous supervision that was a negative experience for T2 and some of the similarities with that approach and S1's style. He felt that if the "baggage from old supervision" had been "talked about . . . the whole semester would have been more engaging". T2 focused more on how to remain safe and disengaged than being engaged. He did give a description of experiencing connection and how simple yet important it was when supervisees feel they have their supervisors' attention.

T2- [S1] anticipated what I was going to say, he was one step ahead of my thinking. It felt congruent, I felt understood, listened to.

It was impossible and undesirable for the supervisors and supervisees to be continuously engaged during an entire session. The supervisors and supervisees punctuated the different aspects of the experience of disengagement.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two indicated that there are differences between what supervisors and supervisees think they are doing in supervision and how it is perceived by others. This was also true with the participants in this study when they viewed themselves on videotape. They were surprised to see that what they thought they were doing was not what they observed on the video tapes. This was the case with S1 thinking that he was more engaged.

S1 - I remember myself being more engaged then I appear to be as I watch it . . . I may stay more with the [content rather than supervisees' process] than, I realized.

S1's surprise that he was less engaged than he had thought was similar to supervisors' responses in Kagan's (1983) study. The supervisors in his study were surprised that when they watched their behaviors on videotape they did not match what they thought they had been doing.

S1's experience was that sometimes he was spread too thin to be engaged all the time. If engagement was going to occur the supervisee was going to have to initiate it.

S1 - I try to do everything, be a nice guy and be engaged everywhere. "How can I do everything?" . . . If people are going to engage me they will have to work for it . . . It takes energy to be engaged; I become parsimonious with every dispersal [of energy].

T3 experienced disengagement when he allowed his fears of S1's response to influence him.

T3 - If I was more open he probably would reciprocate. He might, maybe I'm afraid he might not, and that would be even worse . . . I would engage more if I was confident that S1 would be present.

S1's experience of disengagement included a reciprocal element of interaction. When T2 simply answered his questions and did not bring

much of himself to the process, S1 experienced disengagement and "checked out".

S1 - One of the keys, for me, that I identified where I began checking out with him early was, I didn't feel . . . much reciprocal interaction with him. I asked him a question, he fed me an answer . . . It was like the answer was structured in such a way of non-engagement . . . "this is complete now". The exchange is over, I've answered the question, now we're ready to move on . . . It was sort of like . . . sometimes you make a comment in class and the instructor listens, or you ask a question and the instructor answers the question in a sort of completed way . . . I accepted it as he's given me the explanation and we're through with that. That was the cue for me, one of the cues for me. I'm probably more likely to continue to be involved and not check out if there is more of that [engaged] kind of exchange . . . Uh huh, reciprocal, yeah.

S1's example of asking a question and getting a non-engaging response from T2 appeared to be a reciprocal loop that they got caught in. S1 asked a questions to get T2 thinking about what he was doing. T2 thought he had to concentrate on answering S1's questions and could not focus on what he wanted to do. The interaction as S1 described it supports Holloway's findings (1982, 1983) that supervisory questions do not result in further cognitive development in the supervisee. The supervisees tended to give a brief answer or no answer at all.

T2 thought that S1 blamed him for the lack of engagement between them. He thought that engaging in personal issues was important to S1 and he noticed that he blamed himself when the sessions were not the way S1 would like them to be. T2 tended to focus on what was important to S1. When he focused on what was important to him, he realized that sometimes supervision is just not that important to him. When he owned this part of his experience and shared it with S1 he felt more engaged. In other words, talking openly about being disengaged was engaging.

T2 - He bounces off my engagement and says "you weren't engaged so I didn't push you" . . . His lack of pushing [for engagement] he doesn't own it all. I think he doesn't push because he doesn't want to be engaged. He is somewhat responsible, at least half has to do with that (his willingness to be engaged), as it does with me . . . I think he'll go with whatever level the supervisee shows up with. That is what he thinks is my agenda but I think there is more to it than that. I might pick up on his willingness to be engaged . . . When he said "you weren't engaged", my first thought was, "oh no, I did a bad thing." Then I was honest "you aren't getting my best energy." [I] felt o.k. about his response. "We all make choices about where we put our energy" and I felt accepted by that.

T3, like T2 and S1, described a reciprocal interaction as a pervasive part of his experience of disengagement. Similar to T2, T3 tended to think that if engagement was not happening he needed to do

what was necessary to engage S1. When T3 experienced disengagement he responded with an increase in talking, hoping to generate and experience engagement. Ironically, he thought his solution to talk more prevented him from achieving his goal of experiencing engagement. His solution to solving the problem of what he perceived as his disengagement became the problem itself.

T3 - When he disengages I become more energetic. I am looking for something . . . I am not shutting up. When I work hard to be engaged the opposite happens. If I would stop talking he would start. When he is connecting I slow down and say what I want to say.

S1 and T2 had a difficult time connecting with each other. They both expressed frustration with their efforts to be connected in a way that felt good to them. Eventually they lost their interest in being engaged either during the session or before the session even begins. S1 described his experience of disengagement as a reaction to something that T2 was doing. He "checked out" when T2 was focused on the case. T2 and S1 had different orientations to supervision. S1 was interested in the person of the therapist, T2 was interested in focusing on the client. When T2 focused on the clients, which was important to him, S1 said this gave him permission to check out, be disengaged. T2's agenda seemed to put S1 to sleep. S1 reached the conclusion that the opportunity to be engaged with T2 was just not available. S1 did not indicate that he and T2 discussed this process of S1 checking out.

S1 - When they [supervisees] talk about the case in a certain way it is a monologue . . . The extended long monologues seem to kind of put me to sleep. [They] give me permission to check out or something . . . I may check out during supervision . . . I'm wondering if the supervisees are aware of when I am checked out . . . I experience him as distracted . . . enough that I am aware of it and recognize it . . . When he talks about a case I'll get this feeling he's just sort of somewhere else in telling me about the case . . . It is the length of time when he seems to drone on and giving these descriptives that don't seem to reflect much about himself. [There is] no window there for me to understand what the supervisee's asking about or really talking about in terms of himself. I'm interested in him in supervision in dealing with the person of the therapist and his own involvement and I am not hearing that, I guess. So I am kind of checking out or seeing no windows for viewing internally the person of the therapist.

Interviewer - What prevents you from engagement?

S1 - He is too busy. I have fallen in a kind of symmetrical response that it isn't that important to me either. When I make the decision, it's not that important, [I say to myself] "conserve your energy".

T2 described himself reaching a point (in the session he was viewing) where he simply was not interested in being engaged with S1. T2 described this as a lack of motivation from him and in part a response to S1's lack of motivation.

T2 - Sometimes we are engaged, sometimes we're not. I have a love/hate relationship about it. When we are not engaged I may not be motivated to do anything about it. Think it is same for him, some days I think he has no desire to be engaged and he is just getting through the hour like I am . . . On this day I didn't want to be engaged. It is more exciting to be engaged but sometimes I just don't do it. [I'm] just not doing more than putting in my time. If I were honest with him I would tell him that being a therapist is not the most important thing to me. It would have felt engaged to say that.

Responsibility

There were times when participants described their experience in supervision as if they had little choice about how to respond. At other times they focused on their abilities and efforts to shape and create the sessions in a way they felt was satisfying. Each of the participants had a different perception of how he/she was attempting to take responsibility for his/her experience in supervision such as engagement, disengagement, finding solutions for clients, personal growth, and professional growth. Responsibility has been defined as the

ability to respond. This section examines the participants' descriptions as they clustered around their abilities to create and respond to participating in supervision.

As T2 watched the tape, he noticed that he was operating from a belief that he was powerless in supervision, as if he could only react to what S1 wanted. Typically, he either rejected or accommodated what he felt S1 wanted. T2 seemed a bit surprised when it struck him that he had the choice to speak up about feeling unsafe and ask S1 to stop.

T2 - In the future I can say to myself "I can talk about my feelings and I can stop when I feel unsafe." I have some power in the moment when I feel unsafe . . . If I said what I felt it would have gotten richer.

When T3 felt that engagement with S1 was not what T3 would like it to be, T3 took responsibility by testing the waters to see if it was safe. He made an assessment of S1's availability and based his self-disclosure and efforts for engagement on that.

T3 - I guess I feel like I take little risks, you know, it's sort of like I put my little bait out and see how he does. So for most of the session he hasn't been there so it's going to be really hard for me to plunge into a risk now, a big one, I'll do little ones.

T4 thought there was a conflict with S2 about the theoretical models they each used with clients. T4 would not share information about clients that he felt were not amenable to S2's model because it would produce conflict that he wanted to avoid. T4's basic response to

a difference of opinion with his supervisor was to accommodate him. T4 felt it was particularly difficult to hide his differences with S2 during live supervision. In live supervision he felt more obligated to use S2's model.

T4 - I once had a client where his (S2's) model was inappropriate and I removed that client from supervision. I thought it wasn't good for the client . . . I had more freedom to do what I wanted with tape than with live . . . I felt live was not good for client because of a model conflict. I was afraid I would disappoint him if I did it [therapy] different than he wanted . . . I didn't want to create friction, dampen his enthusiasm, poop on his party . . . I don't want to push his buttons or cause him not to like me because the position he is in I want him to very much like me.

S1 commented on his awareness of taking responsibility for his own growth and engagement. He suggested that his own personal history was not something which was automatically left outside the door just because he was a supervisor. He had to push himself to take responsibility for feeling engaged in supervision. He indicated that it may be easy for a supervisor to expect the supervisee to take responsibility for engagement. S1's experience with taking responsibility evolved to where he saw himself distinguishing between taking responsibility for his own experience and not the supervisee's in the form of supervision outcome. At some level S1 indicated that the supervisee was trying to figure out

his agenda. Sl's solution to this was to be more direct with his own agenda and take responsibility for his own experience.

Sl - Part of my own person-of-the-self as a supervisor is . . . the garbage I carry with me . . . I have been nurtured in the context of somebody else taking responsibility for that [engagement]. Part of my own therapy and growth has been to try . . . to push for growth for myself in that area. To just push myself, not letting myself get by with making the jump that this is somebody else's responsibility. It's mine . . . when I see that, I'm always aware of the reality that I've got to push myself, I've got to take charge of making sure this is my responsibility, It doesn't come naturally . . . After having looked at the other two tapes, I . . . see some things but don't always follow up on them. Those are part of my issues as a supervisor . . . I am wondering if we check out at the spots where we don't assume responsibility for our own agendas . . . Point where I check out is where I don't have the guts or the energy to . . . just . . . pick up the responsibility for my own agenda . . . I have gotten more trusting of just waiting for the propitious moment . . . [to] take responsibility for your own reactions and response and let go of outcome. I'm trying to find a way to take care of my own agenda for myself . . . If I make it my agenda to (take him) into deeper waters, I get more anxious, more mechanical and more

tense and I don't like the way I am coming across. If I set the agenda (for him) and then I don't do it I get into syndromes like "I failed" . . . My responsibility is to be more direct about what I see my role is. It's not his responsibility to try to guess that.

S1 wanted to take responsibility for his part in what happens in supervision, but he was not willing to do all the work to make something happen. When he felt that T2 was not meeting him half way, he did not see it as his duty to get him interested. He decided to conserve his energy for when T2 was interested. S1 took full responsibility for his choice to be disengaged.

S1 - I'm thinking . . . "have I just got lazy or am I conserving energy or am I saying 'fuck it, I'm not going to get all upset'", I'm not going to upset myself . . . I'm going to get through my day and enjoy life. I am thinking I am not short-changed. I just need to get through this too. I am not going to extend myself. That's the channel I'm on . . . if somebody wants to take responsibility with me of engaging, Jesus Christ, man, I'm ready . . . which I think is kind of healthy, not necessarily lazy. I don't see myself as being very lazy, but I see myself as kind of not getting too upset anymore about things that if somebody is busy, well, they're busy.

S2 saw his responsibility differently from S1. S2 did not mention any concern with feeling engaged or disengaged with supervisees. For S2

the focus was on the client, not the interaction between supervisor and supervisee. Responsibility was likewise focused on the client. S2 saw himself as a colleague with the supervisee, with each of them focusing on solving the client's problem. From this perspective, the supervisee would not have any conflicts with S2 personally, only a difference of opinion about how to work with the client.

S2 - Windows of opportunity are responsibility and privilege of supervisor to open as well as student . . . From the client's point of view I think I have responsibility to help him [T1] do the very best job he can helping the client achieve his or her [own] goals . . . I add information that I may think is useful...I am not . . . as a supervisor saying I want you to take a particular approach . . . If he [T4] had an issue he felt strongly about I would still expect him to broach that issue with me . . . I don't think he would back off on an issue of conflict.

In contrast to S2's expectation, T4 felt strongly that S2 imposed his model of therapy on him at the beginning of the semester and that by the end of the semester it was still an unresolved issue.

Supervisors may have a tendency to think that their duty as supervisor is to take responsibility for the supervisees' growth and responsibility. S1 noticed a similar response with T3 taking responsibility for his clients in a way that S1 thought unnecessary. S1's model of supervision was that he was not responsible for changing

the supervisee. He used a similar approach in viewing therapists' interactions with clients.

S1 - He thinks he should be different in order to deal with these people and their problems . . . He was feeling like, he was the one who was responsible for their change . . . that he can change the people. He has no responsibility to change them, and he has no responsibility for being the type of person that he thinks is necessary for helping them change. I sense that he was feeling like that was sort of giving up something. He kind of wants to be this way and hasn't been able to be that way and it's a little disappointing . . . Maybe he wanted me to help him know how to be that way and I was saying "you are the way you ought to be".

Interestingly, S1 commented on how T3 may be taking too much responsibility for the clients' experience, and T3 commented on the issue of taking too much responsibility for S1's experience of engagement in the supervision sessions.

T3 - I am making it as comfortable as possible wanting him to be here, what I was doing was insanity . . . I should let him meet his own needs. I feel like it is really my job to make him feel more engaged that is what it really comes down to. Thinking about it, I think my whole struggle in the session is to connect. My errant solution has the opposite

effect. I am dependent on him if connection is going to happen.

The supervisees frequently approached supervision without asking themselves what they wanted to get out of it. They tended to approach supervision from a perspective where they would be meeting the needs of the supervisor rather than the supervisor meeting their needs. Taking responsibility for their own needs became a process of protecting themselves from their supervisor. Their needs became the need to survive. The supervisees commonly accommodated the supervisors to protect themselves.

T4 punctuated an experience of attempting to take more responsibility for getting supervision from a model that was important to him. He felt that he was "imposed" on and had no choice but to accommodate his supervisor. Interestingly, T4 turned to tactics he had learned in therapy of taking a one-down position with clients and used them with his supervisor.

T4 - I [took] him an article on Gestalt therapy . . . The next time we met he told me he found it philosophically unpalatable . . . to make the client so responsible . . . I was up against having to use [his model] to please my supervisor . . . Wouldn't want to offend [him] for personal and political reasons . . . I accommodated him somewhat . . . I didn't feel like I had the space to say "this feels like I am being imposed on" . . . [I] wondered how to tell him about [his] imposition [and] be honest that I am not

interested in kissing his butt, but I don't want to be a jerk about it . . . I'm gauging him, looking for an opening . . . As I look at it now, I went one-down a little to say "I know those were ideas that you had" . . . [I] said I was doing them but I felt I wasn't doing them well and I wasn't doing what you thought . . . He became more interested when I incorporated his ideas . . . One of the reasons I was struggling to do his model is that I wasn't comfortable with it . . . If I'd insulted his model of therapy I don't know if he'd of been straight with me . . . that's real important to him and he was excited about it. If I had somehow insulted him it probably would have irritated him and I'm not sure he would have told me about it [irritating him]. I'm wondering if I can interact with him in a way that doesn't put him on a pedestal. If it is ok to interact with him as equal?

T4's experience was very similar to the supervisee in Martin, Goodyear, and Newton's (1987) intensive case study with one supervisee. The supervisee in that study identified one of the worst aspects of a semester of supervision as the sense of rejection when efforts were made to have the supervisor accept her model. Ironically, she was also trying to get the supervisor to assist her in using Gestalt therapy.

It is interesting to note that S2 commented that he was intentionally trying to get T4 to use a different model than the one T4 was comfortable with. S2 had discussed T4's progress as a therapist

with his colleagues and decided that T4 needed to learn more than the model that he brought with him to the program. S2 indicated that he was intentionally rejecting S2's model of therapy as a means of stimulating T4's professional growth.

T2 focused more on taking responsibility for his supervisors' agenda than on his own experience. He forfeited his own position and chooses to accommodate what he thought was S1's agenda. When he was spontaneous and real with S1, he feared that he would be punished for it. He entered supervision with the expectation that the more energy S1 had, the more cautious he needed to be.

T2 - S1 was saying "I was really tired in our last session. I said "yeah, you did [seem tired]." When I said that I thought "oh god, maybe you shouldn't say that" . . . When [this time] he said his energy was up a notch I thought . . . "oh, now I'm going to be looking for it the notches are up now" . . . I thought this was going to be more energizing than the last one so I'll be looking for how that will play out . . . I'm more focused on their [the supervisors'] agenda than mine . . . I have the same tension with clients. I think part of when I'm not using the [supervision] process it's like I've decided it's not my time, I'm just putting in time and going on about my way, just getting through it because I have to . . . I show up for supervision not in a user mode but a "do it for you mode" which is crazy. In my old setting you didn't want to do it [supervision] you had

to for them, which is crazy. I don't start with a user friendly I am going to get what I need from this, how to be a therapist. I pay my time then I go. Just getting through cause I have to.

T2 responded to his experience of confusion by assuming that there must be something wrong with him. He thought that supervision had a strong hierarchical nature to it and he responded by hiding his direct thoughts about this. He viewed the supervisor as having the power and the control in the relationship which greatly limited his abilities or opportunities to respond.

T2 - I knew I was confused but [I] take too much responsibility [for my confusion], I assume when [I'm] in a [lower] hierarchical position that I am confused because I am not bright enough. I am not working fast enough. I missed some vocabulary word or something . . . He is the supervisor therefore he is right in asking . . . it's not that he hasn't been listening it is that I haven't explained it well enough. I don't have enough power yet to think the reason I am confused is that he asks confusing questions . . . [To] say "I'm confused" . . . I spend so much energy hiding it . . . I own too much of the responsibility of the confusion in this session and most supervision. This whole issue of power and control is a theme that is really big in my supervision.

T1 limited his ability to respond by monitoring whether S2 was going to offer suggestions or ask questions. T1 thought that S2's agenda was to mentor and advise him. T1 thought that he could not be open and honest when S2 was sticking to his agenda. From T1's perspective, there appeared to be an unspoken hierarchy where S2's agenda dictated whether T1 pursues his own agenda. T1 responded to his experience of hierarchy by avoiding any extreme behaviors, he monitored and moderated his responses.

T1 - I'm reading his response determining whether the ice is getting thin or not, whether to back off with it or to proceed with it. So I think it would depend on if he had an answer for some stuff, an immediate response, then I think I would back off. If he had questions and inquisitiveness I think I probably would have allowed myself to be as open and excruciatingly honest as I would see appropriate and maybe that's the flag source . . . When he's wanting to know what I'm thinking, he'll be questioning, when he's not he's wanting to advise to mentor to inform.

Interviewer - As you're talking, in my mind I'm visualizing almost as if there's a point there where you have an opportunity to move to an adult/adult relationship with him.

T1 - Instead of a parent/child . . . How true that is. I think that's an excellent way to describe it. What keeps it in the parent/child, adult/adult, instead of parent/parent

or adult/adult all the time, part of that I suppose, could be the . . . perceived power differential, the perceived threat . . . I have been moderate in how much risk I am willing to take . . . in talking about his [S2's] relationship with me. I think even, when I was saying to him, what I thought about being open and the power differential [in our relationship] I was being moderate.

During my interview with S2, the issue of parent/adult interactions was mentioned briefly by me. S2 thought that the interactions in his supervision sessions were "all adult to adult."

T1 responded during most of his supervision by assessing how safe it was for him to be honest and monitoring his responses. Supervision for T1 was not so much self exploration and growth as it was learning how to please his supervisor. He felt like a hypocrite because he talked about the importance of being open and honest and he was closed and withholding of his thoughts.

T1 - I think S2's perception would be very different . . . So I'm left to make a judgement of whether I trust. Do I take a chance and trust S2's perception and expect that my interaction can be different because of that willingness to trust and take a risk? . . . My needs (from supervision) are to be real in the process . . . To say what I think and feel and be attended to as a real person . . . Part of me wants to be inquisitive [but] I self-monitor, "is this going to be o.k.?" I'm guarded, semi-guarded. I tell S2 what he wants

to know, needs to know. It's tiring after a while . . . At the same time of being real, we're making good judgments or discernment about which part of yourself you share and which parts you don't, to be useful or effective . . . I want to be . . . up front and honest . . . so it's . . . hypocritical . . . to sit in a room with a person and, for whatever reasons, or rationalizations, or excuses, to potentially know that you are not saying the things that you might could be saying. So I need to figure out why is it I'm not saying it and decide whether I have good reasons or don't have good reasons.

T1 thought that there was a power differential or hierarchical nature in supervision where he had to be careful to protect himself with the supervisor. However, he did seem to have some power when he chose whether to participate in an interaction that he felt was hierarchical. In this example, he felt that S2 was trying to take a hierarchical position of "therapizing" him. T1 turned the tables and took a covert hierarchical position by standing back and chuckling at S2. He waited for S2 to make his move or set the tone for the sessions and then T1 responded in a way that he thought was safe and appropriate. In some ways T1 was in a hierarchial position or a position of power in the way in which he waited for his supervisor to commit himself. From that position he could either reject S2's agenda or play along in a covert way.

Interviewer - What happens between you and S2 when you feel like you need to be coming at it from a perspective that is different than yours?

T1 - I feel like it gives me an opportunity to be appropriately respectful [laughter] and attending and be careful not to let my pride and arrogance and self-confidence in . . . In supervision sessions, I perceive sometimes he's doing a brief job (brief therapy session) on me. He's asking me to predict in the future and talk about how my life will be different, all the classic little phrases and cliches. I kind of chuckle inside when I think that is happening and other times that doesn't seem to be happening and it seems to be more genuine and congruent with where he's at . . . with the comments he makes to me. And so I was coming into this session thinking to myself "I wonder . . . how's this going to be similar or different, what's going to happen?"

T1's experience of therapy being done on him was similar to Tyler and Tyler's (1988) observations that supervisors used therapy techniques and models with supervisees.

When the supervisees were not responding by accommodating their supervisors, they responded in a diplomatic fashion. When the supervisees were accommodating, they did what they thought the supervisor wanted them to do. When they were diplomatic they were

trying to say what was important to them in a way that would not upset their supervisor. T1 struggled with wanting to tell S2 what was important to him, but was not sure that he could do it in a diplomatic way.

T1 - It's hard to say "you trashed my using hypnotherapy!" That's not true, he didn't trash it, he did not respect it. When I think that he doesn't see that as [being] useful as other forms of brief practice, that he thinks are so valid, . . . it feels as if it was trashed, which I didn't say to him.

T2 responded in a diplomatic way to clients by letting them run on in their conversations and did not involve himself. He got into what he called his "potted plant mode". T2 preferred to respond in therapy with planned interventions and techniques. He preferred supervision to be the same way. When supervision lacked the structure T2 wanted, he responded with his potted plant mode where he "just listens and sits there". When this happened he thought that there was nothing that the supervisor could do to break him out of it. He did not like that he responded this way but he felt safe doing it.

T2 - [In therapy sessions] When I follow my own interests then it is more fun. If I am going to do a certain technique I love those hours. But if I just have to listen to hours and hours of running on like a Hollywood plot, [and sit there] like a potted plant, I hate that . . . you're not there to meet your own needs, just theirs. I might enjoy

supervision if I knew before the hour what track I was going down. But it makes no difference if he is talking or listening, if I am in my potted plant mode. Potted plant is boring but it is safe.

T2's experience of listening to clients "running on like a Hollywood plot" was similar to S1's experience in supervision of listening to T2 run on about the details of the case. Both mentioned how it was easier to not take the responsibility of making supervision more interesting. It was less interesting but safer and easier to let the other person run on.

T2 mentioned that once he got in a certain frame of mind, it made no difference what the supervisor did to interact with him. This suggested that supervisees can have powerful intrapersonal experiences going on (perhaps from previous supervision experiences) that interpersonal dynamics have little or no effect on. This concept is expanded on in the theme of regression.

Regression

S2 made a comment during the interviews that triggered my attention to the supervisees' descriptions of projecting onto their supervisors experiences from their past.

S2 - He is not demonstrating that he feels my support as I see it now [on video] . . . What I am doing for support may not be powerful enough to communicate it to him...Or he is so turned inward that he is unaware of what I am giving.

Wolinsky in his book about the everyday trances in which we all participate, makes the following comments on age regression:

Whether we care to admit it or not, most of us experience spurts of age regression on a fairly frequent basis. If only for 30 seconds after being reprimanded by a boss, spouse or friend, we all know how it feels to cascade back in time psychologically and emotionally. The problem is that the adult in present time automatically and unknowingly age regresses to get what she wants. When this happens the individual cannot adequately experience present time (pp. 79-80).

The concept of regression is consistent with a constructivist perspective in that reality for the individual (how they experience present time) may have very little to do with ontological reality. How supervisors and supervisees experience their reality of supervision, how they experience present time, may have more to do with their experiences in the past or ideas of what the future holds than anything that is going on in the present.

If supervisees were asked if they age regress or project experiences of the past onto their supervisors, they may not be aware of it. However, when watching themselves on video tape they noticed without any prompting from me the influence of past events and relationships on their current interactions.

T4 had focused during the interviews on the conflict he felt with S2 about which model of therapy to use. T4 feared that there would be some possible retaliation from S2 if he addressed this conflict. However, he did not think that his fear was grounded in any interaction that he had with S2, and in fact it would probably be o.k. to be open with him. When this conflict is viewed from the perspective of

regression and projecting past experiences into it, another way of understanding supervision opened up. If the supervisor is displaying supportive behavior, that support can only be accepted if the supervisee is open to it. It seems to me the solution is not to be more supportive but to look at how the experience of being supported is blocked.

T4 - I haven't been as consciously aware as I am now, as we speak of it, but I have been aware of S2 being sort of a fatherly kind of person to me . . . I was so in the process of . . . how I was going to personally let S2 know that I really didn't want to do the whole [deleted for reasons of anonymity] model. So that was part of my personal struggle . . . I experience S2 as having a very strong presence. I didn't feel like I wanted to or really needed to challenge that but [I] didn't know how I was going to take care of myself in the presence of someone who was presenting himself that strongly . . . in some ways he has a fatherly part to himself . . . he will get relatively close to you and just stare right through your eyeballs. That's a little bit disconcerting . . . that's pretty intimidating . . . There's a formidable presence about S2 . . . parts of that I really like. There's also parts of it that you wonder, well, what would happen if he got pissed off? So that part, I think, is my stuff, worrying about if he got irritated how would he respond. It would be like a father yelling at a son, which my father did do. My father was a very formidable character

himself . . . So I could see how I was transferring or projecting some of that [his past experience with his father] into this.

Interviewer - What's the emotional component of that, what does it feel like to be in that situation?

T4 - I guess it's scary . . . one [reason] is from a fatherly kind of perspective you don't want to disappoint this person.

T4 began to make further connections with his experiences of age regressing or projecting onto S2 aspects of his father. In particular, he was aware of how it affected his availability for a collegial relationship and desire for approval.

T4 - My father would not want any one of his children to interact on equal level so I may be projecting. I'm sure one of my issues with my father was getting approval cause I didn't get much. [It is important to get] approval with all people I interact with.

T2 experienced what I call "supervision regression." He regressed back to the experiences he had in previous supervision. He received supervision, in the past, that focused on his personal issues and related them to the cases he was working with. S1 had a similar focus on the person of the therapist that seemed to trigger in T2 experiences from previous supervision. As T2 reviewed his sessions on tape, he commented on his expectations and fears that his supervision with S1 would be a repeat of his previous supervision. When T2 regressed to his

previous supervision experiences, they became a filter by which he judged and interpreted his current interactions. He was not available to any changes in the current interactions with his supervisor, he was only available to see what was happening through his filters.

T2 - He asks me for a feeling; we talk around it then he asks me again. " What are your feelings?" When he talks about feelings I'm more susceptible and vulnerable its turn the volume up . . . Anxiety, that it is going to be my therapeutic issues. I wonder do I take it beyond my own perceptions where he is interested in going because I have had other supervisors that wherever you start it, it ends up your pain or your treatment issues are the ones getting tinkered with. That's the agenda I show up with . . . Even when he asks one feeling question I may go way down the line with it. I can see where I think he is going. What I used to always get was "your personal therapeutic issues are in the way here" . . . At that time in my life they probably were in the way, that's my anxiety too . . . I don't respond with a feeling statement but I know he has asked me. At some level I know he asked and I am going to put it through my filters and everything he says no matter what he says I am going to put it in that category.

T2's experiences from the past prevented him from trusting his experiences in the present and recent past with S1. It seemed that S1 could offer all the support and encouragement in the world but until T2

could answer the question, "Is it possible to be safe in supervision?", S1's efforts to create a safe environment would have little effect.

T2 - I ask myself "Am I going to be safe?" Because I have had experiences where I wasn't. I think he'll analyze my feeling and that doesn't feel safe. I don't want to be made fun of which has happened [in the past with other supervisors].

Interviewer - Has S1 ever done anything to make you feel unsafe?

T2 - No, it's probably mostly my projection.

It was important to T3 to feel engaged with his supervisor. S1 had mentioned that he enjoyed T3's ability to be engaging. As T3 watched and talked about engagement, he became aware of what he defined as "some old patterns". The old patterns he described were representative of the way in which he regressed back to his interactions with his father. As stated by Wolinsky, "The problem is that the adult in present time automatically and unknowingly age regresses to get what she wants". T3 described how he used old patterns to have S1 engaged with him.

T3 - It feels like it did with my father, "pay attention to me, look at me, look at me, look at me, look at me", that kind of thing. What it does for me is that, I am acting in a way that I don't find particularly functional or makes me feel good because it's not congruent with who I am. It's who I might of been and it's sort of pulling up old

reserves, but I feel like, in a lot of ways, I can attack that. I resent kind of having to use my old patterns that I wanted to leave behind when I was seventeen.

Interviewer - Yeah, so in order to engage S1 it almost feels like you have to go back to how it was with your dad and be the "look at me, look at me?"

T3 - Yeah, 'cause when I amuse him he laughs . . . But I hate that [having to engage him in that way] . . . He does it [engages] sometimes where he's engaged because of my intellect. He's engaged because of what I'm doing in terms of not the [child], but . . . the professional. When he engages when I'm being professional that feels ok, it's when I'm doing my jesterish stuff and I engage him that makes me feel shitty. I've worked hard . . . sometimes I feel like I need to do something to please . . . so my natural thing . . . was to please . . . I think part of that is like I sometimes feel like the dog and pony show. I need to do stuff to entertain them to keep them involved to keep them attentive. I think the double-whammy is that he's also my chair so that I really need to please him.

During the interviews S1 commented on how he felt more present with T3 when he was not talking on and on to get his attention. He indicated that he felt T3's talking was a way to avoid dealing with "what he wants to work on". They both noticed and preferred it when T3 was not doing his "jesterish" stuff, but they did not talk about it

openly. T3's tendency to use old patterns of interaction to get S1 to "pay attention" by doing "jesterish stuff" combined with what S1 described as his history of having others take responsibility for engaging him. T3 and S1's personal dynamics appeared to have an effect on their supervisory relationship. For T3, the process of using old patterns of interaction was automatic.

Interviewer - [continuing the dialogue with T3] Is that an automatic process?

T3 - Yes . . . I am on automatic - like a court jester. When looking at it in that way I almost don't give people the chance to talk. I hate that but I feel disengagement happening. Feel like I need to work really hard when the disengagement is happening.

Interviewer - And be energetic?

T3 - More energetic, sometimes I almost feel like I'm trying to be a clown and I'm not really . . . I imagine . . . myself starting to juggle and wanting to do things. It's an odd thing . . . It's automatic, as I'm doing it I'm conscious of it. I'm thinking "Stop, slow down, back off, you don't need to do it. It's really ok for him to be disengaged and for me to just carry on in a normal, reasonable way". But it's automatic, I'm doing it then I become conscious of it. When I watch it I see it happens.

T3's process of going on automatic reverberated throughout his approach towards and experience of supervision. It effected his experience of engagement and complicated the issue of whether he was working to take care of his own needs or S1's.

Flexibility

As some of the supervisees described significant aspects of the sessions, it became clear that they had different needs and ways of viewing supervision from their supervisors. Some of the most noticeable experiences that the participants struggled with were identified as hierarchy, unequal power, safety, responsibility for engagement, and choice of therapeutic model to be used. The overall theme running through these conflicts was the experience of anxiety related to supervisees' perceptions of being in a one-down position with their supervisor.

The focus of this paper and the intent of an Interpretive paradigm is not to debate the ontological existence of hierarchy but to report on the participants' interpreted experiences of supervision which may or may not sound like hierarchy. A different approach, such as a feminist approach, may begin with or focus on the existence of hierarchy and the different supporting evidence for that assumption (Luepnitz, 1988).

The supervisees pointed out moments in the sessions when they experienced a change in feeling like they were in a one-down position. During these moments the supervisees were not accommodating or approaching their supervisors from a diplomatic stance. The difference

in these moments from the other interactions was the supervisees' perception of flexibility in the supervisor to momentarily take a one-down or equilateral stance with them.

For one of the supervisees, the change from experiencing anxiety and being in a one-down position came when the supervisor was self-disclosing. For another supervisee, this happened when the supervisor appeared to be learning from him. In both of these examples the supervisor moves from being one-up to being on an equal or possibly a reversed hierarchical position.

The experience of changing positions was not limited to the supervisees. S1 described an experience of moving out of a one-up position to a position of being equal or one-down. S2 did not describe a change in his position but he did view his position differently from his supervisees. He viewed himself as being in a predominantly collegial, adult to adult position where he was learning alongside of the supervisee.

S1 gave the impression that there was an expectation that because of his role as supervisor he should have answers he should know what to do and not be lost. He saw himself growing in a direction where he could be more comfortable with not having the answers and be more of a person instead of more of his role.

S1 - I was struck by, how he (author of book, Keene) said men really need to be more comfortable with their lostness. We need to get more comfortable being lost. [It's as if there is an expectation that] . . . I should know, because

I'm in this role, I should have some solutions . . . I probably have not handled that [feeling lost about how to help] with the kind of comfort that Keene's statement [it is o.k. to be lost], might now enable me to grow.

When S1 shared his personal pain and presents his personal struggles he was no longer in a one-up supervision position. He saw T3 trading places with him as T3 tried to help him. As he stepped out of his role, T3 could step out of his role. S1 had stated earlier that it was important to him that the supervisee experience himself as competent and capable and to not be viewed as an expert. When he stepped outside of his role as supervisor by sharing who he was as a person, he seemed to accomplish his goal. The supervisees did not seem to experience themselves as competent and professional colleagues as a result of supporting statements. They tended to have this experience when the supervisor was flexible, honest, and self-disclosing enough to momentarily switch roles.

S1 - I am sharing some pieces of my own pain, I haven't done that much . . . it's sort of like I felt out of my role and he was able to be, enter into a different level of role with me that I had not experienced with him . . . as if the roles have changed. He is supervising me in that he is trying to understand me, to hear what I am saying.

S1 sharing his own "stuff" or his growing edge was a recurring theme of importance with T3. T3 feels there was a reciprocal relationship with his willingness to share his vulnerabilities and S1's

ability to share himself. From T3's perspective, S1 was in a hierarchical position that required him to maintain that position a lack of self-disclosure. As long as S1 was not self-disclosing or taking a risk, T3 experienced him in a one-up position.

As I read back over T3's comments I noticed that he and S1 mix descriptions of role and relationship together. T3 commented on how S1's self-disclosure took away the feeling of hierarchy, yet he still respected him as a supervisor. It occurred to me that supervisees were comfortable with hierarchy as it related to the role of being a supervisor. They wanted the supervisor to know more than them on a professional level. However, supervision also becomes a relationship and they did not want hierarchy in the relationship.

T3 - I like his self disclosure. I can learn from him, it makes him human. It allows me to be more vulnerable. Although the struggles are different, they are on the same plane. I feel more connected when he shares . . . I like it . . . it makes it not in such a hierarchical way . . . He's got tremendous amounts for me to learn from and if he discloses to me it doesn't take that away and doesn't take my respect from him away as an individual and therapist and supervisor . . . It makes it a varied experience and that is great. It enhances it because it allows me to be more vulnerable . . . Because you're on a more even plane. Even though our struggles may be different they're ongoing struggles that are being articulated . . . I think that it

is difficult for supervisors to get down to the level of the supervisee, when he shares his personal issues, I like that.

Interviewer - It struck me the way you said the term, "It makes him more human", and I was wondering is there more you can say?

T3 - I think the way that the roles are set up with supervisor supervisee, the focus is on the supervisee which . . . to a good extent it should be, but if someone like S1 is just asking me questions and looking at my process he stands removed and above. When he can come down, and that's really the visualization, when he can come down [to my level]. I know he's going through his own processes and struggles as everybody is, I don't know what they are and I don't know if they are a problem for him and I don't know if it's all together for him and he is done with that aspect of [growing and learning]. I assume from S1, because of other contexts, that he is kind of struggling through certain things . . . then he comes down, he's sitting in a chair on the same level with me. He is still respected and higher in terms of what I've got to get from him, but it also means that we can share something here and I have something to offer and that's what I mean he becomes more human. It becomes more like a real relationship. I think that's a

very difficult thing for people . . . particularly . . . supervisors, just because of their status, to understand that they can still kind of get down and still be having that status . . . He is present in his role as supervisor and in that way he is pushing me. What would be helpful is his sharing of his struggle especially if he is struggling with [something] . . . similar . . . I feel like he is taking a risk by self disclosing, a calculated risk, but still a risk . . . I would value that he is doing something that is difficult for him even if it were not self-disclosure . . . What would be helpful is his sharing of his struggle.

Hutt, Scott, and King (1983) found that in supervisory relationships supervisees identified as positive there was mutual self-disclosure. Supervisor self-disclosure was not present in the negative supervisory relationships.

S2 said that he was in a mentor role in supervision if he liked it or not. Within the limits of that role he experiences his relationship with T4 as a colleague. S2 did not experience himself in a one-up position but he did wonder if supervisees saw him in the same way that he saw himself. When S2 said he was learning from the supervisees, he described it as collegial while they tended to describe it as a reversal of hierarchy in the relationship.

T4, like the other supervisees, was comfortable with hierarchy in terms of a supervisor's role. Most of the supervisees found an element

of hierarchy necessary and productive. However, when they were more focused on their relationship with their supervisor they did not want it to be hierarchical.

The fluctuation back and forth between role and relationship appears to me to be a vital aspect of the supervision process. The best example I can think of to describe it would be with a parent and child, say a father and son. They each have their role which has an inherent element of hierarchy in it. However, if the father can get on the floor or go out in the dirt and play with his son in a way that the father is truly enjoying himself, then there is a change in the relationship. The father has not lost his role as father in the child's eyes because he has gone exploring in the woods with him or is playing a game of chance with him but the son experiences himself and his father in a new and different relationship where the perception of hierarchy and the multiple forms of anxiety temporarily disappear.

S2 - I am learning here, this is instructive for me . . . I see all supervision and interaction with students as a learning opportunity . . . I don't know if the students view me in a learning mode? . . . Supervising is interesting because I want to learn . . . Not just about T4 or the case but about therapy.

T4 - It is like the teacher/mentor learns there is something else to learn. It is o.k. to still have a label

as supervisor (mentor/teacher) but it feels different when the supervisor can get something and I am contributing.

Interviewer - So its more like there's a qualitative shift in the relationship, the roles haven't changed necessarily in terms of whose the supervisor and whose the supervisee.

T4 - Right, but there's a qualitative shift in the feel of the relationship.

Chapter Five:
Reflections And Discussion

My Process In The Study

Despite the constructivist framework I was using I found myself trying to think of how to approach the data in a way that I would not contaminate it. I wanted to present the findings as "the truth" about supervisors' and supervisees' experiences. Prior to beginning the analysis of the data I had begun to formulate ideas from the interviews, the literature review and my own experiences in supervision. By the time I began the analysis, my hopes of following Osborne's (1990) suggestion of letting the data speak for itself was quickly fading. I came to the conclusion that there was no way that I could expect to keep my interpretations separate and objectively report on the data.

Perhaps I was suffering from the uneasiness that Heshusius (1990) refers to when a researcher has to let go of seeing themselves as expert. He suggests that interpretive researchers have to ask themselves the difficult question "Once we turn our back on a positivist belief in method, what sets us apart, as social scientists, from regular people?" (Heshusius, 1990, p.200)

The process of operating from an Interpretive and Constructivist paradigm was more of a challenge than I had imagined. The pull to return to thinking and translating the data from a conventional, functional paradigm was strong. Atkinson and Heath (1987) suggest that the researcher must avoid "seeing social phenomenon such as communication or marital satisfaction as existing 'out there', available

for the researcher to discover and measure" (p. 9). This seemed pleasurable to talk about but difficult to practice.

I tried to remain consistent to the theoretical ideals of the interpretive paradigm and a constructivist framework while at the same time trying to critique my findings from a positivist paradigm. Lincoln (1990) has elaborated on her own personal struggle to become a constructivist researcher that seemed to parallel part of my process.

We have deluded ourselves that the discourse of constructivism could resemble the discourse of other sciences, and I and others were wrong. To array the arguments of emergent-paradigm science in the raiment of conventional science is to do new-paradigm inquiry an injustice. We cannot just change the forms and interactions; we have to alter the way in which we discuss those new forms and relationships (p. 86).

I agree with Lincoln that efforts to apply positivist criteria for judging and discussing to constructivist research does not seem to fit. Accepting this, I was still left with the question, "How then does a constructivist researcher go about his/her business?"

The emergence of constructivist research appears to be in a transition of breaking away from the positivist heritage. It reminds me of the efforts of family therapists to break away from non-systemic paradigms in Psychology and Psychiatry. Atkinson, Heath, and Chenail (1991), suggest that "qualitative researchers are still rooted in positivist conceptions about the nature of knowledge . . . we believe that the trustworthiness of hypotheses, insights, or explanations cannot be established by individual researchers, regardless of the methods they use (p. 162).

The goal of research might be simply to create novel observational experiences from which new views of the social world can emerge. Research could be thought of primarily as a process that facilitates conditions ripe for a flash of insight (Atkinson, Heath and Chenail, 1990, p. 163).

Lincoln suggests that when science begins to concern itself with the constructions of reality, "rather than the 'facts' determined by scientists, we will have moved to a social science in which respondents have a strong voice" (Lincoln, 1990, p.84). This study represents my efforts to embrace the emerging paradigm and give a voice to the experiences of supervisors and supervisees.

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the experience of participating in supervision from the perspective of both supervisors and supervisees. The study attempted to go beyond researcher-generated categories of experience and examine supervisees' and supervisors' lived experience of supervision. With the aid of videotape the study was designed so that the participants were the interpreters of their own experience. In effect I was interpreting the participants' interpretations of their own experience. My interpretation consisted of familiarizing myself with the interview data and research literature to identify themes and peculiarities in the participants' experiences.

Anxiety.

Supervisees described anxiety related to being evaluated by their supervisor as a prevailing theme in their experience. Supervisors were required to evaluate the supervisees at the end of the semester with a letter grade. However, the supervisees' concerns were not related to grades. It was more that they generally experienced supervision from a one-down or powerless position. They associated their anxiety with just being in a relationship with someone who has power over them regardless of the supervisor's behavior. From a constructivist perspective the issue is not whether supervisors really do have power over supervisees. The important issue from a constructivist perspective is that the supervisees' experience that supervisors do have power is real for the supervisees.

Based on the supervisees' reality that "supervisors are in a hierarchical position", they were sensitive to any indication from the supervisor that they would abuse their power. The area of conflict that was most frequently mentioned was the theoretical approach to be used in supervision. The supervisees perceived themselves to be in a position of having to use an approach that was compatible with their supervisor's approach. This included whether to be client-focused or self-focused. The supervisees gave the impression that they would have to accommodate their supervisor in this regard.

In general, the supervisees did not think that their supervisors were abusive of the power that they had. However, this was not enough

for them to relax. The supervisees' perceptions of the potential threat from the supervisors was substantial enough for them to remain guarded.

Supervisees described the fear of being found out by their supervisor as an imposter or not having answers to their supervisors' questions. These fears became a part of their decision-making process as they asked themselves what aspects of themselves and their interactions with clients to share with their supervisor. When choosing between appearing competent and exposing vulnerabilities, the participants generally chose to appear competent.

Supervisees indicated that what they were showing their supervisors on the outside was very different from what was going on inside of them. Their behaviors indicated that they were eager to please their supervisors because they were interested in what the supervisor had to tell them. The supervisees indicated that the motivation was to please their supervisor and they went to great lengths not to disappoint them.

Considering the lack of self-disclosure on the part of the supervisees, I wondered if the supervisors were aware of the anxiety the supervisees experienced. The supervisors' descriptions of supervision indicated that they experienced supervision as a safe, trusting environment in which the supervisees could self-disclose any aspect of their professional and personal life. If the supervisors were aware of the supervisees' fears, their descriptions did not indicate the intensity with which the supervisees experienced them and the extent to which they colored their interactions and decisions. The supervisors

did not mention anxiety as a significant aspect of their own experience in supervision.

Empowerment.

Empowerment was frequently pointed out by supervisors and supervisees as a significant aspect of their supervisory experience. There appeared to be a very personal quality to empowerment; it meant different things at different times to different people. The participants' experiences of empowerment ranged from support to confrontation and were interpreted differently over time. As T4 reported, what he experienced as imposing at one point was later viewed as empowering. This suggests that identifying what empowers supervisees is a complex process that requires understanding both a short- and long-term understanding of what is empowering from the supervisees' perspective.

Empowerment was generally referred to by the participants in the sense that the supervisor could empower the supervisee. This raises the question, "Is power something that comes from outside an individual and one person can give it to another?" The supervisors referred to empowerment as helping the supervisees become aware of the abilities they already possessed.

The supervisors' descriptions of empowerment reminds me of the Zen buddhist tradition of enlightenment. The monks come to the master for assistance in achieving enlightenment. However, the basic premise of the Zen tradition is that all individuals are already enlightened; they simply need to awaken to who they already are. The only change required

in the monk is to stop thinking that he needs to change or be different from who he already is. This concept was voiced by the supervisors as they commented more than once that they wanted the supervisees to realize that they knew more than they thought they knew.

Continuing with the Zen metaphor, the monk/supervisee enters into a relationship where she/he thinks the master/supervisor can enlighten/empower them, only to be frustrated that the master/supervisor has no solutions to offer them. Eventually the frustration reaches a pinnacle or satori experience and the monk awakens to the experience of being whole and complete. The relationship between the monk and the master is paradoxical in the sense that the greater the monk's efforts to seek approval from the master, the further the monk is from realizing he is already enlightened.

The supervisees appear to come into supervision approaching the supervisor in a similar manner as the monk approaches the master. While the supervisees are not seeking enlightenment, they indicate that they want the supervisors to validate them, approve of them and let them know they are personally and professionally competent. The paradoxical nature of the supervisory relationship is that the more the supervisees seek empowerment from the supervisors, the further away they are from realizing their own abilities.

The supervision process is further complicated in that the supervisees indicate that they feel threatened by the supervisor and expose only a limited amount of themselves to the supervisor. The supervisees appear to be in a double-bind. They want to expose

themselves so they can learn and be validated professionally and personally, while at the same time they are withholding personal and professional information so they will not appear incompetent to their supervisor. In their efforts to prevent being seen as an imposter they risk becoming an imposter by hiding themselves from their supervisor.

In terms of empowerment the supervisors appear to be in a double-bind of their own. By grading and evaluating the supervisees they contribute to the perception that they can empower the supervisees, in this sense encouraging supervisees to look outside themselves for validation rather than inside themselves. Supervisors are in the bind of being asked to make evaluations at the same time they are trying to get the supervisees to believe in themselves as competent and capable.

Returning to a western understanding of empowerment, it is interesting to note that the word empowerment is synonymous with "authorize", "commission", "entrust", "license", and "warrant" (Webster's Thesaurus). These synonyms suggest that the supervisor is in a position to authorize the competency of the supervisee. This definition presents the same dilemma. How does an individual experience him/herself as competent when that competency is authorized, commissioned, entrusted, licensed, or warranted by someone else? If supervisees do not learn to look for empowerment and competency in themselves, are they destined to look for higher and higher levels of acknowledgement outside themselves? A case in point is T1's description that despite all his credentials he was not confident in his own

abilities, and feared that his supervisor would expose him as an imposter.

Role.

When the participants stopped the videotape to point out a significant aspect of their session, they often associated their experiences with their perceptions of the supervisor's or supervisee's roles. They explained their behaviors as a function of what they perceived to be their roles. It was as if they objectified their own experiences to be what any supervisor or supervisee would be expected to do.

S2 and S1 had different ideas of what their roles were. S2 described his role as balancing the needs of the clients and the professional growth of the supervisee. S1 preferred focusing on the supervisee and trusting that if the supervisee appeared confident they would handle the clients appropriately. The different approaches and understanding of their roles fit with Haley's (1976, 1988) model of the two opposing orientations to supervision.

The supervisors' perceptions of what their roles were seemed to guide them in the focus of supervision and what they punctuated as significant aspects of supervision.

S2 tended to punctuate aspects of the sessions where he supported the supervisee in his decision about what course of action to take with the client. S1 punctuated the aspects of the session that were focused on the supervisee's personal growth. The supervisors were consistent in their approach with both supervisees.

The supervisees were not sure of what their role was in supervision. They indicated that supervision was different for them

depending on who the supervisor was. It seems that supervisors have developed a firm understanding of what their role is and they are confident and consistent in responding to supervisees from that role. The supervisees, on the other hand, tended to change their responses depending upon the supervisor's orientation much in the same way that a client might respond differently with a behavioral therapist than with a psychoanalytic therapist.

The supervisees' lack of a clear definition of what their role was in supervision may have contributed to their tendency to follow the supervisor's lead. S2 commented that he could envision supervisees asking themselves "How do I get that professor to know I am willing to play my role"? The implications of this statement are interesting. Are supervisees playing a role in supervision where they are not open and genuine with the supervisor? The supervisees offered numerous descriptions indicating that they would play along.

While I cannot verify that supervision is a process of learning how to play a role, I can say that I noticed that when the participants began to talk about their experience in terms of role, there was a qualitative shift in terms of their involvement in the interview process. They had less personal investment in describing the supervision process in terms of role and frequently referred to what they should or ought to do. When they talked about role they appeared to be objectifying themselves and their experience. Based on this observation, supervision would be a process of becoming less subjective and more objective. It is interesting to note that S1 indicated that he

wanted supervision to be more of a whole person to whole person experience. The supervisees in Heath and Tharp's (1991) study indicated that they wanted supervision to be more of a human interaction.

Collegiality.

The participants punctuated the experience of collegiality as a significant aspect of supervision. The supervisors tended to describe collegiality from a perspective that was consistent with their supervisory orientation. S2 described collegiality as working on an equal level with the supervisee to help the client. The experience of collegiality was generated by sharing ideas and opinions about the client. S1 was less client-focused. His description of collegiality focused on the relationship between himself and the supervisee. S1's experience of collegiality was highlighted when the supervisees presented themselves as professional, confident and competent.

For S1 and S2 an important distinction of collegiality was that it circumvented telling the supervisees what to do. S1 and S2 did not want the supervisees to view them as experts with the answers. The supervisors indicated that despite their efforts, supervisees had a tendency to view them as experts. As S2 said, "I think that supervisees tend to view supervisors as having knowledge and answers".

That supervisors desire to be colleagues and not experts appears contradictory to the organization of supervision. To begin with, the word supervision implies that the individual has super vision, i.e., they can see better. Secondly, supervisees are required to participate

in supervision with a supervisor that has been designated as an expert by a professional organization.

The supervisors indicated that they really did not think that they were experts. They may be designated as expert by virtue of their title but they did not believe that they necessarily knew more than the supervisee about how to handle a particular case. As S2 said, he was a mentor whether he wanted to be or not. The supervisors' notions of a collegial relationship appear to be more congruent with their beliefs about their expertise rather than the organizational nature of supervision. They described a collegial relationship as more energizing, fun, and engaging for them. From the supervisors' perspective, collegiality was a viable and desired aspect of supervision. They did not indicate that power or control were factors influencing their experience of collegiality. They implied that if supervisees stopped viewing them as experts there would be a greater likelihood of a collegial relationship.

For the supervisees, collegiality was more than a relationship issue. The supervisees implied that genuine collegiality would require changing the roles in supervision. The supervisors commented on their concern that the supervisees would view them as experts. Ironically, supervisees expressed the view that they did not see the supervisors as clinical experts, but they do view them as being in the role or position of expert. In fact, supervisees suggested that they know more than the supervisors concerning many of their cases. They also expressed their

belief that as long as the supervisor was in the role of expert, collegiality was not a viable option.

Collegiality appeared to be experienced by the participants with two different emphases, relationship and role. When the supervisees emphasized role they were inclined to describe collegiality as the absence of anxiety, power, and hierarchy. When they emphasized relationship they described reciprocity in learning and sharing their professional and personal struggles with each other. The supervisees appeared to believe they could experience collegiality in their relationship with their supervisor but not in terms of their role. The supervisors de-emphasized the issues of power and hierarchy that were important constructs to the supervisees and emphasized the opportunity for a collegial relationship.

Interestingly, the supervisees reported some benefits to supervisors being in a hierarchical role. They felt confident and safe at times knowing that the supervisor was ultimately responsible. In general, the supervisees were comfortable and even appreciative of hierarchical roles. However, they were uncomfortable with a hierarchical relationship.

Dual Roles.

The supervisees frequently described their concern with the different roles that supervisors employ in their lives. Supervisors were typically also professors and committee members. This concerned

the supervisees that what transpired in supervision would affect what happened in other contexts.

I think the supervisees' use of the word "roles" rather than dual relationships is significant because their interpretation is not so much a relationship issue as an issue of role. The term "role" is not used here as framework for my interpretation of the supervisees behavior; rather it appears because the supervisees used the concept of role as a way to interpret their own interaction.

When the supervisees were focused on the supervisors' dual roles they emphasized the need to protect themselves. The supervisees consistently identified dual roles as a reason for not taking risks, avoiding vulnerable situations, and self-disclosing. Dual roles were described by the supervisee as if they were a contaminant to the entire supervision process. As T3 said, "it is right there all the time". The supervisees' experiences of dual roles appear to affect their sense of empowerment, the supervisory relationship, and collegiality.

As I listened to supervisees describe dual roles as the reason for not taking risks and being honest in supervision, I began to wonder if it had become an habitual way to explain their lack of engaging behaviors. I began to get the sense that supervisees identified themselves as the victims of dual roles. According to the supervisees, they would not be open, honest, vulnerable or take risks because of the threatening environment created by dual roles. With the supervisees' experience of supervision as an unsafe environment, the process of supervision is doomed to cognitive discourse.

It is interesting to note that while this was one of the most frequently identified experiences of the supervisees, it received little attention from the supervisors. S1 did not use the term "dual roles", while S2 recognized it as an aspect of the supervisees' experience but did not think that it caused "any real problems".

I was curious to learn if the supervisees' difficulty with dual roles was unique to supervision in an academic setting. It appears that it may not be. Dual roles was reported in Heath and Tharp's (1991) study as a significant problem for supervisors in agency settings where the supervisor was the boss.

Connection.

The supervisors and supervisees spent an average of 90 minutes a week with each other during the course of the semester. Supervisees were not simply coming in for consultation about cases, they were involved in an ongoing relationship. S1 and the supervisees identified the dynamics of the supervisory relationship as a significant part of supervision. S2 focused on relationship with the supervisee in the sense of concentrating together on the case.

Sometimes supervisees described what was happening in the sessions as if they were two people playing their roles with each other. At other times the participants described the importance to them of feeling connected in a session. The supervisees described connection as the experience of feeling understood, validated and acknowledged. They identified connection occurring when they were validated not for what

they did but who they are, as T4 described it, "when he is more interested in me, in my process".

The supervisees and S1 seemed to experience confidence in the relationship when they experienced connection. The participants described the times they felt connected as "engaged" and when they did not as "disengaged". They experienced engagement as being more free to be open and honest with each other. Interestingly, for the supervisees, feeling engaged and opening up to the supervisor was a double-edged sword. They wanted the experience of engagement but they also thought it was risky.

When the supervisees chose not to engage the supervisors they tended to give reasons related to dual roles or the lack of availability of the supervisor to be engaged. S1 also indicated that part of his decision to engage was his assessment of the supervisees' willingness to be engaged.

As part of the interview process the participants began to question some of their behaviors and interpretations. As the interviews progressed the participants started identifying disengagement as their own process. They began talking about engagement as an opportunity available to them if they were willing to find the energy and take the risks of being "present" and available with each other. During the interviews the participants expressed regrets at not attempting to be more engaged and take some risks. As S1 said "I wish I had engaged him more, he is a wonderful person to engage".

It seemed that sometimes the participants simply preferred the safety of disengagement. I am reminded of a popularized quote from Virginia Satir: "people prefer the certainty of misery over the misery of uncertainty", or as T2 said, he didn't like being a potted plant, but it was safer.

Responsibility.

As the participants watched the sessions they commented not only on what had happened but indicated what they thought their part was in it. They distinguished between what they could or couldn't be responsible for. As the interviews progressed, the supervisees seemed to expand on a number of choices they thought were available to them. How the participants interpreted limitations on their responses in supervision seemed to guide their actions and interpretations.

Supervisees indicated that supervisors limited their experiences by being imposing, disrespectful, and manipulating. When this was their experience they felt angry, resentful, powerless, hostile, and resentful toward the supervisor. It was customary for the supervisees to not discuss openly these thoughts and feelings with their supervisor. Instead the supervisees tended to evaluate the situation and make decisions about how to respond to their supervisor.

The supervisees responded in various ways when they felt limited or had a negative experience with the supervisor. A frequent response was to accommodate the supervisor. As T4 said "I wouldn't want to offend him . . . I accommodated him." When the supervisees did not

think they were safe they would often do what they thought their supervisor wanted them to do.

Sometimes the supervisees responded to an experience of being powerless by being supportive of the supervisors. T1 and T2 interpreted their actions as protecting their supervisors. They explained "protecting" as not letting the supervisors know the negative thoughts and feelings they were having about the supervision process. As this was explored in the interview they began to interpret that they were really protecting themselves, although their original interpretation was that of protecting the supervisors.

Responses similar to protecting the supervisors were not wanting to disappoint the supervisors, appease them, and make them feel comfortable. As T3 said "I am making it as comfortable as possible wanting him to be here, what I was doing was insanity . . . I should let him meet his own needs." A typical pattern in the supervisees' responses when they were experiencing supervision negatively was to be cautious, withdrawn, insincerely respectful, calculating, risk avoidant, conflict avoidant and to generally present themselves differently from how they felt and thought.

While the typical response of the supervisees was not to engage in a power struggle with the supervisor, at times they took a covert approach to balancing what they perceived as an imbalance of power. T4 for example, took a one-down position and withheld clients from his supervisor after he had felt that he was being forced to use his supervisor's model of therapy. Other attempts at balancing what they

perceived to be an imbalance in power was to shut down and not participate in supervision, to "just get through the hour."

It appears to me that the supervisees had their own type of covert power in the supervisory relationship. When using videotape they are in a position to know more than the supervisor knows about the case. They can reject what the supervisor has to say and withhold any information they want from the supervisor. Frequently the supervisees described how they responded to the supervisors as waiting for them to make the first move and then responded accordingly. As T1 said, "I'm reading his response determining . . . whether to back off with it or proceed." Paradoxically, by taking a one-down position and reading the supervisor, the supervisee appeared at times to have switched the hierarchy.

It seems to me that as supervision progressed, supervisees became more adept at understanding what behaviors were valued and not valued by their supervisor. Having made an assessment of the supervisor, the supervisees proceeded to balance what they perceived to be an imbalance of power through covert means.

When the supervisees experienced supervision positively they responded by being open and honest, they would take risks, self-disclose, and respond spontaneously. Dialogue was straightforward and addressed their thoughts and feelings. They were not anxious or preoccupied with protecting themselves.

During the interviews, S2 never expressed any negative thoughts or feelings about supervision. In fact, he focused very little on his relationship with the supervisee. This seemed consistent with the

therapy model he uses. His focus was on helping the supervisee to help the client reach their goals. The behaviors S2 most frequently seemed to identify during the sessions were being supportive, asking questions to stimulate the supervisee's thinking and offering his opinion.

S2 commented that at times the supervisees did not indicate a response to his supportive statements, or questions. It appeared that S2's response in the session was to repeat his supportive behavior despite the supervisee's reaction. S2's actions and the supervisees' responses seemed consistent with Holloway's (1982, 1983) findings that "the most repetitive messages used by the supervisors were those of supportive communication" (p.233) and supportive communication was used "in response to a variety of differential messages from the trainee" (p.315).

S1 pointed out in the interviews that supervision was an opportunity for the growth of the person of the therapist. He seemed to include himself in this opportunity as he frequently mentioned taking responsibility for his own growth and engagement with the supervisee or as S1 calls it his "own person-of-the-self as a supervisor".

S1's pattern of response was to ask questions that would provide an opening into the person of the therapist. If the supervisee was not responsive to this he would take another avenue and then come back to his original focus. If repeated efforts at engaging the person of the therapist were not successful S1 would tend to stop participating or "check out". In short, the supervisors had different patterns of responding. S2 was inclined to consistently respond with supportive

statements to various supervisee behavior. S1 tended to disengage when his efforts to focus on the person of the therapist were not reciprocated.

When the supervisors were experiencing supervision positively they were not concerned with outcome; they were focused on the process. As S2 said, he does not get anxious because he is not concerned with outcome. The supervisors seemed comfortable with letting the session unfold rather than trying to push to make something happen. As S1 said "I have gotten more trusting of just waiting . . . and let go of outcome". They did not attempt to take responsibility for issues that they thought they had no control over, such as the outcome of the supervisees' development. S1 experienced supervision as positive when he took responsibility for his own agenda in supervision by being open and honest with the supervisee.

Regression.

Each participant had his own way of filtering his experience of supervision. However, as I mentioned above, there appeared to be some general patterns of interpersonal behavior that supervisors and supervisees experienced during supervision. Here I would like to look at some of the patterns of behavior that seemed to be representative of the intrapersonal experiences of the supervisees rather than interpersonal responses.

Supervisees described how they filtered their current supervision experiences through previous life experiences with authority figures

such as parents and supervisors. Two of the supervisees made connections between their current behaviors and their behavior patterns with their fathers. One of the supervisees made a connection between previous supervision and the patterns of protection displayed during current supervision.

The supervisees' previous life experiences provided them with different ideas and notions about what they want and can expect from supervision. This is not unusual and is a part of everyone's experience. However, the supervisees indicated that these previous life experiences emerge as repetitive patterns during supervision which are out of the awareness of the supervisor and supervisee.

By processing their experiences in the interviews the supervisees became aware of patterns where they become excessively verbal and energetic to get attention, shut down any feelings to avoid being made fun of, monitored self confidence to avoid hurting others, and imitated the supervisors' behavior to get approval. These themes in the supervisees' intrapersonal lives were repeated in different ways interpersonally throughout the supervision sessions. I have mentioned the supervisees' intrapersonal aspects and not the supervisors only because they identified it as a part of their experience. The supervisors did not. I suspect, however, that simply by virtue of being human that supervisors may also have intrapersonal issues that develop into unidentified interpersonal patterns in supervision.

Flexibility.

The supervisees' punctuation of significant aspects in supervision fluctuated back and forth between a focus on their supervisory relationship and role. The supervisees used the term "relationship" to describe distinctions in their experiences of connection with their supervisors. They used the term "role" to explain different expectations of behaviors in supervision. How role was defined by the supervisees changed as their expectations changed and was typically used to describe the task-oriented aspects of supervision.

T3 described how a good supervisor had the flexibility to focus on him as a person and also on the practical aspects of what to do with clients. T3 says, "The strength of a good supervisor is to do both." Similarly, the supervisees experienced sessions positively when the focus of the sessions flowed back and forth between role (what to do) and relationship (personal). Sessions were experienced negatively when the sessions became too focused either on role (what to do) or relationship (personal).

It appears that when the sessions become too focused on role or relationship it is usually related to the supervisees' experience of an unresolved conflict in that area. If the supervisee and supervisor have a difference of opinion or world view about an aspect of role or relationship that goes unresolved, their experiences tend to be more focused in that area.

T4 was in conflict with S2 from the beginning of the semester over the theoretical model to be used. The conflict over what to do and how

to do it kept T4's experience focused on role. T4's focus on the unresolved issues of role affected the flow of the sessions to their relationship. As the relationship was neglected, T4 formed opinions that S2 was imposing on him. T4 did not bring these issues up directly with S2 and they went unresolved, keeping his experiences focused on the conflict of role.

Similar conflicts were experienced by the other supervisees. T2 and S1 were in conflict over whether to focus on role or relationship. S1 preferred to focus on relationship (tell me about yourself) and T2 preferred to focus on role (tell me what to do with the client). T1 and S2 both wanted to focus on role. T1 thought there was conflict over his model, and believed that S2 had "trashed" his model. T1's experience became focused on the role aspects of supervision and the relationship aspect was left out. T1 commented while processing information about the sessions that he was beginning to wonder about his relationship with S2. T3 and S1 both had a desire to focus on relationship. The conflict for T3 was over who would take more risks to have a relationship. Relationship became the dominant experience of T3's supervision and role or the task oriented aspects of supervision were not addressed to his satisfaction.

T3 and T4 identified supervisor behaviors that seemed to open the flow back up between role and relationship for them. For T3 the conflict was over relationship and who would take more risks. When S1 would self-disclose and take risks in sharing his own personal and professional struggles, the conflict over relationship was resolved and

they were able to move back and forth between role and relationship again. T4's conflict over role changed when he experienced S2 as being more accepting of T4's therapy model.

In both these instances the supervisors were seen by the supervisees as taking a new position that terminated the conflict. They temporarily let go of their stance or position. S2 was seen as letting go of the importance of his model by indicating that T4 was teaching him. S1 was seen as letting go of requiring T3 to take all the risks by initiating with his own self-disclosure.

It seems that the conflict between supervisor and supervisee ends when one person is willing to temporarily abandon their position and take the other person's perspective. Paradoxically, when the supervisors took their own advice, flexibility was introduced to the supervision process, S2 by learning rather than teaching and S1 by self-disclosing rather than asking questions. The supervisors' flexibility allowed the sessions to return to an experience of fluctuation between role and relationship.

General Impressions

Initially I was struck by the pervasive anxiety that dominated the supervisees' experiences. The supervisees in this study were planning to take their preliminary examinations shortly after these interviews and perhaps that had heightened their anxiety. They were guarded and generally more focused on the supervisors' responses than their own

agendas for supervision. As one of the supervisees commented, they put a lot of energy into protecting themselves.

Supervisees and supervisors frequently described the importance of empowerment. Rather than a straightforward process of the expert informing the novice how to perform, empowerment had interesting paradoxical elements to it. The supervisors' intentions were to avoid being seen as expert and to encourage the supervisees to access their inherent abilities.

The participants had specific ideas about what their roles were in supervision and depended heavily on these concepts to explain their behavior. It appeared to me that, particularly for the supervisees, their concepts of role not only helped inform them how to behave in supervision but it also aided in the reduction of their anxiety. As two of the supervisees indicated, if they knew what to expect or what was going to happen they wouldn't be so anxious. Part of supervision appeared to be a process where supervisees were learning their role as a therapist as a vehicle for feeling less anxious with clients.

The supervisors' and supervisees' experiences of collegiality punctuated their tendencies to interpret role and relationship aspects of supervision differently. Supervisors focused on the collegial aspects of relationship. The supervisees tended to punctuate the difficulty of experiencing collegiality because of hierarchical role differences.

The supervisees' focus on dual roles in supervision raises an important question about the context and structure of supervision. The

supervisees did not consider the context in which supervision was taking place as a safe environment for them to learn and grow. Considering the importance family therapy has placed on understanding the context in which behaviors take place, it is surprising this aspect of supervision context has been neglected. The concerns with context have been focused on mirrors, video equipment, reflecting team, and other techniques.

I wonder if supervisees' concerns with dual roles are written off as just something that supervisees need to go through. Therapists go to great lengths to avoid dual roles with clients so that they can create safe and protected environments conducive to growth and development. Yet dual roles in supervision seem to be accepted as part and parcel of the process of becoming a therapist.

In general, the participants desired an experience of feeling connected to one another as human beings. In the same sense that therapy can be a powerful experience for the client when the therapist acknowledges and validates their life story, supervision was a powerful experience for the participants when they acknowledged and validated each other.

The supervisors displayed characteristics of self-disclosure and willingness to learn from the supervisee. These characteristics were experienced positively by the supervisees and seemed to change the focus and behaviors in supervision.

Overall, the results indicate that supervisors and supervisees describe their experiences in supervision as revolving around role and relationship. The relationship aspects of their experiences fluctuated

between the risks of engagement and the safety of disengagement. The descriptions of role fluctuated between a sense of security, guidance, and empowerment to a hindrance and block to self expression.

Association of Findings With the Literature

When the participants' experiences were particularly relevant to the research literature, it was noted in the text for immediate comparison. The following aspects of the participants' experiences were related to the literature in more general terms.

The participant's experiences were consistent with the variables used in survey research to identify the prevalence of different responses. The factors of providing direction, confronting when necessary, helping supervisees assess strengths, giving constructive feedback, and building confidence, identified by Wetchler (1989) and Wetchler and Vaughn (1991) were described by the participants as significant aspects of their experience.

My review of the literature indicates that studies on supervision have traditionally focused on either the relationship or role aspects of supervision. Similarly, the participants tended to describe their supervision experiences in terms of their role or relationship. Hutt, Scott, and King (1983) concluded that "good supervision must integrate both relationship-oriented and task-oriented aspects of behavior" (p.122).

Heath's and Tharp's (1991) qualitative investigation into supervisees' perspectives yielded similar results to this study. They

found the issues of empowerment, dual roles, and the desire for supervision to be a human experience as recurring themes in the supervisees' experience.

Martin, Newton, and Goodyear (1987) identified revealing personal information and taking risks in supervision as important to the participants in their study. This finding is supported by the supervisees in this study.

Hutt, Scott, and King's (1983) findings were similar to the descriptions of the supervisees in this study. Supervisees were found to use avoidance tactics to manage negative supervision relationships, and when supervisees felt powerless they were hesitant to reveal negative feelings and address conflicts. Positive experiences for the supervisees "incorporate . . . supervisor suggestions into interactions with clients, . . . [supervisors] sensitivity to the supervisee's current needs and readiness to accept new learning . . . [and] assess interventions in terms of therapeutic impact on clients rather than in terms of supervisory approval" (p.121).

The findings in the literature support the topics found in this study related to anxiety (Lowenstein, et al., 1982), the desire for interpersonal proximity (Wetchler, Piercy, & Sprenkle, 1989), and divergent supervisor and supervisee perspectives on role (Fisher & Embree, 1981).

The findings in this study were not unique in the sense that the participants described "new" experiences. However, the participants' experiences were unique in terms of the emphasis that they put on those

experiences in relation to the attention their experiences receive in the literature. The research literature does not adequately address the significant findings of this study. The following are suggested topics for future research and dialogue based on the findings in this study: The impact of dual roles, supervisee anxiety, supervisor self-disclosure, perceptions of hierarchy, fluctuations between role and relationship, the reciprocal influences of supervisees on supervisors, conflict avoidance behaviors, supervisee accommodation, the paradoxical aspects of empowerment, and intrapersonal influences on interactional patterns.

The findings of the study indicate that supervisees and supervisors view supervision through different lenses. When and how does this occur? It would be interesting for a study to focus on the transition from supervisee to supervisor. This could be done through a qualitative analysis of supervisors in their last year as a supervisee and their first year as a supervisor.

Implications For A Constructivist Framework

The diversity of the participants' interpretations of the same event supports the constructivist concept of multiple realities. The diversity of the participants' realities challenges a simplistic positivist assumption that human interaction is best understood through the reduction of objective and independent variables.

The participants' experiences appear dependent on a complex system of interpersonal, intrapersonal, and contextual variables that do not

lend themselves to reductionistic measures. The different interpretations by supervisors and supervisees of the same events warn against making the assumption that certain isolated behaviors are necessary and sufficient variables for "good" supervision. Research that identifies isolated behaviors such as "support" separates those behaviors from the complex contexts in which participants experience supervision.

A constructivist informed approach to research might be to raise people's awareness of their own experience by bringing them into contact with the realities of others. In other words, research is a form of dialogue between the participants in the study and the readers. The researcher is the facilitator of that dialogue. As readers compare their experiences of a particular phenomenon to the participants' in the study, their own experience can be expanded. The process of sharing the realities of those who participate in supervision can affect the realities of others and ultimately the way in which they create and experience supervision. This perspective encourages further dialogue among supervisors and supervisees rather than solutions.

Suggestions for Supervision

The differences in supervisors' and supervisees' experiences of the same event in supervision indicates the importance of communication. What the supervisor thinks is helpful may be interpreted negatively by the supervisee. If the supervisors' and supervisees' perspectives are not discussed, the session can fall into a repetitive cycle of limited

growth. I frequently asked the participants if they shared what they felt was a significant theme in their supervision with each other. Usually they had not. The following are suggestions generated by the data that may aid in the prevention of repetitive patterns.

- *Define concepts of supervisory role and relationship with each other.
- *Explore what it would look like to step outside the boundaries of a traditional role and relationship.
- *Clarify what models and methods will be used in supervision and reevaluate those terms throughout the supervision relationship. Supervisees can share examples of previous work that they are proud of. Share articles, books, etc. that clarify each other's orientation.
- *Examine the "should's" and "ought to's" that inform supervision behavior. For example, "the supervisor should be supportive". Discuss the benefits and liabilities of this belief.
- *Define key words used to describe experiences such as collegial, mentor, expert, hierarchy, supportive. etc.
- *Share a supervision history with each other. Explore what issues the supervisee found significant. Include the supervisor's history as a supervisee.
- *Discuss the supervisee's fears. What is his/her worst fear?
- *Discuss the positive experiences in previous supervision sessions together.
- *Explore what could be done to address the issue of dual roles.

Is there an option of using a third party for supervision that is not in a dual role? Can a consultant to the supervisee and supervisor be used?

*Consider what you each think you have to offer and learn from each other.

*Address perceptions of gender sensitivity.

*Supervisors can demystify their position as expert by sharing videotapes of their work with difficult cases, allowing supervisees to observe them in therapy, or by doing co-therapy with the supervisees.

*Monitor assumptions that are formed as supervision progresses. Watch sessions on videotape to help identify and discuss the covert processes and patterns occurring in supervision.

*Look for intrapersonal and contextual factors that may be a hindrance to supervision.

Limitations

There are several limitations in this study. The setting of a doctoral program limits generalizations to masters degree programs and non-academic settings. The supervisors commented and I have also noticed that from year to year the students as a group tend to take on a unique personality together. Some years the students as a whole may tend to want a family of origin focus while the next year students may want to learn about using reflecting team interventions. The experiences of the supervisees may change from year to year and reflect

the mood of the group as much as it reflects the individual personalities of the supervisees. The supervisees' experiences may be as indicative of their relationship with each other as they are of their interactions and relationship with their supervisors. The group for this study were a mix of two relatively experienced and two relatively inexperienced therapists. They shared a common interest in hypnosis and live supervision. In future studies a thorough understanding of the group dynamics of the supervisees may prove useful in understanding the individual experiences of supervisees in supervision.

The participants had been a supervision team for one semester and the interviews were conducted at the end of that semester.

Generalizations to supervision teams at different points in their relationship should be made cautiously. Long term and short term experiences of supervisory interactions could vary. What supervisees experience positively at one point in supervision may be experienced negatively at a later point in the supervisory relationship.

Generalizations about negative and positive experiences should be understood within the context of the participants' relationship.

An additional limitation to generalizing the supervisees' experiences was the external factor of exams. The supervisees were all preparing to take their preliminary exams within one month of the recorded supervision sessions. This may have led to an increased sensitivity to their experience of anxiety in supervision.

As the researcher, with previous experience as a supervisee of the supervisors in the study and having little experience as a supervisor,

it was easier to identify with the experiences of the supervisees than with the supervisors. I had the sense that the supervisors were careful in choosing their words to describe their perceptions of the supervisees. Had they been interviewed by a fellow supervisor, they may have offered different information. I also had the sense that the supervisees tended to use the interview sessions to voice some of their criticisms of the supervisors that they previously had not had a chance to express.

As I worked on various drafts of this study I shared my hunches, theories, and findings with those who were available and interested. The supervisees in the study tended to be available for discussions related to the study and served as informal evaluators of my ideas and organization of the participants experiences. The supervisees' responses during our informal meetings corroborated with my experiences and interpretations of their experiences. While I sought out the advice and feedback from a supervisor in the community, the study would have been strengthened had I consulted with the supervisors about the results of the study. Sharing my findings with the participants in the study could have served as a useful method for validating and confirming my findings as is suggested here as a method for future qualitative researchers.

Participants' Process

The participants shared that as they watched themselves on videotape it gave them a very different perspective on supervision from the one they

were used to. One supervisee commented that he has never really been taught how to utilize supervision and the interview process helped him to do so.

A common response to the interviews was that it changed how they thought about supervision and they anticipated their next session to be different as a result of the interview. The participants inferred that the interviews expanded the realm of possibilities of what they could experience in supervision. Their responses to the interview process suggested that as the participants changed the way they conceptualized supervision, it changed the way they experienced it.

Participants commented on how the interviews allowed them to take a meta-level view of what happens in supervision. The video allowed for a comparison of what they believed had been happening with what they were seeing on the video. The interviews appeared to heighten their awareness of their own patterns of creating and responding in supervision.

As the interviews progressed, the participants' comments became more self-directed. They talked less about what they observed in their partner and more about a new awareness of options they had available to them. The supervisees in particular began to describe themselves from less of a victim position and focused more on taking responsibility for their own experience.

Final Comments

Participation in this research study has influenced me in numerous ways. I have gained a new appreciation for supervisors and the challenges they face in balancing their responsibilities to clients, supervisees, and themselves. As I prepare to embark on my own journey as a supervisor I will remember many of the words of the supervisors. The supervisors have helped me be more comfortable in taking leadership in therapy and hopefully in supervision by showing me the difference between the misuse of hierarchy and a benevolent form of guidance.

The supervisees were helpful in normalizing some of the crazy feelings and thoughts that I was sure I was having alone. The thoughts of conflict and power in supervision that I had attributed to some personal dysfunction suddenly seemed less pathological as I listened to the supervisees.

The very basic need of the participants to feel connected and understood by each other was refreshing. It has restored my faith in the power of having family members "cure" themselves through the power of reconnecting and the importance of speaking one's truth.

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Appendix A

Appendix A
Introduction to Study &
Consent Form

NATURE OF THE STUDY

This is a descriptive study of the subjective experiences of supervisors and supervisees during the supervision process. Subjective experiences refers to the personal meanings and perceptions of your thoughts, feelings and actions.

I am particularly interested in the aspects of the supervision session that you feel are significant. By significant I mean any distinction in verbal, intellectual, emotional, behavioral or physiological awareness.

WHAT IS INVOLVED

I would like you to stop, fast forward, or rewind the video tape you will be watching to any place on the tape you feel is significant at which time I will ask you questions about your experience. Participation in this study will consist of three interviews. The first two will last approximately one and one half hours. The follow-up interview will be approximately one hour. The interviews will be video taped at the Center for Family Services the time of the interview will be arranged at your convenience.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I will be video taping and transcribing parts of the interviews. "Participant" will be substituted for your name in the transcript.

The names of participants will not be included in the study in any way, i.e., written, verbal or otherwise. Consequently, quotes will not be associated with a named individual.

All conversations will be considered private and will be respected and treated as such.

Appendix A - continued

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE STUDY

It is my hope that participation in the study will prove to be an interesting and beneficial experience. If at any time you decide you no longer wish to participate in the interview, or the study, you are encouraged to pause, postpone, or cancel as you see fit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Signature

Date

If you have questions, please let me know:

J. Graham Disque
3400 K Foxridge
Blacksburg, Va 24060
703-552-7410

Appendix A - continued

1. We know that the mind works faster than the voice.
2. As we talk with people, we think of things which are quite different from the things we are talking about. Everyone does this and there is no reason to feel embarrassed or to hesitate to "own up to it" when it does occur.
3. We know that as we talk to people, there are times when we like what they say. There are times when we are annoyed with what they say. There are times when we think they really understand us and there are times when we feel they have missed the point of what we are saying or really don't understand what we were feeling or how strongly we were feeling something.
4. There are also times when we are concerned about what the other person is thinking about us. Sometimes we want the other person to think about us in ways which she or he may not be.
5. If I ask you at this moment just when you felt the supervisor/supervisee understood or didn't understand your feelings, thoughts, efforts or actions or when you felt you were making a certain kind of impression on her or him, or when you were trying to say something and it came out quite differently from the ways you wanted it to, it would probably be very difficult for you to remember. With this T.V. playback after your session, you will find it possible to recall these thoughts and feelings in detail. Stop and start the playback by means of the remote control as often as you are aware of something you would like to share. As you become aware of thoughts, feelings, actions, desires, disappointments, successes or anything you would like to share, stop the tape and tell me about it.

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