

Cross Cultural Supervision ↗
Working Effectively Cross Culturally- Sheila Moriarty, Ph.D, MSW, LISW

The supervisor- supervisee relationship

- Can include employer to employee
- Field Instructor to intern
- Licensing supervisor to licensee

Supervisor-supervisee Relationship

- Needs to be built on trust
- Mutual respect
- Shared beliefs about practice and populations served.
- Shared belief in potential of the supervisee

The Relationship in Context- Power Differential

- The relationship between supervisor and supervisee is important for the reasons listed earlier, but there is also a significant power differential.
- The supervisor is often viewed as the "expert knower" or someone with the wisdom and authority that comes with experience.
- We want our supervisor to be someone who guides our practice, helps us grow, and encourages us
- At the same time, the supervisor is also someone who has power over our professional success.

Supervisor-Supervisee Relationship Cross culturally

- Cross cultural practice between the supervisor and supervisee happens whenever both individuals don't share one or more of the same: ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, or religion.
- The power differential that was earlier identified is heightened under these circumstances, particularly if the supervisor represents the dominant culture in race, sexual orientation, or religion.
- Creating a safe, mutually beneficial relationship is crucial to both parties.

Taking you back to school

- Models of cultural awareness for Whites and Persons of Color

Positive White Identity

- Helms and Carter (1990) identify six ego statuses of positive White racial identity:
- Contact stage- Person doesn't see self as a racial being
- Disintegration stage- Person struggles with racial moral dilemmas
- Reintegration stage- Person returns to idealizing Whites and denigrating people of color
- Pseudo-independence stage- Person intellectualizes acceptance of one's own race and other races.
- Immersion-emersion stage- Person considers the significance of Whiteness and the impact of racism
- Autonomy Ego stage- Person is able to make honest evaluation of racism, whiteness, and internalizes a multicultural identity.

Stages of Identity for People of Color

- Atkinson (1998) brings a similar model related to the experience of people of color
- Conformity stage- Person of color accepts dominant values and beliefs favorably
- Dissonance stage- Person of color acquires increased knowledge of self and cultural- increasing potential for conflict
- Resistance and immersion stage- Person of color has increased awareness of self and group identity to others of same race leads to rejection of Whites.
- Introspection stage- Person of color struggle with belonging and identifying with cultural group- seeks autonomy
- Integrative awareness stage- An appreciation of all cultural groups emerges

So what does this mean?

- If the supervisor is White and has a strong and positive White identity and appreciation for other cultures (Immersion-emersion or Autonomy Ego Stage), then there is a strong change of a mutually satisfying supervisor-supervisee relationship
- If the supervisor is White and doesn't have a strong positive White identity and appreciation of other cultures (Contact, Disintegration, Reintegration stages), they are unlikely to connect well with a Person of Color unless that person also doesn't have a well-developed sense of racial identity.
