



# Feminist Supervision Theory

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# Presentation Goals and Objectives

- Understand the roots and theoretical underpinnings of Feminist Supervision Theory
- Learn the objectives and principles of Feminist Supervision Theory
- Understand the role of the supervisor in Feminist Supervision Theory
- Learn specific interventions in Feminist Supervision Theory
- View examples of Feminist Supervision interventions through simulated supervision sessions
- Understand how a Christian worldview may be incorporated into Feminist Supervision Theory



# Roots and Origins

- Feminist Supervision Theory is rooted in Feminist therapy which began in the 1960s
- Similar principles: collaborative, empowering, and strength-based
- Transparency: counselor is not the expert, supervisor is not the expert
- This allows clients and supervisees to share and reflect




# What is Feminist Therapy?

- ▶ Feminist therapy is an integrative approach to psychotherapy that focuses on gender and the particular challenges and stressors that women face as a result of bias, stereotyping, oppression, discrimination.
- ▶ Helps empower clients to understand the social factors that contribute to their issues, discover and claim their unique identity, and build on personal strengths to better their own lives and those of others
- ▶ No single model developer; began as a grassroots effort



# Power

- Feminist supervisors are aware of and acknowledge the inherent power differentials in the supervisory relationship
- Shared power is a concept that Feminist supervisors model (as opposed to the supervisor's power over the supervisee)
- A mentoring relationship



# Six Main Objectives of Feminist Supervision

- 1. Respecting each supervisee's goals
- 2. Working to bring supervisees to awareness of their attributes, values, and behaviors with respect to gender
- 3. Supplying a facilitative atmosphere in which supervisees can discuss sex-role stereotypes and socialization
- 4. Assisting supervisees in gaining an understanding that the personal is political, including the political impact of counseling on clients' roles in society
- 5. Modeling respect and equality for supervisees
- 6. Educating supervisees on women's issues

(Degges-White et al, 2013)



# Four-stage Feminist Supervision Model

According to Porter (1995, 2009):

- 1. Guiding the supervisee to conduct a didactic exploration of all aspect of all aspects of a client's identified problem in order to gain knowledge.
  - 2. After the supervisee accomplishes an understanding of issues, the supervisor helps him/her explore the client's social "location", including oppressions related to aspects of this location.
  - 3. Supervision moves to explore the supervisees' own biases, misconceptions, and privilege, notably any countertransference manifested in therapy and biases manifested in supervision
  - 4. Supervision broadens to explore community engagement and interventions at a societal level that could promote client well-being and serve to increase the supervisee's understanding of social action.
- <https://www.wdbj7.com/content/news/I-felt-so--506234301.html>



# Roles of the Feminist Supervisor

- Mentoring
  - Teaching
  - Collaborating
  - Modeling
  - Providing Useful Feedback
  - Ensuring Quality Care
  - Consulting
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# Feminist Supervision and Social Change

- Feminist Supervisors encourage supervisees to examine their own beliefs and identities in order to broaden their perspective on how they view their clients
- Social justice, community engagement, and advocacy are elements of Feminist Supervision
- Supervisees are encouraged to look at the social context surrounding an issue

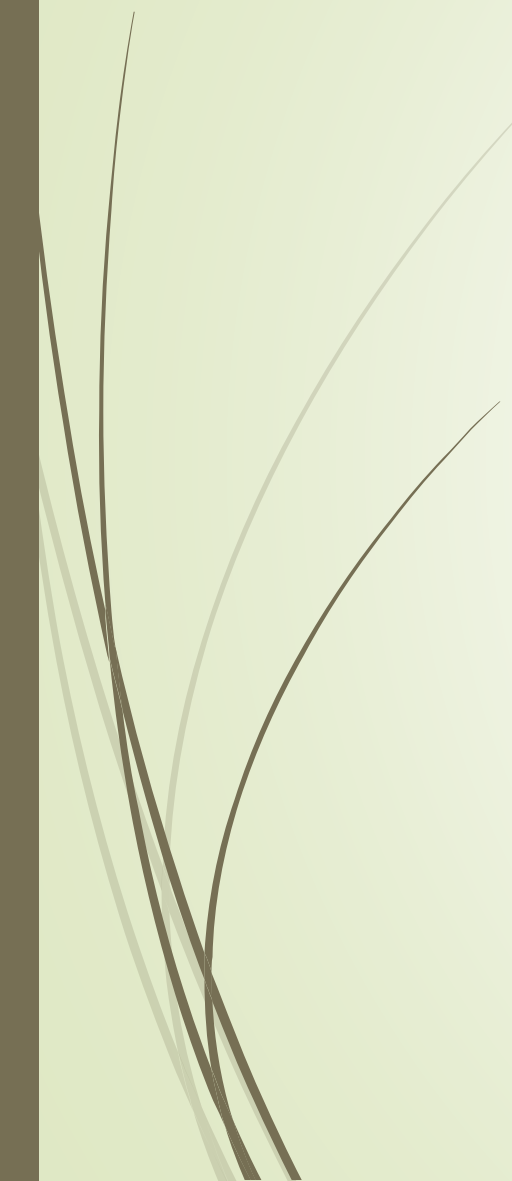


# Individual Supervision Interventions: Self-Disclosure and Case Conceptualization

- Self disclosure: Allows the supervisor to be a collaborator and learner
- Goal is to demystify the counseling process
- Case conceptualization: Social and cultural explanation of power differentials, gender roles, multicultural considerations
- Encourage supervisees to talk in ways that clients are behaving in a gender-stereotypic manner that may impede progress
- Encourage supervisees to examine their own possible bias
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q\\_XMkX01Fj8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_XMkX01Fj8)

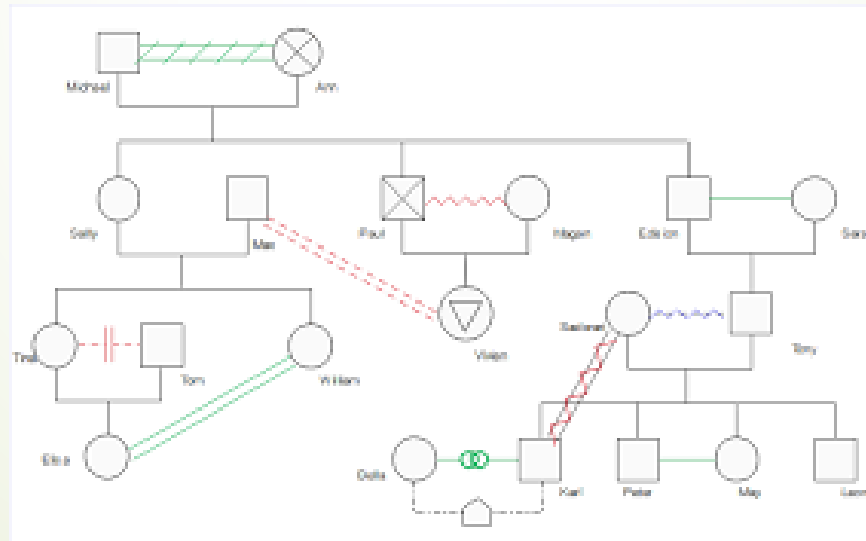


# Individual Supervision Interventions: the “reversal”

- Supervisees switch the gender of the case when discussing case conceptualization
  - This can lead to an understanding of the gender aspects of the case and deeper understanding on how to better help the client
  - This technique can help clients to move beyond thinking “this is the way it has to be” or “this is the way that society says it should be”
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# Individual Supervision Interventions: Genograms

- Genograms are often used in counseling
- Genograms are used in Feminist Supervision to help supervisees explore their own views and expectations of gendered behaviors in the supervisor-supervisee relationship and the client-counselor relationship





# Individual Supervision Interventions: Client inclusion

- ▶ Client inclusion can be literal or a symbolic inclusion
- ▶ Purpose is to avoid using pathologizing language or bias and involve the client in the decision-making process
- ▶ Viewing the case from the client's perspective
- ▶ Humanistic principles are involved as the focus is on empathy or understanding from the client's point of view

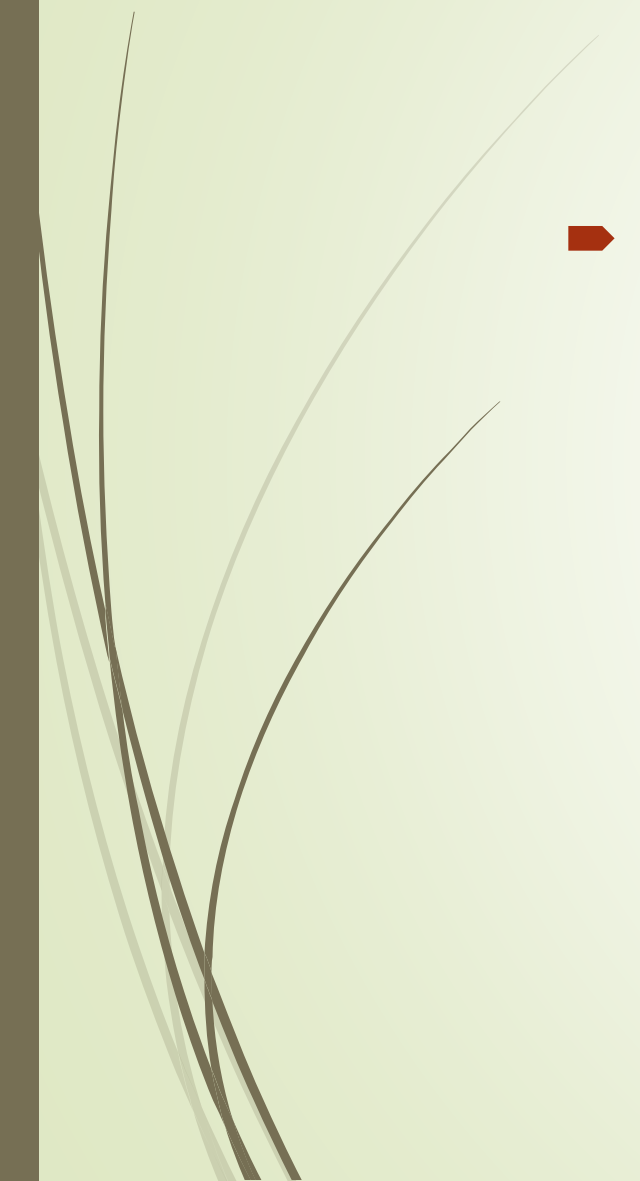


# Individual Supervision Interventions: Audiotape/Videotape Review

- ▶ A Feminist Supervision approach allows the supervisee to select which part(s) of the session are reviewed
- ▶ The supervisor may choose to play an excerpt for teaching purposes; however, the supervisee should be asked to explore feelings and thoughts about the excerpt
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwxVJmmclCI>



# Incorporation of a Christian Worldview

- ▶ Background:
    - ▶ Worldviews are developed early in our lives
    - ▶ Worldviews answer basic questions i.e. what exists, how we know what exists, how things work, what is good/bad, right/wrong, etc.
    - ▶ They can help shape the understanding of ourselves and how our world operates
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# Christian Worldview in Supervision

- ▶ Christian supervisors seek to inform our approach to supervision by our Christian views in ways that are conscious and intentional.
- ▶ General agreement that what exists is both material and non-material or spiritual; this drives Christian supervisors as being purposeful of a divine direction. For example, a Christian supervisor may invite the supervisee to silently bring God's presence and guidance to counseling sessions






# Christian Worldview in Feminist Supervision

- Aligned with the role of the Feminist supervisor as collaborative, empowering, and strength-based, a Christian supervisor believes that he or she is called to be one of God's servants and a steward (To be faithful stewards of the gifts which God has blessed us (1 Cor. 4:1-2) and instill and encourage this stewardship in our supervisees
- Mapping onto the role of the Feminist supervisor as a teacher and model, Feminist supervisors may encourage their supervisee to explore with their client how God fits into an important life decision or life circumstance; they may encourage their supervisee to read and reflect on scripture related to such a theme or life challenge



# Example of integrating a Christian Worldview into Feminist Supervision

- ▶ You, the supervisor, are reviewing an audio session recording of your supervisee where the supervisee misses an opportunity to provide reflection at a critical point in the session
- ▶ As a Christian and Feminist supervisor, you give feedback to the supervisee in a manner that is with an attitude of graciousness, kindness, and gentleness (Eph. 4:29-32). Furthermore, you recognize that we have made similar mistakes in our own counseling of clients (Gal. 6:1).



# The Relationship between the Supervisor and Supervisee

- ▶ In line with Feminist Supervision objective #5 (modeling respect and equality for supervisees), a Christian Worldview enables the supervisor to actively encourage the supervisee to engage in spiritual practices that are consistent with the supervisee's discipline (e.g. prayer, service, worship, etc) without a hierarchical context



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