CHAPTER 6 BECOMING A MULTICULTURALLY COMPETENT SUPERVISOR

**PRACTICING MULTICULTURAL SUPERVISION EFFECTIVELY**

- Becoming a multiculturally competent mental health practitioner involves three dimensions
  1. Deals with the practitioner’s attitudes and beliefs about race, culture, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation; the need to monitor personal biases; development of a positive view toward multiculturalism; and understanding how one’s values and biases may get in the way of effective helping
  2. Recognizes that a culturally competent practitioner is knowledgeable and understanding of his or her own worldview, possess specific knowledge of the diverse groups with whom he or she works, and has a basic understanding of sociopolitical influences
Becoming a multiculturally competent mental health practitioner involves three dimensions:

- 3. Deals with skills, intervention techniques, and strategies necessary in serving diverse client groups

  - part of multicultural competence entails recognizing our limitations and is manifested in our willingness to:
    - (a) seek consultation,
    - (b) participate in continuing education and
    - (c) when appropriate, make referrals to a professional who is competent to work with a particular client population
GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH DIVERSITY IN SUPERVISION

- The ethical standards provide professionals with direction regarding multicultural supervision, but they don’t offer practical steps to assist supervisors in addressing diversity with supervisees
EXPLORE MULTICULTURAL DYNAMICS IN THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

- When supervising trainees from cultural backgrounds other than our own, additional supervisor competencies become important.

- As a supervisor, it is crucial that you understand the concerns of your supervisees and explore these concerns with them.

- Equally important is having the ability and the willingness to communicate your understanding in a way that avoids cultural misunderstandings.
Explore Multicultural Dynamics in the Supervisory Relationship (Cont’d)

- Examples of this type of communication include asking supervisees directly about their cultural identity and how this may affect their practice of counseling (which also applies to areas of gender, sexual orientation, and spirituality), and direct discussions regarding uses of racism, privilege, cultural mistrust, sexual identity development, disability, or economic environments.

- Be prepared for discussions that may be less than glowing about your own race or culture, and do your best not to respond defensively.
INCLUDE MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES IN THE SUPERVISORY AGREEMENT

Following questions to initiate a discussion with supervisees about multicultural considerations:

- How do you describe your ethnic identity?
- What are the various cultural groups to which you belong?
- How do you think your cultural affects the way you see your roles as a therapist?
- Can you identify, at this time, ways in which our cultural differences or similarities may affect our supervisory relationship?
- How would you rate your knowledge of and comfort with discussing cultural issues?
A supervisor’s worldview is likely to influence the therapeutic choices made by supervisees.

Here are some questions to guide your process of self-exploration:

- Through what lens do I view the world?
- What is my definition of culture?
- With which cultural groups do I primarily identify myself?
- What cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes do I hold, and how do these fit with the dominant culture?
Here are some questions to guide your process of self-exploration:

- How did I learn my cultural values?
- What has been my experience with other cultures, and what has been my perception of these cultures?
- How might my beliefs affect ability to supervise effectively?
- How do I define the relationship between culture and therapy?
ACCEPT YOUR LIMITS AS A MULTICULTURAL SUPERVISOR

• The task is not to do a perfect job but to learn how to recover after having said or done something less than perfect
ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- Model of multicultural understanding by Locke
  - This model encourages exploration of the following cultural elements: acculturation, poverty and economic concerns, history of oppression, language, racism and prejudice, sociopolitical factors, child-rearing practices, family structure and dynamics, and cultural values and attitudes

- The culturally competent supervisor will have a working knowledge of this type of information for various cultural groups and will be aware of resources to share with supervisees regarding basic information for any given cultural group
Therapists ask themselves the following questions as part of the assessment process:

- Does something about this person’s appearance make me think this person’s behavior is abnormal?
- What is the basis for making these assumptions?
- What labels am I consciously or subconsciously applying to this person, and where did the labels come from?
- What other labels might be used to describe this behavior?
- To what cultural group am I assuming this person belongs, and what do I know about this group?
Provide the Opportunity for Multicultural Case Conceptualization

- Case conceptualization requires supervisors to gain an understanding of a client’s symptoms within that client’s Sociocultural context.

- Multicultural case conceptualization includes an analysis of the impact of the client’s race, class, sexual orientation, gender, age, or disability status on the client’s life.
MODEL SOCIAL ADVOCACY

- It is the supervisor’s responsibility to model active social advocacy and to encourage this role in supervisees.
- Members of certain groups have been oppressed and discriminated against.
- Therapists have a responsibility to act as advocates by being willing to speak on behalf of their clients, especially those clients who have been the target of discrimination and oppression.
Assessing Multicultural Competencies in Supervision

- Multicultural assessment strategies and instruments should be extended to include certain disenfranchised groups, including religious minority groups, women, lower socioeconomic groups, and gay, lesbian, and bisexual clients.
SPIRITUALITY AS A FACET OF MULTICULTURAL SUPERVISION

- We, as supervisors, have a specific responsibility to ensure that those who train under our guidance receive ample opportunity to understand, honor, respect and address religious and spiritual diversity