

Supervision Techniques 18

FOUR SUPERVISION TECHNIQUES

EDITED BY MICHELLE LUCAS

DILEMMA CARDS

EXPLORING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLEAN
LANGUAGE







WORKING WITH THE SEVEN-EYED MODEL

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF GROWTH

This resource is an extract from the book
*101 Coaching Supervision Techniques, Approaches, Enquiries
and Experiments* by Michelle Lucas






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Where can this be used?				Typical level of supervisee experience required	
					
Professional one-to-one supervision	Professional group supervision	Peer group supervision	Individual reflection	Most levels	Experienced supervisees only

Technique 1: Dilemma Cards

Written by Michelle Lucas and Carol Whitaker

Where can this be used?				Typical Level of Supervisee Experience Required	
					

When is this used?

These cards offer real scenarios of tricky situations indicating the kind of topics which could be brought to supervision. They are particularly useful for novice coaches or newly formed supervision groups. The cards were created as a bridge between CPD and supervision, the hypothetical examples provide a launch pad for people to share their own experiences.

What is the technique?

The Coaching Dilemma Cards are copyrighted by Collaborative Coaching Supervision. Some examples are in the public domain see Turner, Lucas and Whitaker (2018). Currently the cards reflect four different coaching contexts (Coaches; Internal Coaches; Mentors; Line Managers). Each set is organised into four categories Confidentiality; Conflicts of interest; Boundaries; Dual Relationships.

Step 1: Share a number of the cards with the supervisee(s), inviting them to select a dilemma that resonates for them.

Step 2: Each Coaching Dilemma Card © ends with the question “What could you do?” – so the first round of dialogue draws out all the different approaches that come to mind. The challenge is not to agree a single, preferred way forward, rather to flush out the multiple options the supervisee could have.

Step 3: The cards work best when they draw out actual experience. While the discussion might start hypothetically, the supervision task is to help supervisees connect with their own stories and build awareness of how that informs their actions. Helpful questions could be “So has something similar happened for you?” or “What does this scenario remind you of in your own experience?”.

Step 4: Each Coaching Dilemma Card © is designed to highlight complexity. Therefore, draw attention to what in the scenario makes the situation ‘grey’ rather

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than black and white. This is an opportunity to look at the dilemma from different stakeholder perspectives.

Step 5: To wrap up the discussion enquire what impact reviewing this scenario will have on their practice. Ask “What’s your learning?” or “How will you be more mindful in the future?”.

How to work with the technique...

The philosophy behind these cards is to encourage a diversity of ideas and yet often supervisees want to know the ‘right answer’. As the supervisor keep the discussion broad and explore the nuance of each situation or context to understand what influences subtle differences in approach. It can be helpful to deliberately showcase alternative strategies, for example if A was true, it might be useful to do X; but if B was also true then it might be more helpful to do Y.

What else might need attention?

Occasionally a supervisee becomes very attached to their instinctive response, and despite hearing a variety of alternatives, stays fixed in their thinking. Reflect this back to the individual concerned and invite them to play with what might need to change in the scenario in order to trigger in them a different response. This may be a useful opportunity to raise awareness of the potential for confirmation bias.

In order to encourage mental flexibility, invite the group to take an opposite stance. For example, when a particular way forward seems to be ‘obvious’ or preferred, ask “And when wouldn’t that approach be appropriate?”.

A word of caution.

It is important that the supervisor maintains a flexible and open stance rather than ‘supervisor knows best’. Should an unethical approach be suggested, before correcting the supervisee, help them explore what’s informing their choices. Enquire when they would take an opposite view – they may already have a sense of when this would not be appropriate.

What other uses are there for this technique?

Typically, the supervisee(s) choose which card to work with. Where an individual has a blind spot, the supervisor may suggest a particular card which because of its hypothetical nature can encourage them to stand back, prompting a fresh perspective.

By focusing on one category at a time, it is possible to create a theme for a session or perhaps give inspiration/practical application for a CPD session.

The cards can be used in many ways, which CCS share in their Train the Trainer workshop.

Reference:

Turner, T. Lucas, M. and Whitaker, C. (2018) *Peer Supervision in Coaching and Mentoring: A versatile guide for reflective practice*. Abingdon: Routledge. pp.125-160.

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Resources:

Purchase a sample set of Coaching Dilemma Card © Available at:

<<https://www.greenfieldsconsultancy.co.uk/latest-thinking/resources/>>. [Accessed 19 August 2019].

Technique 2: Exploring Relationships with Clean Language

Written by Angela Dunbar

Where can this be used?					Typical Level of Supervisee Experience Required
					

When is this used? Useful as a ‘next step’ when a supervisee has already explored a client scenario study, and this generates a curiosity about the coaching relationship itself. It can be used as a follow up to the ‘At your best’ exercise on pages 210 – 212.

What is the technique?

This uses Clean Language questions that help expand attention and widen perspectives. Coupled with an understanding of the seven eyed model and other supervision frameworks that focus on parallel process and patterns across multiple relationships, this technique provides a way of exploring without influencing (and potentially biasing) the supervisee to take on your view.

The questions are clean as they are non-directive and stripped of the supervisor’s own assumptions, bias and metaphors of their own. The questions are used to focus attention on the metaphorical element of the supervisee’s narrative.

Step 1: Explore the supervisee’s client scenario as you would normally (or you could use Clean Language questions to do this).

Step 2: Once the supervisee’s client feels ‘alive in the room’ and the supervisee has spent some time exploring aspects of their work and their relationship with this client, ask “And your relationship with this client is like what?”.

Step 3: Follow the process described on pages 210 & 21 for exploring ‘at your best’ from Step 3 onwards. This time you are focusing on the metaphor that the supervisee uses to describe this relationship.

Step 4: Keep exploring until there are a number of different components to the metaphor, (for example: “This relationship is like a sheep dog trying to herd a flock of sheep that are in no hurry”. Each of the symbols ‘sheep dog’, ‘sheep’ and ‘flock’

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could be further explored, as well as the state 'in no hurry' and the activity 'trying to herd' This is likely to uncover more symbols and sensations, for example possibly "feeling frustrated"; "the farmer is not looking"; "Sheep just want to eat grass".

Step 5: Once you feel there is a whole 'landscape' or map of this metaphor for the relationship, help the supervisee consider the relationship patterns and connections by asking Clean Language questions that invite comparison. Choose two aspects of the supervisee's narrative to question further :

- And is there a relationship between the sheep dog and the farmer?
- And when sheep just want to eat grass, what happens to sheep dog?

Step 6: With the seven eyed supervision model in mind, you can also cleanly invite the supervisee to reflect beyond the immediate relationship:

- And what is *around* the flock of sheep? (reply – a field)
- And what's *beyond* the field?
- And what's happening *now*?
- And where could xxx have come from?
- And is there a relationship between that and your coaching relationship?

Step 7: You could move into another supervision approach when this feels done. Or you could wrap up learnings with the following Clean Language question sequence:

- And now you know your relationship is like xxx, what difference does knowing that make?
- And what needs to happen next?
- How will you do that?
- When will you do that?

How to work with the technique...

As a facilitator of this Clean approach, you may at times feel excluded from the exploration. The supervisee is likely to be making connections and understanding the meaning behind each metaphor, without verbalising an explanation to you.

This can be beneficial as it allows the supervisee to uncover deeply personal and significant connections with no obligation to disclose it all to you. This makes the process incredibly respectful, and keeps the ownership completely with the supervisee.

It may not be necessary for you to ever understand the meaning of a supervisee's metaphor. In Step 7 the follow up questions are likely to bring any insight out into the open and helps the supervisee translate insight into behavioural change or to take action.

A word of caution.

See points raised for the 'At your best' technique on page 212.

What other uses are there for this technique?

Useful to explore any relationship, with practice supervisees could use with their own clients.

Further reading:

Dunbar, A. (2018) *Using metaphors in coaching* [pdf] Available at: <https://cleancoaching.com/files/2018/04/Using%20Metaphors%20with%20Coaching%20April%20'11.pdf> [Accessed 1 September 2019]






Wilson, C. (2004) *Metaphor and Symbolic Modelling for Coaches* [pdf] Available at: <https://cleancoaching.com/files/2018/04/Metaphor-Symbolic-Modelling.pdf> [Accessed 1 September 2019]

Smith, K. (2012) *A Clean Corner of Coaching Supervision*. [online] Available at:

<https://www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles/articles/318/1/A-Clean-Corner-of-Coaching-Supervision/Page1.html> [Accessed 1 September 2019]

Technique 3: Working with The Seven Eyed Model

Written by Michelle Lucas

Where can this be used?				Typical Level of Supervisee Experience Required	
					

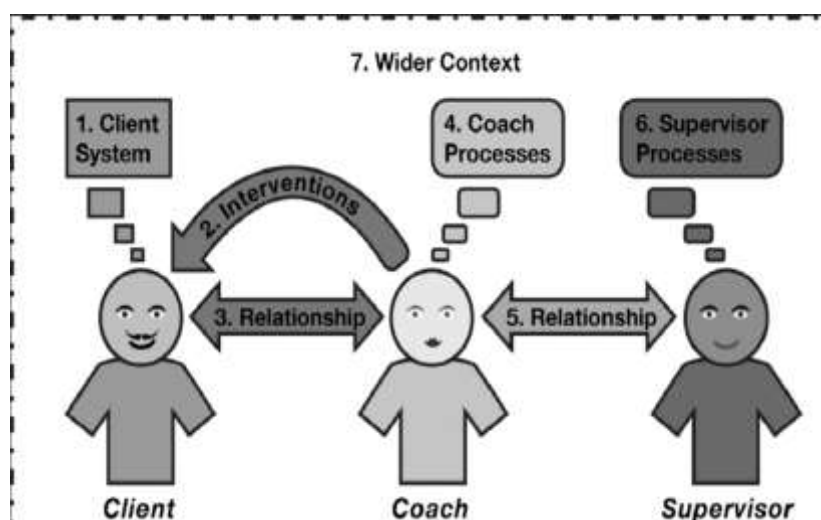
When is this used?

This technique is universally useful as it encourages a holistic approach. Typically the supervisor holds it as a mental map, using it to clarify which perspectives are being attended to and which may have been overlooked.

What is the technique?

The technique rests on an understanding of Hawkins & Smith’s (2006) Seven Eyed model which deliberately draws our attention to seven different perspectives from which any supervision issue can be explored – see Figure 8.1. Input from the group is structured to ensure each of the seven perspectives are considered.

Figure XX: The Seven Eyed Model by Lucas 2010, adapted from Hawkins & Smith (2006)



Step 1: Where the group is unfamiliar with the model provide a short explanation.

Step 2: Set up so that each group member holds responsibility for questions from one particular 'eye'. The supervisor holds those eyes which have not been allocated.

Step 2: Invite the supervisee to provide an overview of their client scenario.

Step 3: Check with the supervisee which 'eye' they would like to explore first. Alternatively, look to the group to see who has the strongest sense of wanting to start.

Step 4: Encourage a dialogue to unfold. Once the supervisee has responded to the first question, the discussion tends to move towards a different eye. The supervisor then signals this to the group, inviting the person holding the next eye to become more active in the conversation. This emergent approach continues until all of the eyes have been considered.

Step 5: Allow a couple of minutes for quiet reflection for everyone. Useful questions might be:

- Supervisee: which 'eye' brought you the greatest insight?
- Group members: how easy or difficult did you find it to connect with your chosen 'eye' ... and why do you think that was?

Step 6: Return to the supervisee and enquire what their learning has been.

Step 7: Open the enquiry to the whole group to share their learning.

How to work with the technique...

This is a complex model which many supervisees shy away from, it is best to work slowly and to afford it a significant amount of time. It may be prudent to do an educational piece ensuring the group is comfortable with the model before beginning. This takes time, but will enable them to generate their own questions. Where time is short an alternative is to pre-prepare a list of questions that are relevant for each eye and to provide this as a handout.

If the group is small in number and comfortable with the model they may be able to 'double up' on the number of eyes they each take responsibility for. Where you, as the supervisor, are less familiar with the model, focus on facilitation rather than take an 'eye' yourself. Any eyes which have not been specifically discussed, can be reflected upon independently.

A word of caution.

Where you or the group are less familiar with the model you have the option of working through each 'eye' sequentially. Whilst this ensures comprehensiveness it can create a more stilted experience for the supervisee.

Give the supervisee sufficient time in Step 5 to digest the experience. Being on the receiving end of a series of questions all coming from different angles can knock the supervisee off balance. If not facilitated gracefully the supervisee can feel interrogated.

What other uses are there for this technique?

An alternative is to arrange chairs to reflect the model. Often there are two chairs for eye four – one to represent the supervisee as coach (facing the client), placed back to back with the second to represent the supervisee in supervision. As a group member raises a question, they are asked to say where in the model they think the question comes from. The supervisor facilitates a sculpture whereby the group member moves to sit (or stand nearby) the chair representing the relevant eye in the model. This can be particularly powerful to illustrate areas of common interest or indeed common blind spots. In individual supervision (or individual reflection) the same kind of ‘tracking’ can be achieved by mapping the discussion on paper.






Although this model was developed for supervision, the seven eyes can easily be translated to client work. Here, Eye One becomes the stakeholder under discussion, Eye Four becomes the client, and Eye Six becomes the coach.

Reference:

Hawkins, P. and Smith, N. (2006) *Coaching, Mentoring and Organisational Consultancy: Supervision and Development*. McGraw-Hill: Maidenhead. pp. 136-159.

Technique 4: The Two Dimensions of Growth

Written by Hetty Einzig

Where can this be used?				Typical Level of Supervisee Experience Required	
					

When is this used?

This model is used to raise awareness, develop a cogent purpose, harness vision and, critically, ground this in action in the world. In this way we move towards the mid-line, drawn by the magnet of the Higher Self (see pages 316 - 317). This is healing and empowering.

What is the approach?

The supervisee plots key life events along the horizontal axis with the line descending or rising according to their perception of the significance of the event. This brings into awareness their sense of being in the world.

Step 1: Contract appropriately for the depth of the work that follows, ensure a degree of safety by reminding the supervisee that you will be guided by them regarding how far and how deep they want to explore.

Step 2: Draw the axes with the supervisee. The horizontal axis represents time, the vertical depth or transcendence. Then explain each dimension along the following lines:

- The horizontal axis is about Quantity: we acquire more knowledge, things, status, money, psychological understanding, cleverness.
- The vertical axis is about Quality: it expresses our spiritual growth, the development of our reflexivity, our compassion, our appreciation of the mystical and the beauty of all life, our wisdom.

Step 3: Give the supervisee time to plot their graph from a point in time of their choice to the present. Facilitate the discussion lightly, start by asking what the supervisee notices about their graph.

Step 4: Note: In Transpersonal work we hold the belief that a person needs to develop along both axes. If one or other dominates our trajectory then each axis will hit its own existential crisis.

Step 4 (a) Where there is a dominance of the horizontal/quantitative axis, this could result in the *Crisis of Meaning*, a creeping or sudden loss of meaning and purpose which causes us to ask: “Why am I doing this, what for?”. With appropriate re-contracting permission, you can help the supervisee acknowledge and explore this, perhaps using imagery, metaphor and drawing to activate the imagination and the Higher Unconscious (see Figure 10.1 in Transpersonal chapter).

Step 4(b) Where there is over-development along the vertical/qualitative axis, this could result in the *Crisis of Duality*, when the gap between the vision of wholeness and the messiness of the actual world yawns wider than is bearable, causing loss of ‘faith’, disgust, self-abnegation or self-destruction, summed up by the question: “What’s the point?”. With permission, you can help the supervisee acknowledge and explore this, by using grounding techniques (e.g. bodywork), practical actions and commitments.

Step 5: Check in to see what action the supervisee feels ready to take and how they plan to take it.

Step 6: Agree with the supervisee how they want to close the discussion and check what additional support they need from you or others in their network.

How to work with the approach...

This work may well generate ‘big’ questions for the supervisee. It is therefore important to be guided by the pace and capacity of the supervisee in the moment in the room. Occasional re-contracting helps sense check the journey of discovery and helps ensure the supervisee does not stay confused or overwhelmed. Sometimes these discussions stir things up but remain inconclusive so be prepared for the session to feel unfinished and uncertain. However, equally, sometimes powerful insights are generated and something significant shifts, so be prepared for the supervisee to take what may seem like a momentous action – perhaps before you feel ready for them to!

What else might need attention?

The supervisee will almost always need to continue the work outside of the session and so it is important when contracting to differentiate between where the supervisee wants to involve you and where they want to reflect independently.

A word of caution.

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This kind of deep work should only be facilitated by those who have already engaged and benefitted from similar work themselves. This is as true for the supervisor who wants to use it with their supervisee as it is for the supervisee who wants to use it with clients.

What other uses are there for this approach?

Without specific additional training, no further applications are recommended.

Further reading:

Assagioli, R. (1965) *Psychosynthesis: A Collection of Basic Writings*, Wellingborough: Turnstone Press.

Einzig, H. and Whitmore, J. (2015) Transpersonal Coaching. In: J. Passmore. Ed. 2015. *Coaching: The Industry Guide*. Maidenhead: Kogan Page. Ch..9

Ferrucci, P. (1982) *What We May Be: the Visions and Techniques of Psychosynthesis*. Wellingborough: Turnstone Press