How Highly Effective Psychotherapy Supervisors Supervise: A Longitudinal Study of Supervisees' Experiences

by

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Abstract

The supervision of pre-professional psychologists is a mandated and essential training process. Supervisors have two overarching roles: (a) they are gatekeepers to the profession, protecting the public from incompetent psychologists and (b) they are providers of essential training to pre-professional psychologists to enable them to become fully competent. Research has explored what constitutes good supervision to better understand the process and help enhance training programs. Examining how expert supervisors provide supervision is a new way to study this, as experts have different ways of conceptualizing their work than novices. For example, expert supervisors appear to have distinct skills, behaviours and cognitions that may affect supervision. This study focused on identifying supervisees' experiences of being supervised by an expert supervisor to better understand this process, and identify what supervisors do well that enhances supervision. Through the use of snowball sampling and peer nominations based on a set criteria, eight expert supervisors were identified, of which four had students participate in this study. Seven supervisees participated in three semi-structured interviews over the span of their year internship to discuss what expert supervisors do well within supervision. Experts were identified as having specific attributes in comparison to their counterparts, such as being a supportive ally, being adaptive and being credible. Supervisees identified that experts were able to create a positive alliance, focused on engaging in responsive teaching, and actively used their own backgrounds and experiences in supervision. Supervisees also indicated that expert supervisors impacted their practice by enhancing their growth and development, both personally and professionally, and by helping supervisees improve their perceived outcomes with clients. Results from this study help capture the characteristics and

behaviours of expert supervisors that make supervision work, and provide insight on what impacts the supervision dynamic.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Terilyn Pott. The research project, of which this thesis is part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name “Supervisee’s Experience of Engaging with Master Supervisors” No. Pro00060822, 1/18/2016.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Study Context

Psychotherapy supervision has long been considered a necessary rite of passage for supervisees and is considered the main mechanism by which they acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become competent (Watkins, 2011). It is believed that through supervision pre-licensed psychologists will adhere to and promote quality care, will become effective psychologists, and that supervision will positively impact client outcomes (Hardy, Sipson-Southward & Waller, 2017). Within the field of psychology, supervision of professional practice is a mandated and essential training process worldwide (O'Donovan, Halford, & Walters, 2011). For example, each province within Canada provides specific criteria outlining the amount of supervised hours pre-licensed psychologists are expected to receive during their training (College of Alberta Psychologists, 2014). Though supervision is a common teaching method its format, structure, and style varies (Goodyear et al., 2014), making it difficult to identify what practices lead to effective supervision.

Outlining the Problem

Prior to the last ten years, it was assumed that simply having a combination of graduate training and post-graduate clinical experience was sufficient to create proficient supervisors (Campbell, 2006). Supervisees have identified years of practice experience as a necessary component a skilled supervisor should possess (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), yet being an expert supervisor requires additional skill sets, such as knowing how to manage the normative and formative functions of supervision (Barnes, 2004). To better understand supervision, research inquiries have concentrated on; the supervisor-supervisee relationship, how supervision impacts client outcomes and supervisee competence, factors that influence the provision of supervision,

and supervisor characteristics (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). A main finding from the literature is that supervision can lead to both positive and negative outcomes in supervisee training (Ellis, 2010). For example, good supervision leads to improved supervisee identity development (Haggerty & Hilsenroth, 2011), reduces supervisee stress and anxiety (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), enhances their self-awareness (Inman et al., 2014), and encourages their self-disclosures (Knox, Burkard, Edwards, Smith & Schlosser, 2008). A positive supervisory experience can also lead to better alliance formations between a supervisee and their client, which can positively impact client experiences (Tebes et al., 2011).

Though supervisors aim to provide good supervision, not all supervisors will have the skills, knowledge, or training necessary to do so which can lead to poor supervisory experiences (Ellis, 2018). Ellis and colleagues (2014) found that 13-25% of supervisees reported receiving inadequate supervision, and 6-12% harmful supervision (Ellis et al., 2014). When looking at what Ellis (2018) labels as 'de facto' inadequate or harmful supervision, meaning it is objectively measured by the supervisor's actions or inactions, 70-90% of supervisees in the study had experienced inadequate supervision and 26-42% harmful supervision. When supervision is inadequate or harmful it can lead to a decrease in supervisee self-disclosure about client difficulties, can decrease confidence in their counselling skills, and can create negative dynamics within supervision (Constantine & Sue, 2007). Harmful supervision practices include boundary violations with the supervisee, while inadequate supervision practices include supervisors not engaging in their role as gatekeepers (Ellis, 2010). These poorly managed situations can cause supervisees to feel anxious, reserved, withdrawn, and helpless (Wong et al., 2012). Ultimately, harmful or inadequate supervision defeats the fundamental goals of supervision and as Ellis

(2010) points out, it s a myth that all supervisors are well trained, knowledgeable, and doing a good job providing supervision.

In the last decade there has been an increase in the creation of training manuals and introductory textbooks published to help improve the quality of supervision being provided. Yet, "no apparent consensus exists on what constitutes effective supervisor training" (Milne, Sheikh, Pattison & Wilkinson, 2011, p.54). Many of these textbooks outline the qualities and characteristics a psychologist should possess to become a proficient supervisor. Campbell (2006) defines the qualities and characteristics of an effective supervisor as being the same as those of an effective psychotherapist. Personal attributes necessary to be an effective supervisor are, "trustworthiness, authenticity, genuineness, openness, tolerance, respect, empathy, and flexibility" (Campbell, 2006, p. 10). Henderson, Holloway and Miller (2014) describe effective supervisors as those that are aware of their values, are able to structure sessions effectively, are aware of the dynamics of the supervisory relationship and are aware of issues such as parallel process and transference. Whereas Ladany and Bradley (2011) stress that an effective supervisor is one who is responsive to and able to teach multicultural awareness, considers supervisee development, and incorporates an integrative approach to supervision. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) propose a conceptual model of supervision and stipulate that an effective supervisor is one who is attentive to all aspects of this model and are aware of concerns such as power differentials and other issues that arise within the supervisory relationship.

Though these authors descriptions provides a starting point, many of these descriptors are based on anecdotes, taken from studies on effective therapists, or extrapolated from research on the supervisory alliance or ineffective supervisory experiences. Additionally, although research have studied good supervisors, sampling methods have been critiqued given these supervisors

are often novices and have little training or experience in providing effective supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). To broaden our understanding of supervision, researchers have only recently started studying expert supervisors. Compared to novice supervisors, experts may have different ways of conceptualizing what they do. For example, Kermer, Borders and Yel (2017) found that experts prioritize self-reflection and self-assessment when working with challenging supervisees compared to easy supervisees. Glasser and Chi (1988) identified that experts are characterized differently than non-experts. They are individuals who: (a) excel in their specific domain by having specialized knowledge and skills, (b) are able to see global patterns in their field of expertise that helps improve their work, (c) are quicker at performing skills in their domain, (d) have good memory skills, (e) identify solutions to a problem quicker than novices (f) spend more time trying to understand a problem than novices, and (g) spend more time self-monitoring their work than novices. Within psychotherapy, these expert qualities and characteristics do appear to impact therapeutic experience and outcomes (Skovholt & Jennings, 2004), therefore the same may be true in supervision.

Studies on experts in supervision are limited and to date this research has only focused on experts' views and understanding of the supervision they provide, consequently leaving the supervisee experience out of the picture. Studying supervisees' experiences of being supervised by an expert supervisor has not yet been studied. Research on the therapeutic alliance has identified that client ratings of the relationship are more predictive of outcomes in therapy than the therapist rating (Duncan, 2003). Therefore, those receiving a service may be better at identifying what leads to an effective experience. It is hoped that an alternative perspective about essential supervisor qualities and characteristics can be discovered by studying supervisees in their experiences with an expert supervisor.

Identifying experts

Identifying who is an expert can be challenging, as there are numerous views on how to operationalize expertise in psychotherapy, and no consensus exists on which method is best (Caspar, 2017). An expert can be identified by: (a) scores on performance measures, such as ratings by clients or supervisees (Miller, Duncan & Hubble, 2007), (b) their level of experience (Feltovich, Prietula & Ericsson, 2006), (c) their level of education and contributions to the field (Sperry & Carlson, 2014), and (d) through peer nominations by key informants (Jennings & Skovholt, 1999). Each method has its strengths and weaknesses. For example, scores on performance measures can be influenced by the difficulty of clients, thus a good clinician may be missed because of having an excess of challenging cases (Caspar, 2017). Though experience is necessary for expertise, it does not necessarily lead to expertise in a field. Similarly, while an individual may contribute to the field in terms of research, this may not translate to expertise in practice. Finally, the use of peer nominations may be impacted by such factors as impression management and popularity (Caspar, 2017). Researchers must therefore strive to choose a way to operationalize expertise, whilst knowing that no definition is complete and each has its limitations.

The present study chose to closely follow Jennings and Skovholts (1999) method of identifying experts through a snowball peer nomination sampling method. Within this strategy key informants, often those well situated to comment on a person's attributes or skills, are chosen to nominate an individual they feel meets either a specified criteria or a level of mastery. This process is repeated numerous times until nominators are repeated with those with the most nominations then considered to be an expert within their field. This study also used convenience sampling at the forefront to gather a set of registered psychologists to contact to participate based

on how easy it was to find their contact information. Snowball sampling was used after these initial psychologists were contacted to help increase the number of nominators.

Peer nomination techniques have been "found to accurately assess personal and interpersonal characteristics" (Skovholt & Jennings, 2004, p. 148) and have good psychometric support (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). As supervision is designed to focus on the supervisee experience, their development, and is meant to enhance their work, past supervisees were used as key informants to help nominate expert supervisors. Supervisees were also used as key informants as other supervisors may not provide insight on the supervisor's actual performance (Bernard et al., 2016). In this study, key informants were also invited to report on additional criteria they believed were important in describing expert supervisors. In addition, participants in this study were unaware that their supervisor was nominated as an expert until debriefing occurred at the end of data collection to examine if the experts were accurately nominated and to avoid influencing the supervisees' experiences throughout supervision.

Purpose and Research Questions

Supervision is a dyadic process involving both supervisor and supervisee. Research on effective supervision has begun to explore a supervisor's view of their helpful qualities and characteristics, but whether these translate into effective supervision and are important to the supervisee is unknown. The main purpose of this study is to extend what is known about expert supervisors through the lens of those actively receiving supervision from them. This studied aimed to answer the following research question: "What is a supervisee's experience of being supervised by an expert supervisor?" This information will help to broaden our understanding of what it means to be an expert supervisor and can provide a more comprehensive view of this topic. This study offers a unique perspective by actively monitoring supervisees' experiences as

they receive supervision by an expert supervisor. The primary focus of this study is to discover what qualities and characteristics supervisees perceive an expert supervisor as possessing that impacts supervision. A subsequent question is to identify what supervisees think their expert supervisor does in supervision that positively influences their supervision experience and improves therapy outcomes.

Relevance to Counselling Psychology

As a psychology student in the department of counselling psychology, it is important to have an understanding of my identity as a counselling psychologist (CP) and how this can play a role in the current study. The APA defines counselling as follows:

> Counselling psychology is a general practice and health service provider specialty in professional psychology. It focuses on how people function both personally and in their relationships at all ages. Counselling psychology addresses the emotional, social, work, school, and physical health concerns people may have at different stages in their lives, focusing on typical life stresses and more severe issues with which people may struggle as individuals and as a part of families, groups and organizations. Counselling psychologists help people with physical, emotional and mental health issues improve their sense of well-being, alleviate feelings of distress, and resolve crises. They also provide assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of more severe psychological symptoms (American Psychological Association, 2015, paragraph 1).

Counselling psychology is a field which differs from other psychology disciplines such as clinical psychology, school psychology, and industrial psychology (Bedi, Klubben & Barker, 2012). Despite a strong effort to differentiate the discipline from other branches of psychology,

confusion still exists (Gelso, Williams & Fretz, 2014) as it is often seen as having characteristics similar to these other branches of psychology (Munley et al., 2004). It was even suggested that clinical and counselling psychology fields merge, out of fear that counselling psychology lacked direction (Gelsco et al., 2014).

Clinical psychologists often provide long term therapy due to engaging with clients having severe mental health needs (Gelso et al., 2014). Clinical psychologists also have a greater focus on psychopathological populations whereas CPs focus on working from a holistic, client centered perspective with clients who have less severe mental health concerns (Morgan & Cohen, 2008). Another key difference is that clinical psychology training programs are often situated in psychology departments and CP programs are located within education, applied, or psychology departments (Norcross et al., 2010). Norcross and colleagues (2010) also found that CPs have less training in formalized assessment and more training in vocational assessment, work more from a holistic approach versus a medical model or psychodynamic orientation, and focus their research on cultural and developmental issues versus assessing interventions and neuropsychology. Finally, CPs more commonly practice from a strength-based perspective: identifying client's assets, healthy and positive coping strategies, and engaging in more research focused on wellness (Lopez et al., 2006). This allows a CP to contextualize individuals' struggles as multi-faceted and provides them the opportunity to create trajectories to understand and help their clients through their struggles. Counselling psychology therefore has a social advocacy and social justice emphasis, therefore CPs may engage in consultation, environmental modification, and work towards incorporating multicultural awareness and competence into their work (Munley et al., 2004).

Within the context of supervision, it is common for either clinical, educational psychology, or counselling psychology supervisors to supervise counselling psychology students (Canadian Psychological Association, 2015) despite their potential differences in focus. This is influenced by the fact that psychologists from all psychology disciplines register with the same regulating bodies and have similar registration requirements despite different training programs and identities (Gelso et al., 2014). This implies that supervisors may be providing supervision to students with varying degrees of experience in counselling, assessment, and research. In addition, in Canada, all provinces expect for two require CPs to complete a PhD prior to registration (Canadian Psychological Association, 2015). In some provinces, such as Alberta, psychologists may register with a master's degree; therefore supervisors may be tasked with supervising students with different levels of educational experience.

The history of counselling psychology, including its development, formation, and identity within Canada, and training processes all provide a backdrop to the relevance of studying supervision. These are all factors which could influence the quality of supervision directly. For example, sensitivity to multicultural issues and use of multicultural models can vary per supervisor (Arthur & Collins 2015), as can a supervisor's focus on helping students to create a solid CP identity. These issues may arise within the supervisory relationship, impacting if supervision is perceived as effective by the supervisee. As many factors, such as theoretical orientation, commitment to a CP identity, and others can influence student development through supervision, it is important to identify what leads to effective supervision and if these topics are of importance within the supervisory dynamic. By identifying expert supervisors within a Canadian context and asking their supervisees what made the supervision effective, this study can identify what is working well within supervision.

Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five distinct chapters. The second chapter provides an overview of the existing literature on effective supervision and supervisors. The third chapter outlines the methodology of the current study, including: the rationale for a qualitative study; methodological framework chosen; the researcher's role and influence in the study; and data collection and analysis procedures. The fourth chapter introduces each participant to situate the reader in understanding their experience and is followed by themes that summarize their experience with verbatim quotes. The dissertation concludes with discussing the findings within the context of previous literature and identifying future research directions as well as limitations of the current study.

Chapter 2: Supervision: A Literature Review

To provide context to this study this literature review opens with a definition of supervision and illustrates how to this day it is difficult to create a unified understanding of supervisions goals and purpose. The factors that impact the provision of supervision are addressed and the research on how to provide good supervision is highlighted. The importance of studying expert supervisors will be argued, and a review of the current research along with its gaps identified.

Defining Supervision

Supervision is the monitoring of a non registered practitioner within the mental health field by a registered practitioner and is the pedagogy by which training occurs (Goodyear, Bunch, & Clairborn, 2006). It is an intervention that has a long history within the field of psychotherapy, dating back to when Sigmund Freud held meetings at his home in 1902 (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). However, it was in 1920 that Max Eitingon proposed supervision as necessary for psychoanalytic training (White & Winstanley, 2014). By 1950, the first text outlining the format of supervision was published, though no single definition of supervision existed (Bernard, 2006). Though psychotherapy supervision has been researched and practiced for a century, controversy still continues to this day about the scope and content of supervision (Morgan & Sprenkle, 2007). Bernard and Goodyear's (2014) definition of supervision is the most widely-used, and is both broad in scope, while also providing a general definition of supervision:

> Supervision is an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member colleague or colleagues who typically (but not always) are members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative and hierarchical, extends over

> time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients that she, he or they seek; and serving as gatekeeper for the particular profession the supervisee seeks to enter (p.9).

Bernard and Goodyear (2014) note that supervision differs from formal teaching, such as academic instruction, in that it: (a) does not have a singular specified learning curriculum and (b) entails giving feedback on both supervisees' skills and personal factors that may influence their work (Kilminister et al., 2007). Proctor (1986) summarized supervision as having three core functions. It is "normative" by addressing ethical and managerial responsibilities that arise in therapy, "formative" by addressing supervisee educational and developmental needs, and can be "restorative" when supervisors address emotional aspects of work. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) state that restorative component of supervision differs from counselling in that the focus remains on improving supervisee effectiveness with clients and does not address a supervisee's personal struggle (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Inman and colleagues (2014) add that while supervision does not entail providing individual counselling, it can address problematic supervisee behavior that may result in client harm.

The extent to which supervision includes components of teaching, therapy, consultation, or a blend of all three components still sparks debate (Watkins, 2011). Watkins (2011) concluded that the current consensus on psychotherapy supervision is that:

> (1) supervision is primarily educational in nature and involves some teaching, though it is not exclusively teaching in role and function; (2) supervision is not and should not become psychotherapy, though it may inevitably involve some attention to matters that are therapy-oriented in nature; (3) supervision can be consultative at times, though it is

> not exclusively consultation in role and function; (4) supervision overlaps with but is separable from teaching, psychotherapy, and consultation; and (5) supervision can be conceptualized as a distinct intervention (p.59).

Factors Impacting Supervision

Supervisory relationships are "multilayered and complex" (Bernard & Goodyear, 20104, p.64) and there are many factors that can influence the success of supervision. A large part of research in supervision has focused on what leads to good supervision experiences by examining the supervisory alliance. This research has identified that the effectiveness of supervision can be impacted by the alliance, supervisor and supervisee qualities, as well as how they both interact within the supervision dynamic.

The supervisor alliance.

Ellis (2010) stated that good supervision is created through the relationship that exists between supervisor and supervisee, termed the supervisory alliance (SA). Bordin (1983) proposed that the therapist-client working alliance could be defined by three elements: agreement upon therapy goals, therapy tasks, and the formation of a positive interpersonal bond between therapist and client. The SA has been derived from this and comprises the same three principles. As supervisors and supervisees have different understandings of supervision and seek different goals from it (West & Clark, 2004), contracting and negotiating an understanding of the purpose of supervision is important (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Agreeing upon the tasks of supervision and the ways in which it will be conducted and evaluated can help enhance interpersonal bonds and decrease the potential for ineffective supervision (Campbell, 2006).

The SA has been studied both quantitatively and qualitatively. Different quantitative measures have been created to assess this relationship and its impact in supervision, such as the

Evaluation Process within Supervision Inventory, which measures supervisors evaluation practices (Lehrman-Waterman & Ladany, 2001), and versions of the Working Alliance Inventory (Campbell, 2006). Studies examining the SA have all pointed to it being, "potentially one of the most important common factors in the change processes of supervision" (Ladany, Ellis & Friedlander, 1999, p. 447). Bernard and Goodyear (2009) explain that this relationship is important because the supervisee is the center point between the working alliance with their client and the alliance with their supervisor.

A positive SA has been shown to decrease personal and infrastructure related stress, increase supervisees' satisfaction at work (Sterner, 2009), and enhance confidence in supervisors (Ronnestad et al., 1997). If the SA is weak, supervisees may feel uncomfortable sharing difficulties they are experiencing with clients, leading to the withholding of potentially important information (Sweeney & Creaner, 2014). In addition, supervision can risk turning into individual counseling, which raises potential boundary violation concerns as supervisors are not therapists to their supervisees (Omand, 2010). In recent work, there has also been a focus on adding a fourth component within the SA, which is the acknowledgement of the power differential and evaluative nature of supervision that may not be present in the working alliance inventories (Falender et al., 2014) yet is an impactful component of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

Accumulating research evidence suggests that supervision has a positive impact on supervisee self-awareness; identity formation, skill acquisition, and treatment knowledge (see Bernard & Goodyear, 2014 for a review). However, negative effects can also occur, such as a lack of self-disclosure (Knox et al., 2008), when issues of power misuse or boundary violations in the relationship arise (Wilson et al., 2016). Given that the supervision relationship requires at a

minimum two people engaging together, it makes sense that there would be specific supervisor and supervisee factors that can influence the quality of the relationship and its impact on supervisees.

Supervisor factors.

Supervisors' characteristics that lead to the creation of a positive SA include their ability to provide instruction well, possessing good interpersonal skills, being a competent clinician, their ability to be good role models and being comfortable with evaluation processes (Kilminister et al., 2007). Supervisors who are able to create a positive alliance are also described as having a healthy attachment style as a supervisor (White & Wueener, 2003), being empathic, kind, and being a good listener (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Supervisors' awareness and dissemination of multicultural issues in supervision (Bukard, Knox, Clarke, Phelps, & Inman, 2014) and exploration of cultural issues with supervisees also enhance the SA (Soheilian et al., 2014). Studies have also identified areas of improvement, suggesting that competent supervisors should possess awareness of countertransference issues, have a commitment to developing and maintaining a positive supervisory alliance, and be able to challenge supervisees effectively (Bucky, Marques, Daly, Alley & Karp, 2010).

Researchers have also identified that competent supervisors have specific skills that can positively impact the alliance. These include that supervisors are encouraging; are able to provide both positive and informative feedback to their supervisees, and take into consideration their supervisees' learning needs (Ladany, Mori & Mehr, 2013). Supervisors should provide positive affirmations of their supervisees work, yet also challenge their supervisees to consider alternatives prior to providing them with answers on each question (Weaks, 2002). It is also important that the supervisor create a safe environment where supervisees feel they can discuss

client and personal issues with their supervisor without judgment (Weaks, 2002). In addition, as supervision does contain a hierarchical and evaluative component, supervisors should be able to create the sense of an equal environment (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009) with a clear understanding and agreed upon criteria of how evaluation will occur (Falender et al., 2014). Though useful, these studies do not provide supervisors with details on how best to acquire these skills. For example, how is an equal environment created while still respecting that supervisors evaluate supervisees on their skills and abilities to work with clients?

Supervisee factors.

Though a supervisor can take many positive steps to create a strong SA, supervisee characteristics also have a determining influence. For example, Jacobsen and Tanggaard (2009) found that although supervisees viewed supervisory guidance as a helpful aspect of supervision, each supervisee varied on what this guidance entails. Supervisees may also differ on the amount of empowerment and autonomy they wish to have within the SA (Ladany, 2012) and differ on the style of learning they present with and prefer (Hart & Nance, 2003). For example, one supervisee may enjoy a supportive supervisor where another wishes for a consultant supervisor who acts more like a teacher than a supporter. Other important supervisee characteristics include: their attachment style; past experiences of supervision and how they impact expectations, stress levels and coping strategies, ethnic differences, supervisee disclosure preferences, and if the supervisee feels they are matched well with their supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009).

Supervisee- Supervisor Interaction

The perceived quality of the alliance, and therefore the effectiveness of supervision, is also impacted by the interaction between supervisor and supervisee. Although supervision is often likened to therapy, it does represent a contextually different process (Bernard & Goodyear,

2014). Supervision is didactic and focuses on teaching and evaluating supervisees' work while offering support to enhance supervisee growth (Campbell, 2006). Researchers have identified that supervisors must be skilled at providing constructive feedback while also creating a supportive learning environment (Bambling, 2009). Evaluative practices in supervision need to be considered clear and fair, by both supervisor and supervisee, (Hoffman, Hill, Holmes & Freitas, 2005) and supervisor and supervisee roles must also be clearly outlined and understood (Ellis, 2010). Researchers have also identified that topics such as racial and ethnic differences should be addressed openly when present in the relationship (Gatmon et al., 2001) to help enhance the alliance.

Training of Supervisors

As supervision involves different roles, it can often be a difficult process for supervisors (Grant, Schofield & Crawford, 2012). Main areas of difficulty can include, but are not limited to, influencing variables such as supervisee incompetence, negative supervisee characteristics, and a poor supervisor supervisee relationship (Grant et al., 2012). Supervision can also be challenging as many supervisors are placed in a supervision role without formal training (Kilminister et al., 2007), making it difficult to know how to provide effective supervision beyond one's own personal experiences of supervision. Yet it is only in recent years that supervision has emerged as a distinctive field (Bernard, 2005), and the importance of training supervisors in how to provide supervision has been acknowledged (Hadjistavropoulous, Kehler, & Hadjistravropoulos, 2010).

Supervision is now considered a core competency and there has been an increased focus on the importance of training supervisors on how to provide effective supervision (Watkins & Wang, 2014). Many regulatory boards now require supervisors to have either formal education

on supervision or to have taken workshops to supplement their knowledge (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Training may focus on teaching supervisors about criteria for minimally adequate supervision, outlining ethical issues within supervision, and teaching supervisors about different models of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Despite this positive movement, a study conducted in 2002 found that only 20% of supervisors had formal training in providing supervision (Peake, Nussbaum & Tindell, 2002). Additionally, no specific standards exist on what this training should look like, including what topics should be taught to supervisors. Hadjistavropoulos and colleagues (2010) examined training in Canadian accredited psychology programs and found that 40% of these programs do not require their students to take formal course work in supervision training. Of the programs that did require courses, the topics covered varied, many of the classes were informal versus structured, and direct supervision experience was not a requirement in all programs. Given that supervisor training is inconsistent and variable on content and focus, its ability to produce competent and expert supervisors is easily questioned, as practice without feedback is not sufficient to gain competence (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). One way to address this gap is to study expert supervisors to help identify what skills, characteristics, actions and cognitions they have, or acquire that could then translate into future training practices.

Review of Expert Supervisor Literature

Many of the studies focusing on good or bad supervision experiences focuses on doctoral supervisors or novice supervisors who may not have experience, training, and enhanced knowledge about supervision processes (Goodyear et al., 2016). In psychotherapy research, there are a subset of therapists that reliably outperform their counterparts and continue to grow in experience and skills (Bernard et al., 2016). Expert psychotherapists have been found to create

personalized approaches when working with clients (Ronnestad & Skovholt, 2003), which may be an important factor that expert supervisors utilize in supervision. Bernard and colleagues (2016) state that the study of expert supervisors is timely as there has been a rise in supervision models, training, and regulations being created to help inform how to provide good supervision. Yet to date there have only been five studies examining advanced supervisors. A common finding among these studies is that expert supervisors are highly reflective, flexible, and are able to adapt to supervisee needs. Each study will be reviewed and its strengths and limitations addressed.

Nelson, Barnes, Evans, and Triggiano, (2008) qualitatively studied how wise supervisors deal with difficult supervisory situations. Wise supervisors were chosen through a peer nomination process, where professional peers rated supervisors they identified as reliable and able to provide excellent supervision. Twelve wise supervisors, with varying educational experience, participated in a phone interview to discuss their orientation to supervision and how they manage difficulties that arise in supervision. They found that supervisors were not afraid of conflict and viewed conflict as a naturally occurring phenomenon within supervision that could help enhance the SA and the supervisee's development. Additionally, these supervisors identified that their own anxiety can make conflict worse. Although they reported disliking conflict, they noted that the SA could be better maintained, and positive supervisee outcomes could arise when they as supervisors handled supervisee anxiety, clarified expectations, and engaged in post conflict resolution (Nelson et al., 2008). This study was broad in nature, focusing on supervisors from various fields such as social work, and was limited by having predominately female supervisors nominated. As psychologists in Alberta have different registration requirements than social workers and counselors, expert supervisors in this discipline

may have different ways of managing conflict due to their gate keeping role. This study also had a low number of nominations, only receiving 17 in total, possibly limiting the scope of wise supervisors they could have identified (Nelson et al., 2008). In addition, key informants were professional peers speaking to who they felt might be seen as an expert supervisor in the community, but were individuals who did not actively receive supervision from the wise supervisor, therefore limiting their ability to speak to actual performance versus perceived performance as a supervisor.

A study conducted by Slvain-Mulford, Hilsenroth, Blagys, and Blais (2011) indicated that master supervisors may also differ in their beliefs of which therapeutic techniques lead to better client outcomes based on their training and experience. Experts were identified based on having eight or more years of post-graduate training and having supervised for three or more years in their specific therapeutic orientation. Participants were limited to a specific psychiatry department and therefore did not include a wide range of academic experience and professional backgrounds. In addition this study did not focus solely on registered psychologists. Participants were given the Comparative Psychotherapy Process Scale, which identifies features of cognitive behavioural and psychodynamic-interpersonal techniques used in therapy. Slavin-Mulford and colleagues (2011) found that expert supervisors who identified as cognitive behavioural supervisors versus psychoanalytic supervisors, and who had more experience using cognitive behavioural techniques, endorsed these techniques as more effective in impacting client outcomes compared to psychoanalytic techniques. Similarly, psychoanalytic supervisors also endorsed psychoanalytic techniques more often, indicating that the more time one had with their favored orientation the less open they were to other therapeutic techniques (Slavin-Mulford et al., 2011). A preference to a specific therapeutic orientation or set of techniques could influence

the training provided to supervisees. Studies have explored if supervisor and supervisee having similar therapeutic orientations influences the quality of the relationship, with mixed reviews on its relevance to the alliance (Campbell, 2006). However, orientation matching is still a commonly endorsed suggestion to help enhance supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), despite research having yet to identify supervisees' experiences of how expert supervisors manage differences of therapeutic orientations and intervention used with clients, and if or how this impacts supervision dynamics.

Grant, Schofield and Crawford (2012) studied how expert supervisors address difficulties in supervision. Expert supervisors in the United Kingdom and Australia were identified through peer nomination, where key informants were known professionals in the field. They used a mixed method approach where expert supervisors were asked to participate in a semi-structured interview reflecting on how they provide supervision, followed by observing a recording of one of their sessions and speaking to skills and techniques used in that session. They identified that experts used four main strategies in handling difficulties that arose in supervision. Experts used relational skills, such as validating emotions, to provide support to the supervisees. Supervisors were reflective about their role in supervision and the role of counter-transference as it arose. Experts were not afraid to use confrontation in a tentative and supportive manner and at times when supervisees presented as defensive, used avoidance techniques to create space in the supervision dynamic prior to addressing the issue. Though this study is the first to use interpersonal process recall to assess experts' reflections of what skills and techniques they used in a supervision session, it did not address supervisees' experiences, and only studied a single session of supervision. Supervision is, at minimum, a year long process where supervisees have been identified as going through developmental changes such as shifts in anxiety and confidence

levels (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). By only studying a single recording, how expert supervisors adapt to and manage supervisees' developmental processes may not be adequately understood.

Through the use of concept mapping, which is a mixed method approach, Kemer, Borders, and Willse (2014) examined the cognitive categories of 18 master supervisors. They identified supervisors as master supervisors if they had a doctorate, possessed supervisory experience, were involved in supervision scholarly activities, and were considered to be distinguished supervisors. The authors did not use a peer nomination process but listed those they believed met the criteria based on their own experiences and asked them to participate in the study. Therefore actual performance of supervision is not being assessed. Analyzing participants' written statements about supervision, expert supervisors were asked to organize these statements into cognitive structures that reflected how they thought about supervision, and how they organize their thoughts on supervision. They identified five distinct clusters of cognitive categories: (1) Supervisors conceptualize supervision and intervening processes by focusing on goals of supervision and what needs attention in the supervision room, (2) Assessment of the supervisee work, which focuses on reflecting on their skills, the alliance, and experience (3) cognitions focused on assessing the supervisory relationship, (4) reflection on supervisor self-assessment, and (5) administrative and logistic issues. They also identified that expert supervisors were self-reflective, aware of their limitations and biases, and were aware of and evaluating the dyadic nature of supervision and their role within it. No comparison group was used in this study; therefore these cognitive maps may not be distinct to expert supervisors.

In a follow-up study, Kemer, Borders and Yel (2017) studied the effect of site supervisors' cognitions on training supervisees. The same expert supervisors from their previous study participated and were asked to think about one recent supervisee they would identify as

challenging, and another they would identify as easy, and to describe what made them this way. They were also invited to rate 195 "supervision cognitions" (Kemer et al., 2017, p.53) on a 5-point-Likert scale to identify the priority expert supervisors used these cognitions while working with each type of supervisee. Their findings mirror those of their previous study, outlining that expert supervisors have nuanced ways of thinking and responding to supervisee training. For example, when working with challenging supervisees experts prioritized self-reflection and self-assessment to assure they were hearing their messages in the supervision hour. In contrast, when working with easy supervisees these same experts prioritized supervisee conceptualization skills, developmental levels, and cognitive-emotional abilities. These results imply that expert supervisors have different ways of working with each supervisee; however this study did not include the supervisees and their reflections on if these different approaches impacted the effectiveness of supervision.

These studies highlight the fact that expert supervisors may have characteristics and skills different than their less experienced counterparts that lead to effective supervision. Carifio and Hess (1987) identify three broad questions that can be asked in regards to ideal supervision: (a) what are the characteristics of an ideal supervisor? (b) what training or experience does the ideal supervisor have? and (c) how does the ideal supervisor implement supervision? The aforementioned studies have focused on answering the first two questions, whereas examining what expert supervisors do in supervision, as experienced by supervisees, has yet to be studied. In addition, peer nomination of expert supervisors through key informants who have experienced the supervision has not been conducted. Current studies on expert supervisors have only focused on identifying experts either through experience and involvement in the field, despite years of experience not always equating to expertise (Goh, Skovholt, Hanson, & Banerjee-Stevens,

2003), or through nominations of peers in the field who may not be able to speak to the actual performance of the expert. A final consideration of these studies is that they measure expertise in a single timeframe, versus exploring longitudinally how experts' conceptualization or provision of supervision changes over time.

Conclusion

Interest in clinical supervision has grown, with an increase in statements of best practice and competencies being developed, and post-graduate training becoming increasingly common (Goodyear et al., 2016). As supervision is a mandated and necessary process of prelicensed training, understanding how to provide effective supervision to improve supervisee experience and client outcomes is crucial. The supervisory alliance is a well researched topic within supervision literature, and an understanding of how to develop and maintain a positive alliance is well-underway. There are however many other factors that influence the effectiveness of supervision, such as how supervisors manage challenges, and supervisee developmental needs. What is needed is a broader understanding of how supervisors can manage these factors effectively. One way to study this is by looking to experts in the field. Experts have been identified as having particular skills and cognitions that differ from their novice counterparts. Still, this research is in its infancy and supervisee perspectives of how these expert traits and characteristics impact supervision has yet to be explored.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The main purpose of this study was to better understand supervisees' experiences of being supervised by someone who is very good at supervision. More specifically, this studied aimed to answer the following question: "What is a supervisee's experience of being supervised by an expert supervisor?" To answer this question, a researcher should identify their philosophical

assumptions and their values to help them choose what approach to choose (Creswell et al., 2007) as the approach chosen should connect to the researcher's epistemology and theoretical perspective in a coherent way.

Researcher as Instrument

In qualitative research, "the researcher is the instrument" (Patton, 2002, p.14), meaning that the quality of the research relies on the researchers skill, their ability to reflect on their ownership of their perspective and how this influences their response to the topic (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). As the researcher is an active respondent, their interaction with the participants can influence the interview space and the degree to which a participant shares information (Pezalla et al., 2012). In qualitative inquiry it is important to make visible the researchers epistemological and ontological views to help situate the reader in understanding the results of the research (Morrow, 2005). A self-reflective statement of the researcher's background is also given to qualify their ability to conduct research, to enhance trustworthiness, to describe their experience, relevant biases and point out assumptions that may influence the approach chosen and the analysis (Greenbank, 2003).

Epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge, framing a researcher's view of what knowledge is possible to observe (Crotty, 1998). Crotty (1998) identifies three epistemologies, objectivism, constructivism and subjectivism. The epistemological stance that I ascribe to is constructivism, where reality is multi-faceted and constructed through each individual's interactions in and with the world and its objects. This is often a philosophical assumption that is tied to phenomenology and hermeneutics, informed by philosophers such as Heidegger and Husserl who will be discussed later in this paper. Choosing this epistemological view has implications for my study, where I would not seek to create generalizations of data, or focus on

generating a theory to predict future behaviours (Crotty, 1998). By taking a constructivist view, my research focuses on understanding multiple supervisees' meanings of their experience of engaging in supervision, and what this experience is like for them. The purpose of such an approach is to better understand the essence of being supervised by an expert, and what qualities and characteristics experts are perceived to have that influence this experience. A constructivist view also frames how I understand supervision as a whole, viewing it as something that is an individualized process, where the supervisory dyad is important to study and understand. Therefore, it was my aim to be guided by my participants understanding of what leads to effective supervision versus imposing my own beliefs on their experiences.

In addition to epistemology, ontology, which is the researcher's view of reality and how they exist in the world (Mayan, 2009) is often important to discuss. The theoretical perspective with which I ascribe to is interpretivism. Interpretivism focuses on understanding and examining historical and cultural interpretations of social realities (Creswell, 2012) and is an idiographic approach, focusing on individual development and understanding (Crotty, 1998). My focus as a researcher is to create an understanding of the phenomenon of supervision as it is experienced by the supervisees engaged in this study. An interpretive paradigm is appropriate as supervisees might have different experiences of supervision based on their background, training, and their own views of reality. For example, one supervisee may interpret critical feedback as imperative to their development and another take it harshly. It is through discussing these interpretations, and creating a forum through qualitative inquiry between a researcher and participant that these constructions of reality can be explored (Yeh & Inman, 2007). It is my training as a psychologist that helped me to avoid rigidity in my interview process. Though I have prior experiences and ideas about supervision while conducting the interviews, my ability to use reflective skills and

empathy helped keep the interview process flexible, and allowed me to be open to new knowledge and insights about supervision.

My past experiences were instrumental in my ability to work with the data collected from this study. I have received training in conducting qualitative research through both my masters and as a doctoral-level student in the Counselling Psychology Program at the University of Alberta. Beyond coursework in qualitative methods, I have conducted 3 qualitative studies with the support of my supervisors, and been part of 2 additional studies where I worked on the qualitative component of mixed-method designs as a research assistant. These studies required that I learn about thematic analysis and become proficient in sifting through data to identify themes that described participants' experiences. My studies have focused on topics such as students' use of music to treat insomnia, mature students experiences of receiving career counselling and assessing Health Technology Assessments specialists' views of ethical issues and values in their profession.

On a personal note, it is my own experiences and development that generated the idea for this study. As a registered psychologist I have had many opportunities to be supervised, both academically and clinically. I also chose to get registered after my masters, and as part of the doctorate program have had to receive additional supervision. Therefore, I have had a unique experience of receiving more than 3200 hours of supervised practice. My supervisory experiences have been both positive and negative, and I have come to value the importance of skills learned during pre-licensure training. During my training I observed supervisees who reported positive, growth enhancing experiences and others who dropped out the pre-licensure process, or struggled through their training. A common observation was that the quality of supervision often played a role in supervisee experiences, as it had in my own. The research

question created for this study arose from a need to further understand what skills and qualities are needed to provide supervision that leads to a growth enhancing experience for supervisees. Since supervision can have such an impact on how a person feels about their skills, as well as their potential career path, knowing how to provide effective supervision has become a passion of mine.

Choosing Qualitative Research

When choosing an approach to research, there exist three broad paradigms a researcher can choose from, quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. By choosing a specific paradigm a researcher is selecting specific views of the world, data, and the way in which they can be informed (Maxwell, 2005). For example, quantitative paradigms will see the world as object-oriented, focused on the use of the scientific method to provide concrete generalized answers about human experience (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Qualitative paradigms on the other hand are focused on studying naturally occurring phenomena to gain understanding of social situations and how they are constructed (McLeod, 2011). McLeod (2000) points out that an assumption of qualitative inquiry is that the knowing/knowledge of a situation is multifaceted, meaning there can be many ways to interpret and understand reality and data. In addition, quantitative research is conducted to create hypotheses, and is often theory-driven and deductive whereas qualitative work is considered to be driven by the data, includes the subjectivity of the researcher (Morrow, 2005) and focuses on an inductive approach (Heppner, Wampold & Kivlinghan, 2008). As a bottom-up approach (Johnson & Christensen, 2012) the goal of qualitative work is often to describe critique, interpret, and provide an understanding of human experiences as it is founded in the interpretive paradigm (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007).

Researchers may also choose to use a mixed method paradigm, which often combines both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection in various ways (Hanson, Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska & Creswell, 2005). In choosing a mixed method approach a researcher may decide to use a quantitative of qualitative approach as a predominate focus and use the other to help elaborate on the results of the first method (Creswell, 2012). Mixed methods are often chosen when a researcher wishes to: (a) converge numerous trends identified in research, (b) to better understand or develop new research instruments, or (c) to expand quantitative data through the use of interviews of key informants (Hanson et al., 2005). For the purpose of this study, a mixed method was not chosen as the study of expert supervisors is novel, with little information existing to date on the topic. A pure qualitative approach provides the ability to study complex phenomena that can be difficult to measure quantitatively, and allows for new insights to be developed about an experience (Smith et al., 2009).

Qualitative research is a movement away from an objective, scientific understanding and towards a personal, subjective and experiential understanding of phenomena (Morrow, 2007). It is focused on how language is used to provide meaning versus numbered data (Polkinghorne, 2005), and its objective is to help create a form of mutual understanding of the many ways of knowing and experiencing reality (Smith, 2008). A qualitative approach is appropriate to help provide common understandings of multiple levels of knowing/knowledge as it is humanistic and focused on the fact that meaning is constructed by and with people (McLeod, 2011). Therefore, a qualitative approach is most appropriate in order to access the meaning making of supervisees' experiences through this process and not impose any pre-existing categories on their experiences. A qualitative approach will help clarify supervisees' "experience as it appears in [their] lives" (Polkinghorne, 2005, p.137).

Within qualitative research, there are many specific designs to choose from, such as grounded theory, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and more. The philosophical assumptions discussed reduce which qualitative design can inform my study. For example, a phenomenological study based solely on Hursserl's principles would not align with the conceptualization of multiple ways of viewing reality (McLeod, 2011) but a phenomenological approach guided by Heidegger might. I would not choose a design that focuses on finding an objective truth or may have its foundations in positivism, such as quantitative work, or qualitative methodologies seeking to create generalized statements about experience, such as grounded theory. Instead, my philosophical assumptions and research question push me toward examining an individual's direct lived experience in order to gain a deeper understanding of what supervision with an expert supervisor entails.

The nature of the question I seek to answer is phenomenological in its essence, examining the lived experience of each supervisee. Having an interpretative theoretical perspective narrows the choices to three different philosophical streams a researcher can choose from which include phenomenology, hermeneutics, and symbolic interactionism (Crotty, 1998). A researcher may also choose to select interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), a design which combines the three philosophical streams to account for both describing the lived experience and providing interpretation to it (Shinebourne, 2011a).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a design that examines the lived experience of an individual and the way in which it allows for an understanding of the meaning of a particular experience or phenomenon as it is experienced by that individual (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is interpretative, because as we examine an experience we are intrinsically making

interpretations upon it, framing it within a social and cultural context (Shinebourne, 2011b). IPA is therefore informed by three different philosophical underpinnings; it draws on phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography which will be examined in-depth below (Smith et al., 2009).

McLeod (2000) argues that hermeneutics and phenomenology are two opposite ends of a continuum. Phenomenology is the purposeful study of an individual's lived experience to understand human consciousness (Dowling, 2007), and can take on different perspectives dependent on the philosophical underpinnings one ascribes to. On this continuum, Husserl's phenomenology can be seen as opposing hermeneutics. Husserl is focused on the descriptive tradition of experience (Husserl & Heideger, 1927), where experience is understood from a pre-reflective state where assumptions and interpretation are put aside to get at the core of experience (Lopez & Willis, 2004). Hermeneutics on the other hand is originally the interpretation of biblical text (Gavridis, 2004) but has expanded in research to the "theory of interpretation" (Smith et al., 2009 p.21). IPA provides a middle ground between these philosophies and illustrates how they complement one another. IPA draws from Husserl's phenomenological stance that focusing on the subjective experience is imperative while looking to Heidegger's (Husserl & Heidegger, 1927) philosophy that we are beings put into a world that is perspective and ever-changing where interpretation of meaning is necessary. Therefore, IPA is focused on the lived experience, but providing interpretation to make sense of it within a social and cultural context. It differs from other interpretative methods such as grounded theory, in that it does not seek to provide a generalized theory. IPA instead is focused on giving voice to a phenomenon to create understanding (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). IPA's purpose is similar to

phenomenology; its goal is to reduce a group of individuals' experiences, such as supervision, down to its universal essence as it is experienced in everyday life (Creswell et al., 2007).

IPA is also influenced by Schleiermarcher's (1998) focus on analyzing a text (i.e., transcript or written work) to draw meaning from it that the author may not be privy to. IPA does not assume this interpretation of text creates a singular truth, but takes Gadamer's perspective that understanding of the text provides understanding of the individual, but in context of when the interpretation occurs (Smith et al., 2009). For this reason, there are many levels of interpretation that IPA can use. One level of interpretation is focused on empathy and meaning making, creating an interpretation grounded in the participant's experience itself (Smith, 2004). A second form of interpretation is conducted when the researcher questions what the participant is truly saying, moving away from a description and toward an interpretation formulated by the researcher, which may be informed by psychological principles or cultural contexts (Smith, 2004).

IPA therefore contains a strong interpretive view linked to construction, where meaning making is framed in the historical processes of our lives (Frost, 2011) and the ways in which we engage with objects (Crotty, 1998). IPA's hermeneutic foundation allows the researcher to contextualize and interpret experiences (Westerman et al., 2013) in "relation to a wider social, cultural and perhaps even theoretical context" (Larkin et al., 2006, p. 104). This creates a focus on understanding what it means to be supervised by an expert supervisor in a broader sense than the individual experience. A key tenant of IPA is to not let the analysis stand on its own but to conceptualize it within existing literature on supervision and one's own experience (Smith, 2004).

Another important aspect of IPA, and qualitative work as a whole, is the notion of researcher subjectivity (Morrow, 2005). As an interpretative phenomenological method informed by Heidegger, IPA takes up his philosophical implications on researcher subjectivity, stating that researchers must be able to bracket their experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Husserl (Husserl & Heidegger, 1927) focused on bracketing off one's experiences to get at the things themselves directly without pre-suppositions of one's own experience, but his student Heidegger argued that a full bracketing and removal from one's biases and assumptions is hard to do. By being a researcher trying to understand a participant's lived experience; Heidegger (1962) argued that we automatically bring our prior experiences, assumptions, and preconceptions to this encounter. In addition to Heideggers argument, IPA also includes Merleau-Ponty and his argument that researchers will always be engaging in a form of interpretation when examining experience, and Satre's argument that experience is shaped through people's interactions, making pure bracketing impossible (Smith et al., 2009).

IPA is founded on Heidegger's philosophy that we have fore-structures of understanding and argues that bracketing is a cyclical process which can only be partially achieved (Smith et al., 2009). Smith and colleagues (2009) note that IPA uses a double hermeneutic turn that sets it apart from other methodologies. "The researcher is making sense of the participant, who is making sense of [the experience]" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 35), allowing the researcher to be an insider to the experience but also frame the experience in interpretation. This implies that there are two levels at which the experience is being subjectively interpreted by the participant, and the researcher. In this case, the use of journaling to make one's biases and assumptions explicit to the reader is important to enhance the quality of the research and understand how ones subjectivity influences the data (Yeh & Inman, 2007).

Finally, IPA has a subjectivist epistemology where participants' subjective data provides knowledge to create an understanding of their experience (Snelgrove, 2014). IPA is therefore grounded in an idiographic tradition focused on the particular experience versus creating a nomothetic view of an experience (Smith et al., 2009). This idiographic focus allows for in-depth examination of the individual lived experience (Shinebourne, 2011a), to highlight particular occurrences within supervision and reflect on personal and unique events as they occur for each supervisee (Larkin et al., 2006). As IPA focuses on homogenous purposeful samples (Smith, 2004) this will allow me to focus in on supervisees' experiences of working under an expert supervisor, and identify how they make sense of the process of supervision. IPA is also often used within the field of psychology as it provides description of the lived experience and places it within the psychological literature (Smith, 2004). Differing from many psychology principles, IPA does not aim at verifying or negating a hypothesis but instead invites flexibility to fully explore an experience, even the unanticipated topics that arise (Smith, 2004). As supervisees' experiences of working with expert supervisors have not been fully explored, being inductive in this manner is well suited for this study.

Longitudinal Design

IPA, as with many qualitative studies, examines a moment or snapshot view of an experience (Frost, 2011). To engage with temporality, and explore more than just a snapshot, I choose to use a longitudinal design. A focus of longitudinal design is to understand the development of a phenomena or perspective as it changes across time to capture idiosyncrasies, commonalities and differences within and across time periods (Hermanowicz, 2013). Through the use of repeated semi-structured interviews over a span of time, one can view breadth and depth of changes in interpretation that participants make about their experiences (Saldana, 2003).

A longitudinal design allows for the exploration of if and how supervision changes over time, and to explore how supervision dynamics develop according to supervisees' perspectives.

There exist different types of longitudinal designs to choose from based on length and type of observation (Saldana, 2003). For this study I used a longitudinal panel design where the same sets of participants were used across three different time periods (Menard, 2008). This design allowed me to ask the same questions in each interview, but also allowed flexibility to formulate new questions for subsequent interviews based on the narratives that arise (Hermanowicz, 2013). Having this flexibility to add new lines of questioning provides the ability to identify supervisee themes of engaging in supervision as they change over time as well as cross reference these themes with participants to help ensure participants experiences are understood and framed accurately. As Saldana (2003) notes, the exploration of change is a collaborative endeavor where cross-referencing themes is a good quality control procedure and is well suited with IPAs exploration of the lived experience.

In addition, Hermanowicz (2013) highlights that the choice of interval between interviews is dependent upon having sufficient time for change to occur and can be different with each study. For the purpose of this study, as supervision is often seen as a developmental trajectory where supervisees are anxious when they start and gain confidence as they proceed (Campbell, 2006), three interviews were conducted. These interviews occurred at the outset of the placement, during the middle half of the placement, and toward the end of the placement in hopes to capture a sequence of change and development.

Method

In this study there were two parts to identifying participants. The first part of this study required the identification of expert supervisors by asking key informants, in this case past

supervisees, to nominate supervisors based on a set criteria later described in this chapter. The second part of this study involved recruiting supervisees who were being supervised by an expert supervisor.

Participants

Supervisors.

A total of eight supervisors met the inclusion criteria of this study. The eight supervisors were dispersed across the province of Alberta, where four were from Edmonton, three from Calgary and one from Red Deer. Of the eight supervisors, two had a PhD in Educational Psychology, one a PhD in Clinical Psychology, two a PhD in Counselling Psychology, one a Masters in Educational Psychology, one a Masters in Clinical Psychology and the final one had a Masters in Counselling Psychology. Of the eight experts, five were male and three were female, and four had supervisees that agreed to be part of this study. The experts being studied were three male supervisors, one with a PhD in Educational Psychology, and two with PhDs in Counselling Psychology, along with one female with a Master degree in Counselling Psychology.

Supervisees.

Participants were seven master or doctoral level counselling psychology supervisees who received supervision from 2016 to 2017 as pre-licensed psychologists in Alberta. A total of seven students, of a possible 14, responded to the recruitment poster and agreed to participate in this study.

Table 1 outlines information on participants demographics. For this study, all seven participants engaged in all interviews, allowing for 100% retention rate of participants throughout the interview process. Of the seven participants, four routinely responded to the

journal entries every two weeks, and one participant occasionally (less than 50% of the time) responded to the journal prompts. The other two did not respond to the journal entries.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	**Age**	**Gender**	**Level of Education**	**Years of Counseling Related Experience Prior to 1600 hour placement.**	**Choose their supervisor**	**Location of registration site**
CW	28	Female	Masters	4	No	Post-Secondary Institute
Titan	44	Male	Masters	12	Yes	Mental Health Outpatient
SB	47	Female	Masters	6	Yes	Not-For-Profit Agency
East Coast Girl	41	Female	Masters	11	Yes	Addiction and Mental Health
Melanie	31	Female	Masters	2.5	Yes	Not-For-Profit
Amanda	28	Female	PhD	2	No	Post-Secondary Institute
Katie	58	Female	PhD	7	No	Post-Secondary Institute

Some participants were supervised by the same supervisor. Table 2 below links each supervisee to their supervisor (pseudonyms used) to provide a context of comparison for the analysis process. In addition, three participants, as part of their placement setting, were supervised by three separate supervisors throughout their pre licensure experience, with an average of each supervisor providing supervision for four months. Though these additional supervisors were not directly part of the study, participants still discussed their experiences with them, and often compared and contrasted each supervisory experience. This provided a unique

opportunity to examine experts versus non-nominated supervisors for a small subset of participants.

Table 2

Supervisee and Supervisor Matches

Supervisor	**Supervisee**
John (Male)	CW and Amanda
Jack (Male)	Titan and Melanie
Tony (Male)	Katie
Tammie (Female)	East Coast Girl and Summer Breeze

Procedure

Identifying expert supervisors.

Convenience sampling was used at the outset of this study to identify psychologists who had registered in the last five years to nominate expert supervisors. Key informants were identified as past supervisees who had completed the pre-licensing process and had undergone the supervision process in the last five years. The researcher identified recently registered psychologists names through listings in the College of Alberta Psychologist (CAP) monitor from Summer 2010 (Issue 39) to Winter 2015 (Issue 48). The CAP Monitor is a quarterly newsletter distributed to all registered psychologists providing information about the field, along with names of newly registered psychologists. This time span was chosen to help assure that supervisors nominated would still be practicing and assure a large enough sample size was used to obtain nominations from. As contact information is not present for these psychologists, and

cannot be released by CAP, the researcher used Google to search for the contact information of the 916 newly registered psychologists. Of the 916 psychologists, 527 were able to be contacted via e-mail or phone.

Snowball sampling was then used in order to identify expert supervisors. The 527 newly registered psychologists were sent a survey (Appendix A) through Survey Monkey, asking them to identify a supervisor that they either know or have worked under that met the following criteria: (a) they would recommend to a fellow psychologist to seek supervision from or (b) helped them or other psychologists provide better therapy to clients. A list of criteria created by results from Kemer, Borders and Willse' (2014) study on cognitive features of master supervisors was also provided for nominators to consider when nominating expert supervisors in case they struggled with who to nominate. These criteria include identifying if the nominee; (a) is reflective of their limitations, biases (b) demonstrated openness to feedback and consultation (c) showed or known for the ability of being self-evaluative and self-reflective and (d) would be considered genuine. The survey also requested that they include who they were supervised by, in order to identify if they were nominating their former supervisor or someone else they knew. It also included a field where respondents could provide additional information about their nomination choice if desired. Respondents were e-mailed a maximum of 3 reminders to participate in the survey.

The identification of expert supervisors only included registered psychologists from the province of Alberta. This study was limited in that other supervisors, such as counselors, psychiatrists, or other professions were not included. This study also excluded other psychotherapists who may have other designations, such as Canadian Certified Counsellor, if they were not also a registered psychologist. The only information gathered on the expert

supervisors was that they were registered psychologists themselves, and their public data, which include their level of education. No limitations were put on the supervisees' credentials or experience, as supervisees in Alberta may have either a master or doctoral degree, to help ensure accuracy of supervision pairings that can occur in Alberta.

The next step was to tally the list of nominations in order to create a list of expert supervisors. Most supervisors nominated had a total of two to five nominations, and a total of eight supervisors were identified as experts, having had a total of seven or eight nominations each. These expert supervisors were then contacted via phone to discuss the study, and were sent a detailed package via e-mail about the study's goals and purpose (Appendix B). Experts were also given a poster (Appendix C) to provide to their incoming provisionally registered psychologists for recruitment purposes. Of the eight expert supervisors, seven responded and were willing to pass the recruitment poster to their incoming students. At this stage potential participants were not informed that their supervisor was nominated as an expert, as not to influence their experience or need to participate. The ethical considerations for this form of deception are addressed later on in this section.

Interview.

Once potential participants were identified and consented to participate (Appendix D), they were asked to engage in three one-hour long face-to-face semi-structured interviews (Appendix E) throughout their year internship. A semi-structured interview was chosen as it provides flexibility in questioning, allowing the researcher to focus on developmental changes as they occur throughout the year and pose new questions according to emerging themes from the previous interview (Smith & Osborn, 2007). The researcher either met students at their internship sites, or had them meet at the University of Alberta in a private office space. Interview

one occurred within the first week of supervisees' internship in order to discuss expectations of supervision. The second interview occurred halfway through the supervisee's year long internship and the third interview occurred within the final week of their internship.

To facilitate recall of supervisory events (good and bad) as they occurred during the year, participants were invited to engage in a reflexive process where they journal once every two weeks about their supervision experience. Participants were sent a bi-weekly reminder via e-mail to complete this journal entry (Appendix F). The purpose of these entries were twofold; (a) they were utilized to help trigger memory recall of events that occurred throughout the year and (b) they were a secondary source of information which is essential in qualitative research to provide different levels of evidence in order to obtain a variety of knowledge and information (Morrow, 2005). These journals allowed the researcher to ask about specific incidents identified by the participant to help them reflect on the supervision process. Data from these journal entries were also included in the participants interviews for qualitative analysis.

At the end of the final interview, participants were invited to engage in a debriefing process to speak to what it was like to engage in all three interviews. The main goal of this debriefing process was to inform supervisees that their supervisor had been identified as an expert, and to evaluate if they agreed with this nomination. Supervisees were debriefed about the purpose of the study, and then provided with a copy of the nomination questions (Appendix A) and were asked to reflect on if they agreed or not with the nomination based on their experience. They were also asked if they would add or remove any of the criteria used in the nomination process, and if they still consented to having their information used for this study. The findings section will address their experience and understanding of "expert supervisor."

Ethical considerations.

To help with recruitment and to acknowledge participants giving of their time, students who participated were provided a $25.00 gift card to a place of their choosing to thank them for participation in each interview. Participants were also provided a thank you gift card for every four diary entries they completed. Despite this incentive, this was a voluntary study where participants were free to withdraw at any point without consequence. They were informed that they would receive the gift card regardless of withdrawal, and that their information would not be used in the study if they choose to withdraw.

Ethical considerations, such as confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by stripping participants of identifiable information and using pseudonyms. Participants were informed that their supervisor was not told if they had agreed to participate or not, and that information about their specific responses would not be shared with their supervisor. They were informed that supervisors would be provided with an aggregate of all the research data at the end of the study in order to respect student's privacy and confidentiality. Informed consent involved going over a consent form (Appendix D) and having discussions about the nature of this research with participants. Both verbal and written consent were obtained as recommended by Yin (2009). This study was approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta (Appendix G).

This study contained a low-risk form of deception, where participants were not informed until the end of the study that their supervisor had been nominated as an expert. They were informed that the purpose of this study was to explore their experiences of receiving supervision. Deception was used in order to not skew their experience, in case they did not feel their supervisor was an expert, and to not add any undue pressure. Participants were informed about

the deception at the end of the study. They were also informed again that they could withdraw after being debriefed about the deception without any consequences to them. This study is considered a low-risk study, regardless of the deception used, as participants are not at risk of any physical harm.

As supervision is a year long process that can be long and difficult process, additional precautions were considered during this study in case participants informed the researcher that they were experiencing conflicts or difficulties within supervision. A list of three referral resources was compiled to be given to participants if they felt they needed either counselling to discuss their concerns, or if they felt they needed to report their supervisor.

Another ethical consideration for this study includes dual roles. I was especially aware of my various roles (student, colleague, and registered psychologist) in relation to my participants and their supervisors. As the community of registered psychologists is relatively small, the ethical consideration changes from avoidance to ethical management of possible dual relationships. To manage dual relationships, supervisors were asked to pass the poster to their supervisees, instead of being recruited by myself as the primary researcher. This provided participants the opportunity to deny participating in the study without having to approach me or feel pressured to engage in the study. As I knew some of the participants as colleagues, I informed them that they were free to not respond to a question and could disclose as much as they felt comfortable with, given the dual relationship. Participants appeared to be open and honest throughout the study, and did not seem to be concerned about the dual relationship. In fact, it appeared that my history with some of them allowed them to be more open and disclosing, especially having them know that I understood their experience of registration having gone through it myself. Participants were also informed that they would be given a summary of

both the meta-analysis, and of their individual quotes to review, modify and provide feedback on.

Analyses

Interviews were audio-recorded using a Panasonic RR-US450 and were transcribed verbatim in a Word file by the primary researcher. Pseudonyms were used to identify participants throughout the analysis process. Each transcript was entered into a separate Word file and analyzed independently for step 1 to step 2.1 (see table 3). Participants' journal entries were included in the analysis process: If participants discussed a story that was also mentioned in a journal entry, this entry was added within that area of the transcript. Additional entries that were not discussed were added to the end of each participant's transcript to be included in the analysis. Subsequent analysis followed Smith and colleagues, (2009) suggested process of moving to an exploration of the singular case to the examination of the shared cases, starting with a descriptive analysis and moving towards interpretation. The process is inductive, iterative, and requires exploring the parts and the whole separately and in conjunction with one another, and involves an innovative stance on behalf of the researcher (Smith et al., 2009). Steps 2.1 to 3.1 of Table 3 were conducted by printing the subperordinate themes of each case, cutting them and organizing them using the steps described below. Creation of master themes is an inductive process that takes time. Sticky notes were used as a creative process to facilitate reflection on names that appropriately captured the overall essence of each group of superordinate themes.

Table 3

Overview of Steps in IPA Analysis

Level of Analysis	Level I: Exploring Comments ⇩ Step 1: Identifying emerging researcher ideas			Level II: Developing Themes ⇩ Step 2: Development of super-ordinate and master themes		Level III: Interpretation ⇩ Step 3: Researchers Interpretation of themes
Steps	Step 1.1. Reading and re-reading.	Step 1.2 Creating researcher notes of interest (exploratory comments).	Step 1.3 Identifying possible themes in each case (emergent themes).	Step 2.1 Developing super-ordinate themes in each participant	Step 2.2 Developing Master themes across all cases	Step 3.1 Interpretation

Using Table 3 as a reference, and moving from step 1.1 to step 3.1, the following steps were conducted to analyze each transcript. Data from each case was read and re-read to help immerse the primary researcher in the analysis process. Table 4 provides an example from East Coast Girls first interview of how the researcher created exploratory comments and then moved toward creating emergent themes for each participant.

Table 4

East Coast Girl Analysis

Transcript	Exploratory Comments	Emergent Themes
Researcher: When you say the word gentle, that she is a gentle supervisor…. Can you maybe give me some ideas as to what you mean by that? **Interviewee:** She's not harsh in her tone or how she speaks; she's always like "Hmm… Hmm… Okay…Well…Why do you think that?" she always makes me think about it before she says "Okay well you can't do that" (Laughs) she's, she's wanting me to justify the rationale about why I did what I did before she provides me with the feedback as to why it's wrong right? So that's gentle in her approach because it's not a uh…You know she could be like "Absolutely not Christine! You can't do that, like CAP would tell you this" but she's not like that… right? Because she's, she's interested in why I did it that way because I think she's trying to take me back to you have to stop doing it that way right? For I think … she allows me to connect the dots, does that make sense? Like allows me to have those moments…	Learning confidentiality differences across profession created a large learning moment for her. Positive moments induced by supervisor and other students. Cross-supervisor learning opportunities. Supervisor not afraid to challenge gently. Clinical change due to supervision: boundary awareness and enhanced confidentiality procedures Supervision changed her approach to working relationship with clients.	**Bond:** Nice tone, empathy, not harsh. – Supervisor has created a positive bond already. **Supervisor skill-** teaching reflective practice through Socratic questioning

Notes of interest may include reflections on repetitions, linguistic or descriptive comments. Exploratory notes may refer to sense of time frame, concepts about the self or the participants experience, use of language, pauses, or a comment on an overarching theme (Smith

et al., 2009). Heppner and Wampold (2008) also identify that there are different levels to consider within psychology research. These include examining such things as micro ancillary behaviours (e.g., tone of voice, stops in speech), content (topics of discussion), interpersonal comments, therapeutic comments, and comments on quality. These were included in the transcript through codes such as "…" indicating a short pause, or actions and behaviours included in [ ] to provide the researcher context when re-reading the transcript. Emergent themes include brief sentence summaries for all the main concepts within the data that the researcher drew out. The main purpose of emergent themes was to identify patterns of connection between exploratory comments and summarize them. As there were three interviews for each participant throughout the year, interviews were analyzed at a descriptive level (steps 1-2.2 of Table 3) immediately after they were conducted. This process allowed the researcher to ask clarifying questions about participants meaning or experiences at each subsequent interview.

Once all interviews were completed, transcribed and analyzed at the descriptive level connections across emergent themes for the case, they were then summarized to create super-ordinate themes by focusing on drawing out the lived experience (Frost, 2011). Step 2.1 from Table 3 required the researcher to bring forward the obscure or unknown of the lived experience by examining life events, cultural components or narrative themes that occur (Smith et al., 2009). Other ways to draw out super-ordinate themes include organizing them by function, numeration, abstracting similarities across text and looking at polarized differences in the participants experience (Smith et al., 2009). A separate word file was created for each participant to compile superordinate themes together across each interview that were then printed so each superordinate theme could be seen individually and organized into relevant groupings. Table 5 provides an example of a superordinate theme for Amanda. Emergent themes are included on the left, where

black text includes themes from the first interview, red text from the second interview, and purple text from the third interview. Smith et al., (2009) recommend that analysis move from the "part to the whole" (p. 104) and from the whole to the part, quotes from the original transcripts which linked to emergent themes were kept to illustrate the connection of the analysis process.

Table 5

Superordinate Themes for Amanda

Theme Title : Use of Self to Enhance Supervision **Description:** This theme addresses perceived ways in which the supervisor used personal self-disclosure to enhance the alliance and inform students teaching needs. Main purposes of use of self include connecting to the supervisee to foster a sense of trust and self-disclosing to normalize, validate or help heal supervisee concerns and struggles.	
Emergent Themes	**Quotes**
Connecting and fostering trust Sharing of personal stories, Commonalities enhance SA Bond Sharing of personal stories reduces anxiety Dislikes excessive formality Seeing supervisor as human :enhances SA bond Personal stories helps develop trust Importance of knowing student needs More interpersonal connection outside of supervision with supervisor (B) - Bond quicker to develop with (B) than (A) Self-Disclosure (B) creates sense of humanism - Level of supervisor self-disclosure impacts safety of student self disclosure B open to being vulnerable in trying new things B uses self to create connection Self-disclosure for rupture repair cycle.- Self-disclosure helps supervisee understand	"so we talked a little bit about that and he's like, "wow you came a long way for the program! (chuckles)" because I came from the other side of Canada and so like we just kind of shot the shit a little bit got to know each other a little bit uhm"…" my dissertation supervisor was his dissertation supervisor (laughs) so we talked about that too so that's awesome." "Uhm it was…it was nice like that's one thing I was appreciate when I have a supervisor because I'm like a pretty chill person like I'm pretty neurotic in some ways and highly anxious but I like to make connections with people and that's just important to me I hate excessive formality especially if I'm going to be working with this person like very intensely for the next four months I don't see the point in that so I like getting to know them and having them sort of become more human to me rather than just like "the supervisor" (deep voice and laughs)" "I'm fine with talking about it but I didn't want to go in with the presumption that he is okay with that. Some supervisors are really wary of that boundary and I'm mindful of it too because like what is he going to do? That's not

supervisor motivations – gives context C discloses to connect and be relational C self-discloses- creates sense of collegial relationship Anecdotes and personal disclosure creates sense of collegial relationship	his, that's not what he's supervising. So I would usually just tell him if I was feeling stressed or feeling drained or feeling exhausted or whatever uhm and not sort of make it a thing." "if he was having a tired week or a tired day he would often say so too but he also wouldn't necessarily tell me about his kids did this and then this and he and his wife fought or like my boyfriend and I fought, that's not really what it is." "we're able to shoot the shit, her office is right across from mine and she supervised two of us at once so the three of us when we get together it's entertaining." "she said "yeah, that's you know that was not my intention to give you the impression that I don't value EFT or those different ways of working" she said she had a supervisor who was EFT and was pretty forceful about her using EFT much in the way you hear supervisors forcing CBT and right so you have an adverse reaction to it so she's like "That's probably where that came from because I don't have an issue of the approach itself or theoretical backing but I had that supervisory experience that stuck with me" so that's where she said that came from." "He will disclose things… even just sharing about his personal life or what he did on his weekend with his wife or whatever. So really personally engaged in that way." "he shares about himself so he seems to appreciate that reciprocal nature"
Healing/Normalizing Supervisors should normalize mistakes- A past bad supervisor didn't make room for this. (A) Could not address emotions enough to create a healing environment. A validated/empathized but did not normalize supervises stress- Stress acknowledged but not elaborated on (a) - Level of supervisor self-disclosure impacts safety of student self disclosure	- This is not present for Sup A. "Sometimes or sometimes he would just sort of I guess empathize in his own way with like "Yeah that is really stressful" and that's it" ": I would say so. Yes, when I feel my supervisor is being that open and sharing like the crazy shit that happens to them, it's very humanizing and like "Right, you're a human that struggles with life too" like you know, I feel that is something supervisor B would say,

	some day she will come in and I remember she came in with like her hair up and like there was a little curl over there and I thought it was super cute and she's like "I'm a disaster today, I slept on wet hair, this is not done, this is just, I slept on it wet and it looks weird now" and I'm like you're just hilarious, this is your daily life "I struggle to human!" I love it because I do too. Because I struggle to human too! "

Of the participants, three worked with both nominated experts and non-nominated supervisors that were not part of this study. As a function of the interview, and participants describing their experiences, differences between expert and non-nominated supervisors were able to be identified in these participant's superordinate themes. These differences helped to highlight main themes that were important to expert supervisors' skills, attributes, and supervisory practices compared to non-nominated supervisors. This process occurred at step 2.1 of Table 3 to help account for the small sample size of participants who had multiple supervisors, and to demonstrate differences in super-ordinate themes as they may not have been salient enough to be identified at step 2.2 of Table 3.

Superordinate themes also included concepts of change or consistency across time (Hermanowicz, 2013). Saldana (2003) suggests specific questions to consider in framing analysis of qualitative data in order to examine epiphanies and major learning moments in participants experiences. These include questions such as, "what kinds of surges occur through time?" and "what is missing through time" and are categorized into framing, descriptive, and analytic categories (Saldana, 2003, p.199). To address these questions in each interview, the different colored texts were used to represent the timeframe of each interview to enhance identification of longitudinal changes across each participant's super-ordinate themes. This

allowed the researcher to cross-check super-ordinate themes during the second and third interview, and to draw out more instances that either strengthen or negate the themes created prior to examining master themes. This also helped to identify any possible shift in themes and served to illustrate interesting longitudinal results as they occurred throughout participants' year long internship.

After super-ordinate themes were created for each case, master themes (step 2.2 of Table 3) were created across cases by examining the following: comparing commonalities and differences, looking for clusters of related themes, examining the function of the theme, identifying stand alone themes and contextualizing themes into a broader understanding (Smith et al., 2009). Whereas super ordinate themes remain at the case level, master themes combine all cases together. This process was conducted inductively, where printed superordinate themes were organized into relevant groupings. For this step the researcher initially compared supervisees' experiences who shared the same supervisor, looking for commonalities and differences in their super-ordinate themes. As Katie did not share a supervisor with another student, a larger compare/contrast of themes occurred afterward with her themes. The researcher also examined if there appeared to be differences in students who had a masters versus a PhD level supervisor, or if differences arose based on supervisees who had more pre-counselling experience compared to others. These commonalities and differences are addressed in the findings chapter.

Smith and colleagues (2009) note that in large qualitative studies, which they identify as a sample size of six or larger, it is important to identify how recurrence of themes were considered. For this study, recurrence of super-ordinate themes to create master themes were identified if they occurred in at least six of the seven participants experiences, and were repeated

across at least two of the three interviews. This allowed the researcher to identify broad levels of experience, while allowing for variation of the experience across each interview. Table 6 (Adapted from Smith et al., 2009) provides an example of how recurrence was identified.

Table 6

Recurrence of Themes

Super-ordinate theme	Titan	CW	SB	East Coast Girl	Melanie	Amanda	Katie
Automaticity in supervision	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Self-Disclosure as Healing	Yes	Not mentioned as healing	Yes	Yes	Not mentioned as healing	Yes	Yes

The final step within the analysis process was to interpret the master themes created in the context of what is known within the literature on the topic, and how the themes best reflected the meaning making process of the participants. It is this final step that allowed the researcher to add a level of interpretation to the text, where general psychological knowledge may be included in the wording or forming of the themes (Smith et al., 2009). This is formalized in the discussion section of this paper.

Quality Assurance

One critique of qualitative studies is that it cannot demonstrate reliability and validity (Creswell, 2012). It is also argued that to use quantitative measures of assessing for standard of quality against a qualitative study is difficult due to their differing epistemological and ontological frameworks (Creswell, 2012). To breach this divide, many authors have suggested criterion for qualitative researchers to consider so that the study can be evaluated for its standard

of quality (Morrow, 2005). For example, Vivar (2007) suggests credibility of data as a standard which qualitative studies should demonstrate. To demonstrate trustworthiness, credibility and that this study is up to a high quality of standard, the researcher chose to follow Yardley's (2000) criteria, Vivar's (2007) credibility of data, and suggestions made by Smith and colleagues, (2009). These are discussed below.

Qualitative methods involve the researcher interpreting the data, therefore reflexivity needs to be addressed (Frost, 2011). As IPA involves the researcher interpreting the participants experience (Smith et al., 2009) a researcher must be able to articulate how they have situated themselves in the research context. This means demonstrating one's subjectivity, assumptions, and biases through active journaling, as well as illustrating how one's chosen methodological approach is coherent and congruent to the research goals (Frost, 2011). Reflexivity in IPA is demonstrated through the processes of transparency (Smith et al., 2009).

To be transparent and coherent, it is important to demonstrate that the research question and the way the results are presented fits with the methodology chosen and its ontological and epistemological backdrops (Yardley, 2000). To demonstrate transparency, the researcher kept a diary, as suggested by Smith and colleagues (2009) that outlines assumptions, biases, and pre-reflexive experiences and thoughts prior to entering into the interview and analysis process. A running set of field notes were also kept to examine how these assumptions and biases shift through the research and my own experiences of supervision. Appendix I provides a sample of the journaling process that occurred throughout this study, where the researcher reflected on her feelings, assumptions, biases, and ideas that formed after each interview. As the researcher has already been through the process of registering as a provisional psychologist, this journaling step allowed her to be aware of how her own experience may interpret the information she was

drawing from my participants interviews. Another step that aided with this was the allowance of a semi-structured interview, so follow-up questions could be posed about the previous interview to help assure that I was situating myself in my participants' world as much as possible.

In addition, as bracketing of one's experience is difficult, IPA researchers need to demonstrate to their readers where their assumptions have influenced their data interpretations (Smith et al., 2009). To do this, excerpts from the transcribed texts have been presented with each master theme to demonstrate their relationship to the interpreted theme and maintain a relationship to the idiographic nature of IPA (Smith et al., 2009). This also allows the reader to make their own interpretations when extract of transcripts are provided.

In addition to transparency, another way to demonstrate reflexivity is through an independent audit. An audit trail is a method that checks validity by organizing all information in a way that an individual can examine and follow the researcher's thinking (Smith et al., 2009). Smith and colleagues (2009) suggest that as part of an audit trail that a secondary researcher also be asked to review the study material and conduct a separate analysis of one transcript in order to access the accuracy of the primary researcher's examination. If differences exist, a discussion will ensue and themes will be modified to best represent a holistic image of the data. Throughout this study, the primary researcher's supervisor was provided exerts of transcript to analyze separately, in order to compare emergent themes from different perspectives. Though minor wording differences existed, both researchers identified similar emergent themes. A secondary audit trail was conducted in the form of a lab meeting, where other researchers being supervised by the same supervisor discussed and evaluated results identified by the primary researcher. Wording, categorization and larger theme ideas were discussed and changed when needed to better account for the lived experience of each participant. For example, a main discussion

occurred in regards to what super-ordinate themes would be best classified under Supervisor Characteristics versus Supervisor Actions. This aided in identifying the bias or single frame of reference the primary researcher had, and allowed for broadening of understanding of themes and participants experiences.

Other criteria suggested by Yardley (2000) to assess quality of a study include sensitivity to context, commitment to research, rigour, and credibility of data. Sensitivity to context means that the researcher has a strong grounding not only in the methodology, but in the existing literature of the topic being studied (Yardley, 2000). Smith and colleagues (2009) note that sensitivity to context is demonstrated in IPA through the researchers dedication to the analysis process, by providing verbatim extracts and by framing the literature within a particular perspective or lens.

Commitment includes having prolonged experience with the topic being studied, and not always as simply a researcher (Yardley, 2000). Commitment can include having experience in the area being studied, and gaining in-depth knowledge of it (Yardley, 2000). The researcher demonstrates commitment by the fact that she has had numerous experiences of being a supervisee, and is aware of, and connected to, the dynamics that play within the supervisory role. Maintaining commitment is also important, and was done by the researcher continually updating herself on research in the field throughout the period of this study. This does impact the researcher's perspective, but as discussed previously, is addressed by being reflexive. The researcher's experience, however, provides her with a level of depth that is important in qualitative inquiry and helps ensure that she was engaged with the topic.

Rigour references the completeness of the study and analysis, through having adequate data to illustrate connections and themes and prolonged theorizing to move beyond everyday

understandings of an experience (Yardley, 2000). In this study, rigour is addressed through the IPA analysis process (Smith et al., 2009) and through the nature of this study being longitudinal. As this study is longitudinal, analysis occurs on many different levels and serves as a way to cross-reference and check the themes interpreted with the participants (Menard, 2008). Through the use of both semi-structured interviews, field notes and participant diary entries, triangulation of data also provides a way to demonstrate rigour (Yardley, 2000). Participants were also e-mailed their themes and asked if the results are indicative of their experiences, helping to ensure credibility of the themes (Yardley, 2000).

A final consideration Yardley (2000) outlines is the impact and importance of the study, noting that the study must bring value to the field. As the objectives of this study are to highlight the lived experience of supervisees working with expert supervisors, it is hoped that the results will bring forth some useful information. Results from this study may help inform and broaden our understandings of conducting supervision that leads to better psychological practices and enhances client outcomes. Results may also inform multiple fields and create an interest in examining the concept of an expert supervisor. Further, exploring the development of supervision as it progresses through a year may provide insight into key turning points that supervisors should be aware of within a student's development as a practitioner. For example, results may indicate where possible ruptures occur throughout the supervision year, and how expert supervisors' manage and repair these working alliance ruptures as viewed from the supervisee's perspective. This information would help create key themes to integrate into current supervision training in order to enhance supervisory competencies.

Chapter 4: Findings

Nominations

Of the 527, 131 newly registered psychologists responded to the survey (24.8% response rate). Table 7 provides information on their responses.

Table 7

Survey Responses

Provided qualitative explanations to their nominations.	70% (92 of 132)
Female Responders	82% (109 of 132)
Male Responders	16% (22 of 132)
PhD	27% (36 of 132)
Masters	71% (94 of 132)
Degree unknown	0.02% (3 of 132)
Nominated their own supervisor	45% (60 of 132)
Nominated someone other than their supervisor	28% (37 of 132)
Uncertain if nominated their supervisor or another supervisor	13% (17 of 132)
Choose to nominate no one	14% (18 of 132)

Table 7 demonstrates that of those who responded, 18 people choose to nominate no supervisor. As these respondents have been supervised, and chose to actively respond to the survey, this indicates that their supervisor would not meet the criteria of an expert. In fact, some responders even provided qualitative reports about their negative supervisory experiences:

"No supervisor I have had meets these criteria." Respondent 52.

"My supervision was pretty bad." Respondent 94.

As 70% of nominators provided a brief sentence or two about their experiences, a wordcloud (Figure 1) was created to highlight key statements that psychologists used to identify expert supervisors. Word clouds illustrate which words are most often used through larger size, and less frequently used words through smaller size. Worditout.com was used as it allows a researcher to remove filler words such as "a, the", and descriptor words such as "supervision and supervisor". Worditout.com also allows the researcher to choose how many words need to repeat to be displayed in the illustration. For this word map the words illustrated are repeated a minimum of 5 times across respondents.

Figure 1

Expert Supervisor Descriptors

This wordcloud, along with a content analysis that was performed on the written descriptors demonstrate main features that nominators thought were notable about their experiences and supervisors. An expert supervisor was most often described as someone who was supportive, clinically skilled, experienced in working with their clinical population, and viewed as a skilled therapist.

Case Descriptions

With small sample qualitative interviews it is often common to provide a case description of each participant outlining their lived experience prior to introducing the shared analysis (Smith et al., 2009). As this study consists of 21 qualitative interviews, a more condensed introduction will be provided. A participant profile for each supervisee will be provided, followed by a general overview of the shared themes, and then a specific breakdown of participants' lived experience within the themes will be discussed through the use of transcripts. This is to help connect the reader to the lived experience of the participant, thereby taking a "case within theme" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 109) approach, where the theme will be described, and evidence from participants provided to substantiate it.

Supervisee's cases will be presented in the following order: those who had a single expert first: Titan, Summer Breeze, East Coast Girl and Melanie, followed by those who had three supervisors: CW, Amanda and Katie. Participants profiles will include participant demographics, their past supervision experience, their understanding of the purpose as to why we have supervision, their goals of supervision, and their overall experience. Their profiles will finish with a description of general activities they underwent while receiving supervision. As paragraph lines do not give a good context for explaining quotes, numbers 1, 2 and 3 will be used to

represent which interview quotes are coming from. This will help provide the reader with context in regard to developmental changes across time.

Introducing Titan.

Titan is a 44 year old male who has completed his masters' degree from an online program. He has 12 years of counselling experience, and is completing his provisional registration hours at a Mental Health Outpatient Unit. Titan indicated that all his previous work experience has been related to the counselling profession. He has no previous experience being supervised by a psychologist and is excited to have someone in his field training him for the first time. Titan described himself as someone who is aware of his limitations, biases and at times limited perspectives with certain client populations. He indicated that for him supervision will be a good way to help learn new perspectives and will help him to grow as a practitioner.

When asked about past experiences, Titan reported that overall he had good supervisors in the form of team leaders and counselors. He indicated that consultation was always seen as an important part of his job and "embedded in what [he] did." (Titan, Interview 1). He reported when lacking formal supervision, he would actively seek out consultation opportunities with registered psychologists or other team members. He reported one bad experience, which involved feeling judged by a team leader who he felt did not have a lot of knowledge about the issues at hand.

Titan is open to the idea of supervision and is excited to learn all he can. Titan believes that supervision is important to help protect the public from incompetent psychologists, and to 'help [him] identify some areas of growth…and areas [he] needs to improve on…" (Titan, Interview 1). He also labels supervision as a mentorship, which to him means, "a pairing up with a person who you have chemistry with, they have experience and it allows [him] to grow and

become better" (2). He believes that supervision will help him generate new ideas and strategies when working with difficult client issues.

Titan actively interviewed different external supervisors to his job placement in order to find one that he believed would fit with his learning needs, client presenting issues, and have relevant experience. When seeking a supervisor, Titan had the expectation in mind that his supervisor should be more knowledgeable than him and would have something to offer him. His main goals for supervision included; enhancing his competence, learning to be self-sufficient, being confident enough to start his own private practice, and learning new interventions.

Overall Titan described his experience with his supervisor as exceptional. He indicated that they quickly formed a positive bond within the first month, where he felt he could self-disclose both personal and client issues with his supervisor and not fear being judged. He indicated that he felt his supervisor was kind, warm, genuine, and had a large breadth of experience he could learn from. He indicated that he felt validated and supported by his supervisor, especially when he himself made mistakes. He provided an example of when there was a miscommunication in booking, and that his supervisor arrived but he was not there. He stated that his supervisor was understanding, did not charge him, and did not blame him which only enhanced his respect for his supervisor. He reported that he even asked to continue a formal relationship with this supervisor, in regards to consulting for a private practice, as he respects his experience and style.

Table 8

Summary of Hours - Titan

Interview #	# of supervision hours	# of group supervision hours
1	4	0
2	20	0
3	65	0

Table 8 shows the amount of supervision hours Titan had during his pre-licensure process. Titan had the same supervisor for his registration process. Titan did not have any group or peer supervision hours; however, he had a total of 10 live supervision hours, which consisted of only his supervisor actively watching him conduct a session. Main activities that occurred in supervision included case conceptualization, discussing difficult client issues, and oral exam preparation. No video tapes or audio tapes were used in supervision. As can be seen in Table 8, Titan has significantly fewer hours of supervision compared to the standard for registration hours and therefore is still receiving supervision until his requirements are complete.

Introducing Summer Breeze.

Summer Breeze is a 47 year old female with a master's degree from an online counselling program. She has 6 years of counselling experience and is completing her provisional registration hours at a not-for-profit agency. She identifies entering into psychology as a second career choice; as her first career was no longer a good fit, and this is her first time being supervised by a registered psychologist. She reported being excited for the opportunity to engage in supervision.

She has had past supervision with other professionals, and reported it as a mixed experience. She described positive experiences being related to having a good relationship with the coach or leader, or feeling like she got good advice. Past poor supervision has been tied to

being judged and feeling she could not be open due to being criticized. She also indicated that some of her past coaches did not come across as confident in their area of expertise, which influenced her level of trust on the learning they provided.

Summer Breeze indicated that she is excited for supervision as it's focused on, "[helping her] be an effective psychologist" (Summer Breeze, 1). She views the purpose of supervision to be, "for teaching purposes, to teach ethics and skills. To understand the ins and outs of the profession and what is expected…" (Summer Breeze, 1). She reports a main goal of supervision is to train competent incoming psychologists in order to protect the public from harm. She is also excited as supervision provides the opportunity for, "collaboration and connection" (Summer Breeze, 2) to other professionals and registered psychologists. She describes a supervisor as a mentor, a person who can guide someone in, "both clinical and ethical aspects of psychology" (Summer Breeze, 1). She hopes that supervision will help enhance her confidence and that she can become a competent psychologist through learning interventions, case conceptualization skills and gaining new perspectives. She identified that effective supervision would help her be more intentional with her clients.

Summer Breeze actively chose her supervisor based on advice from colleagues, and hoping that this supervisor would be a good fit for her learning needs. She actively searched for a supervisor who had experience with the client population she works with, along with having a trauma background. One of her expectations for supervision was to use her supervisor as a sounding board, to get guidance on practical client-based information. She also hoped to get information about the profession as a whole, to gain connections, and learn how to be a psychologist. She reported wanting lots of feedback from her supervisor in order to help enhance her self-confidence as a therapist.

Overall she described her supervisor as kind and open to feedback. The relationship was copacetic, warm and engaging. She indicated that she felt she could trust her supervisor with personal self-disclosure as well as with difficult client presenting issues. She indicated that she appreciates that her supervisor could, "see all [her] foibles and still believes in [her]." (Summer Breeze, 1). She reported being inspired by her supervisor to engage in more research and connect more to the field, and has therefore attended her supervisors workshops, which she reported enhanced her confidence in her supervisor to see her skills and abilities.

Summer Breeze did report that there were ruptures and repairs that occurred within their relationship. Rupture topics included confusion and misunderstanding about payment times and fees, contradictory messages on interventions to use on a client, and a role-played intervention that flopped. Summer Breeze indicated that when these ruptures occurred it made her notice the power differential more in the relationship, and that she was uncertain about how to discuss these ruptures with her supervisor. Though overall she felt she had a great experience, she did state that although her supervisor, "genuinely cares about [supervisee's]...(3)" she felt her supervisor struggled with, "being genuine" (3) in relation to her own self in supervision. This was primarily evident to Summer Breeze when she tried to address rupture concerns and felt her supervisor was unresponsive toward the discussion.

Summer Breeze also reported quite enjoying the group experiences, due to being able to incorporate multiple perspectives that encouraged growth and learning. Another benefit was to hear from other students about their struggles, which normalized her supervision process. Other main activities that occurred in supervision included: a total of 17 hours of live supervision that were observed by her supervisor, case conceptualizations, and role playing with new interventions. Table 9 provides an overview of Summer Breeze's hours during her pre-licensure

process. By the end of the third interview Summer Breeze had completed all requirements to become a registered psychologist.

Table 9

Summary of Hours –Summer Breeze

Interview #	# of supervision hours	# of group supervision hours
1	0	4
2	20	8
3	69	17

Introducing East Coast Girl.

East Coast Girl is a 41 year old woman who has a master's degree from an online counselling program. She has 11 years experience in a counselling role, and this was her first time being supervised by a registered psychologist. She completed her supervision hours at an Addictions and Mental Health Unit. East Coast Girl had always been in a role that relates to the talking profession, but finally decided to take the extra step and become a fully registered psychologist. She reported being excited to be supervised, and is willing to put, "[herself] out there" (1) in order to learn as much as she can from this experience. She reports that she is often the, "one who always volunteers for things" (3) and that she's not afraid to be vulnerable if it means learning more about herself and her practice.

East Coast Girl has been supervised in the past by other professionals, and has mixed experiences. She indicated that some have, "been okay", but that overall she often felt she had more experience than those providing her with supervision. She reported that she often sought out consultation with similar professionals and that this was beneficial for her growth and learning. At her current location East Coast Girl is supervised by someone who is not a

registered psychologist, and whom she identifies as not having strong communication skills and lacks an understanding of her role as a supervisee. She is therefore excited to receive external supervision from a registered psychologist.

East Coast Girl believes that supervision is to make sure, "you're competent, accountable, and ethical" (1). Supervision is also responsible for "client safety and professional accountability" (2) and provides accountability in the field and consistency of practice. She appreciated having someone challenge her, and who was there to make sure she was being effective with her clients. Her hopes for supervision were to get guidance, and to grow because of supervision. She also hoped supervision would help her reflect on her personal goals, help her enhance her case conceptualization skills, and also help her supervise other people and understand her role as a psychologist. She actively expected feedback on her performance to help her grow.

East Coast Girl reported that overall she had, "an amazing experience" (3) where supervision gave her hope, insight, and direction. She described feeling empowered after each supervision session, and that she's learned a lot from her supervisor around ethics, reflective practice, her therapeutic orientation and her self-identity. She described her supervisor as open to feedback, reflective, kind, and a good teacher. She reported feeling her supervisor met her learning needs by, "breaking concepts into manageable blocks, and being kind about gaps in learning by providing sufficient time to explore topics and assure [she] understood" (3). Her supervisor also provided positive feedback which enhanced her self-confidence. She reported feeling comfortable sharing personal issues and difficult client cases with her supervisor as a judgment free atmosphere has been created.

East Coast Girl reported that she found group supervision to be helpful due to having multiple perspectives from which she could learn from. She also stated that at times there was another supervisor, who was a registered psychologist, that joined them, which was welcoming as this person brought new insight and experience to the team. Other activities that occurred in supervision included case conceptualizations, role playing, discussions about ethics and confidentiality, and 20 hours of live supervision. East Coast Girl also had many opportunities to engage in co-supervision, where her supervisor would be in the same room and they would provide therapy to families together. She reported that this was a wonderful experience and allowed her to actively see how her supervisor worked, which she learned a lot from. Table 10 provides an overview of Summer Breeze's hours during the interview process. At the end of the interviews East Coast Girl had completed half of the requirements to become a registered psychologist and was still being supervised until she had completed all exams.

Table 10

Summary of Hours – East Coast Girl

Interview #	# of supervision hours	# of group supervision hours
1	4	4
2	10	8
3	54	41

Introducing Melanie.

Melanie is a 31 year old female who has a master's degree from a University in Alberta. She reported having 2.5 years of counselling experience, but attributes most of this relating to practicum placements during her degree. This is not her first time being supervised by a registered psychologist, and she reported being hopeful that supervision will provide her more

real life context. She stated that, “although you learn things in the program sometimes you’re in real situations and it’s like “Oh wait…am I suppose to do this or this?””(1). She reported feeling unprepared at times for real life situations as a master’s program can only teach a person so much. Melanie completed her supervision hours at a not-for-profit agency that specializes in multicultural counselling.

Melanie describes her past supervision experiences as being, “really positive” (1). She reported that she’s, “really enjoyed supervision” in the past, and that she, “takes advantage of the mentorship piece and sees it as a good opportunity …to just make connections with someone who is working in the field” (1). She reported that in her past experiences she’s gained a lot of wisdom and insight from her supervisors. Though she does value supervision, Melanie expressed some frustration at the registration process, as after graduating there is a sense of, “Oh okay, there’s more to do…three more hoops to jump through” (1). She reported being excited for the job she had, but also being tired after working hard in her master program.

Melanie view’s supervision as a way to learn and grow in the field, and that it’s a necessary process to help learn real life contexts that a degree program cannot always prepare you for. She identified that the main goals of supervision is to protect the public by creating competent and ethical future psychologists. She reported that one way supervisors do this is by holding the supervisee accountable to their learning and outcomes. She describes supervision as a form of mentorship, where “[it’s] having a relationship with somebody that is experienced and has been around for a while as a guide” (1). When thinking about her own goals for supervision she reported that her, “expectations and hopes are pretty vague” (1) when she first started supervision. She indicated that it’s, “nice to bounce [ideas] off of someone and really think

through things and have someone to push [her]" (1) but that she "doesn't know what [she] doesn't know" (2) which made goal setting difficult.

Overall Melanie appeared to have a mixed experience of supervision with her supervisor. She described that they formed a good bond, where she felt her supervisor was wise, kind, non-judgmental and experienced. She also reported that he is flexible, organized with how he structures supervision sessions and is an active listener. A rupture-repair cycle did occur in the relationship, which appeared to be due to Melanie feeling that her supervisor did not provide her with enough structure or learning goals. She indicated that it was frustrating that her supervisor, "relie[d] on [his/her] students to set [a] direction or goal…" (3) and that she felt there, "are a lot of limitations in doing that…" (3). For Melanie this appeared to relate to not completely knowing where her knowledge gaps were. She reported wanting more structure from her supervisor and more guidance on what the overall goal of supervision was. She did report that this was a topic they had discussed and planned to continue figuring out. Despite this struggle, Melanie reported she felt safe disclosing personal issues and difficulties with clients to her supervisor.

Melanie appeared to have a meta-view of supervision and the registration process as a whole, where she identified that there needs to be more systematic goals and outcomes identified for supervision. One example she gave is that because she is working in a multicultural setting, it may have been beneficial to identify specific multicultural competencies she should work toward, that could be addressed in supervision. She indicated that although this is nice in theory, in practice it's hard to implement as there lacks information on multicultural competencies to date. She also appeared to have some frustration at having to pay for supervision, given that it's a requirement for registration and few placements include internal supervisors.

Table 11 provides an overview of Melanie's hours during her pre-licensure process. Compared to other participants, Melanie did not accrue many supervision hours. This was due to personal issues as well as financial constraints. At the end of her supervision hours Melanie had completed half of the requirements to become a registered psychologist, and therefore is continuing to receive supervision. This difference in hours may have skewed her experience of supervision, as not enough time was spent in supervision to get the entire experience. Main activities that occurred in supervision included case conceptualization, discussions on ethics, prep for the oral exam, and a total of 4 hours of live observation. She also did have group supervision but this was not with her external supervisor, though she found it helpful to have at her placement site.

Table 11

Summary of Hours - Melanie

Interview #	# of supervision hours	# of group supervision hours
1	2	0
2	11	2
3	23	4

Introducing CW.

CW is a 28 years old and has a master's degree from a University in Alberta. She identified having four years of counselling experience, combined from before her masters and during her placements. For CW, completing her supervision hours is the first time she's been formally supervised by a registered psychologist. She describes herself as having little past supervision experiences beyond stories she's been told but that she felt excited and hopeful for her supervision.

CW's past supervision experiences were described as overall good. One struggle she described from past experiences was how best to express her needs to her supervisors, specifically around her learning needs. She indicated now knowing that she needs to be more open with her current supervisor to assure she learns the most she can from this experience. CW described herself as open to learning. She stated that she wants to be challenged in supervision in order to enhance her skills as a practitioner. Although nervous to be the only master's student at her placement, and viewing herself as "green" to the field, she expressed an eagerness to push herself to be a better practitioner. She stated that despite her uncertainty of how the supervision year would pan out, she was open to whatever experiences arose.

Overall CW views supervision as a way to make psychologists effective therapists. Through supervision psychologists become competent and ethical practitioners. She believes that a supervisor should be a mentor: someone who is open to sharing their past clinical experiences to help guide learning and is able to hold her accountable as a growing practitioner. She believes that supervisors are both gatekeepers to the profession, but should also be effective teachers. Supervision is seen as a way to build reflectivity in future practitioners, to teach provisional psychologists the importance of continued learning, growth, and achievement, and is meant to provide practical learning beyond what is learned in a classroom. A main goal CW identified for her supervision was to gain confidence in her orientation and abilities as a practitioner.

Overall CW reported that her experience of supervision throughout the year was a mixed experience that left her feeling that she had not gotten all that she could have throughout her supervision experiences. With her first supervisor, who was the expert, she identified that they had a good relationship overall and that she found him to be kind, gentle, caring and experienced. She indicated that she was able to be vulnerable with this supervisor and share

difficult client stories and personal issues with him. She indicated that this relationship took time to build as she got few face-to-face supervision hours with her supervisor at first, due to extenuating circumstances at the placement site. This lack of supervision opportunities at the beginning created a sense of self-doubt and left her feeling like she was falling behind fellow supervisees in terms of development and skill building. She indicated that once more face-to-face supervision occurred, their relationship quickly developed to be a positive one. She did report two main struggles with this supervisor on communication concerns and time management.

Communication struggles were tied to her own learning needs, where she desired more direct feedback and insight but felt her supervisor could not provide this to her due to his style and personality. For her, not receiving feedback left her guessing about what her supervision was thinking. Though this did not negatively impact their relationship, she did indicate that it was hard to figure out what she learned from this supervisor overall. Time-management issues related to her supervisor's style as well, in that this supervisor is often described as a "go with the flow" supervisor where she felt time was not relevant to him. Though this was frustrating for her, she indicated that throughout their time she found ways to work around it, to the point where it was no longer a concern in the end of their supervision.

CW reported that her experience with her second supervisor was overall a negative experience that left her feeling disheartened about supervision. She reported that they did not form as strong of a relationship compared to her first supervisor, and that she had difficulties trusting her supervisor. She reported feeling that this supervisor had a very dominant personality. One main struggle she discussed was feeling that her supervisor was often defensive and unreceptive to feedback or comments about her own learning needs. She told me about stories where she tried to explain herself, or set boundaries with this supervisor, and that these often fell

flat and resulted in the supervisor being abrasive and abrupt toward her. She reported that with this supervisor her own self-disclosure became limited, and she stuck to client discussions only, which led to a less fruitful experience where she felt she learned little and was always having to be on edge.

CW's third supervisor was described as an excellent fit with CW's learning needs. She indicated that this supervisor was humorous, kind, experienced, and well versed in providing feedback. She reported that she felt she had learned a lot from this supervisor in regards to interviews and case conceptualization skills, and she felt that this supervisor, "had [her] back" (CW, 3) when difficult cases arose. She indicated that she had wished she could have done her entire supervision with this supervisor, as they had a great relationship and she felt this supervisor understood how to provide her with effective feedback to enhance her practice. CW indicated that she felt safe to disclose both personal and client issues with this supervisor, and never felt pressured to change her world view or therapeutic orientation despite it being different from this supervisors. For CW, this supervisor would make the expert list, as well as the first supervisor mentioned.

Table 12

Summary of hours- CW

Interview #	# of supervision hours	# of group supervision hours
1	0	2
2	41.5	19
3	109	63

Table 12 shows the amount of supervision hours CW had during her pre-licensure process. CW had three separate supervisors during her supervision. She had a total of 35.5 hours with supervisor A, 34 hours with supervision B, and 29.5 with supervisor C. Group supervision

was divided as 10 hours with supervisor A, 4 hours with supervisor B, and 3 with supervisor C. Group hours also often consisted of other supervisors that were not part of CW's supervision team. During her supervision, common activities in supervision included case conceptualization, role-playing, discussing difficult client cases, and practicing for oral exams. At this supervision site students also engage in live supervision, where they conduct psychotherapy with a client and are observed by their supervisor, and possibly other interns. During this live supervision, the supervisor may interrupt the session to provide CW with feedback or suggestions while working with the client. CW received a total of 34 hours of live supervision. The purpose of this is to provide real-time learning experiences. CW also partook in peer supervision with other interns at this location.

Introducing Amanda.

Amanda is a 28 year old female who is in the process of completing her doctorate from a University in Alberta. She is completing her hours at a university counselling center and was matched with three separate supervisors, each supervising her for roughly 4 months. She reports having roughly two years of experience in counselling, related to her practicum placements during her master's and PhD. She reported that she was looking forward to the supervision process and finishing this part of her journey.

Amanda has had a mixture of both good and bad past supervisory experiences. Good experiences related to supervisors that could meet her learning needs, who she felt she could trust and were non judgmental. She described her past negative experience not being influenced by the supervisor's personality, as she was nice, but by her teaching strategy, which was over controlling. She felt she had no autonomy, which is a value she connects to, and this made it difficult to learn. For Amanda, autonomy is important to be allowed to have in supervision as it

gives her the freedom to try new things, make mistakes without judgment, and to learn what fits with her as a therapist and what doesn't. She describes her PhD and these past supervision experiences as having given her time to reflect on her orientation and needs for supervision.

Amanda views supervision as a way to get knowledge to be a competent therapist. She feels that a good supervisor is someone, "who is more knowledgeable than [her] and has experience" (1) that she can learn from. For her a main goal of supervision is, "about learning from the expertise and experience of somebody who is more trained and more experienced than [her]" (2). For Amanda, supervisors should provide clarity when a supervisee feels stuck and challenge supervisee's to learn and try new things. Supervision provides insight on interventions, ethical issues, difficult cases, and helps the therapist when they are in a rut. Supervision is also a mutual risk taking endeavor, where supervisors are invested in the supervisee training as it reflects back on them.

For Amanda, a good supervisor is someone who can create an environment where supervision is formed on a, "collegial relationship, respect, autonomy, and support…" (3). Amanda identified her main goal as wanting to become, "more effective working within the short-term model…[and to learn] specific skills in particular modalities" (1). A desired outcome of supervision was to feel more confident in herself, her skills, and to feel that she is competent in working with clients and their presenting issues.

Overall Amanda described having a good experience with all three of her supervisors, though highlights varied for each one. She described her first supervisor as having a, "specific sense of humor" (2) that took a while to get used to but that she found fun to engage with once she understood it. She stated that the relationship with this supervisor took a bit longer to develop but that in the end it was a positive one where she felt respected by her supervisor. She

reported that this supervisor was extremely experienced in cognitive behavioural therapy, which she was excited to learn more about. She also reported that this supervisor did not judge her therapeutic orientation, and was able to provide effective feedback for her learning needs. She acknowledged that not everyone has positive experiences with this supervisor, but that she was able to, "learn to work with [this supervisor]…and got used to [him/her]" (3).

Amanda reported that her second supervisor was probably the best fit with her. She indicated that this supervisor challenged her, provided her with effective feedback that enhanced her learning and client outcomes, and provided a judgment-free atmosphere. She stated this supervisor was easy to relate to, as they had similar personality styles. She indicated that she was able to self-disclose more readily with this supervisor than her first, whom may not have known how to respond to emotions as well as her second supervisor. One rupture that occurred early on in the relationship was around orientation, where she felt this supervisor was not as flexible about them having differences of world-views in relation to therapy. She indicated that this made it hard to connect to her supervisor at first, but that she was able to "adapt" and not be bothered by it. Despite this rupture, she reported overall enjoying supervision with this supervisor and learning a lot from him.

Amanda's final supervisor was the expert of this study. She reported overall having a good experience with this supervisor. She indicated that this supervisor was, "experienced, intuitive…understanding…and easy to talk to" (3). She indicated that this supervisor had a very different process to supervision compared to the other two, and it took a bit of time to adapt to it. This supervisor's process, however, allowed her to connect and self-disclose readily. She indicated that this supervisor encouraged discussing emotional reactions to supervision or client work, and would process this with her when it arose. One rupture-repair cycle that occurred was

around time-management issues, where she felt this supervisor struggled to allocate their time efficiently to each person. Her supervisor was open to discussing this and together they found a way to resolve it. She also reported this supervisor was active in asking about their relationship, and her learning needs, to make sure he/she was providing what the supervisee needed in supervision. Amanda also reported that this supervisor was good at returning her, "back to the basics of therapy… such as listening to [her] intuition…" (3), which helped solidify all her learning over the supervision process.

Table 13 provides an overview of Amanda's hours throughout her registration process. Totals for group supervision for Amanda during each interview were not clear, so only a total is reported. Amanda also received a total of 20 hours of live supervision, 7 hours with supervisor A, 4 hours with supervisor B, and 9 hours with supervisor C. Other activities in supervision included case conceptualizations, role-plays, prep for oral exams, training in ethics and formal cognitive behavioural interventions. At the end of the interviews Amanda had completed half of the requirements to become a registered psychologist, and was planning to return home and continue to receive more supervision until she had finished her exams.

Table 13

Summary of Hours -Amanda

Interview #	# of supervision hours	# of group supervision hours
1	10 (Supervisor A)	
2	36 (Supervisor A), 4 (Supervisor B).	
3	41.5 (Supervisor A), 37.5 (Supervisor B), 48 (Supervisor C)	Total: 61 hours

Introducing Katie

Katie is a 58 year old female who is completing her doctorate from a University in Alberta. She reported having 7 years of counselling experience, both related to her practicum placements in school and other employment prior to schooling. Katie completed her supervision hours at an education clinic, and was allocated three supervisors during her year of training, with each one roughly providing 4 months of supervision. Katie reported that this is her second career path, and therefore she is excited to receive supervision and soon be completed her education.

Katie has been previously supervised by registered psychologists, both during her masters and doctoral program. Overall Katie reported having both good and bad experiences in past supervision, but did not elaborate in detail about these. Katie also has the unique experience of having been a supervisor herself, which gives her a different lens from which to understand the supervision process. Katie views herself as having, "a much more fully developed understanding of [her] own approach and world-view in terms of counselling and psychology" (1). She described herself as having a good foundation and confidence in her abilities, but is still open to learning and growing.

Katie stated that the purpose of supervision is that, "it protects the public, it protects [psychologists], it protects the profession and [it is] a protective measure that is extremely necessary" (1). Beyond a gate keeping measure, supervision helps keep supervisees accountable to their work, and provides them with an avenue to learn new skills. Supervision is a place where, "somebody can be safe…[to] talk about their vulnerability…to make mistakes…and to learn" (2). She stated that supervision is both didactic and facilitative, and occurs all the time through role-modeling. Therefore, it is a mutual learning process. Katie identified that, "[she] would like to learn a specific technique or approach that [she] doesn't know much about" (1).

She reported that she is grounded in her orientation but open to learning beyond it, and is hopeful that her supervisors can challenge her to broaden her skills. Katie also reported that she hopes through this process that she gains more confidence and competence, so that when she is finished she feels she would be ready to work on her own.

Overall Katie reported having an "okay" (3) supervision year. She stated that each supervisor had their strengths and weaknesses, but that she learned a lot throughout the process. More specifically, Katie indicated that she developed a good relationship with her first supervisor, who was identified as the expert. She reported that she felt comfortable with this supervisor, that it was a positive experience, and that she felt this person was experienced and had a lot to teach her. She indicated that this supervisor was able to create a safe place, a place where, "[she] could be okay to make mistakes and could still be a learner" (2). A small rupture that occurred in this first relationship was feeling that her supervisor was often busy, due to having multiple roles, and that this sometimes detracted from the "open door policy" that this centre had. She described that this supervisor was humorous, relaxed and warm, but that he did not provide good feedback on administrative tasks such as note keeping. These ruptures were not directly addressed with the supervisor, but Katie reported that they did not detract from the relationship, just caused some minor frustrations.

Katie reported that her experience with her second supervisor was more of a struggle. She indicated that it took a while to connect to this supervisor, but she valued the knowledge, expertise and skills this supervisor possessed. She indicated that she was able to learn a lot from this supervisor, but felt that the power differential was obvious and not well addressed by the supervisor. She felt that emotions could not be readily addressed in their supervision together, and that there was more of a felt sense of pressure to accommodate to this supervisors

therapeutic orientation. She stated that, "[because] there is the hierarchy, it's not as comfortable" (3). Despite these struggles, she indicated the relationship was, "amicable because [she's] good at relationships" (2).

The last supervisor was described by Katie as the best fit for her. She indicated that overall it was a, "collegial and collaborative [relationship]…with much more broader learning, more about professional development, professional identity, self-reflection [and] growth" (3). She felt this supervisor spent time developing a positive relationship with her that shrunk the power hierarchy/differential, and allowed her to be more disclosing about personal struggles and client issues. She indicated that because this supervisor created a positive, safe, and warm environment she felt she was not afraid to "show her worst work" (3). She identified this supervisor as being experienced, well versed at teaching interventions and skills, and open to feedback about the supervisee's learning needs.

Table 14 provides an overview of Katie's hours through her pre-licensure process. Katie reported that she found group supervision to be beneficial, due to having multiple perspectives. She also reported that it was nice to have other interns at this location, as it provided peer support that helped to normalize experiences and provide a safe place to vent frustrations. Other activities that occurred during supervision included 10 hours of live supervision, case conceptualizations, oral example practice, discussion on ethics and specific intervention practices. At the end of the interviews Katie had completed all requirements to become a registered psychologist.

Table 14

Summary of Hours- Katie

Interview #	# of supervision hours	# of group supervision hours
1	5 (Supervisor A)	1
2	47.5 (Supervisor A), 33.5 (Supervisor B).	25
3	47.5 (Supervisor A), 52 (Supervisor B), 42 (Supervisor C)	65

Breadth versus Depth

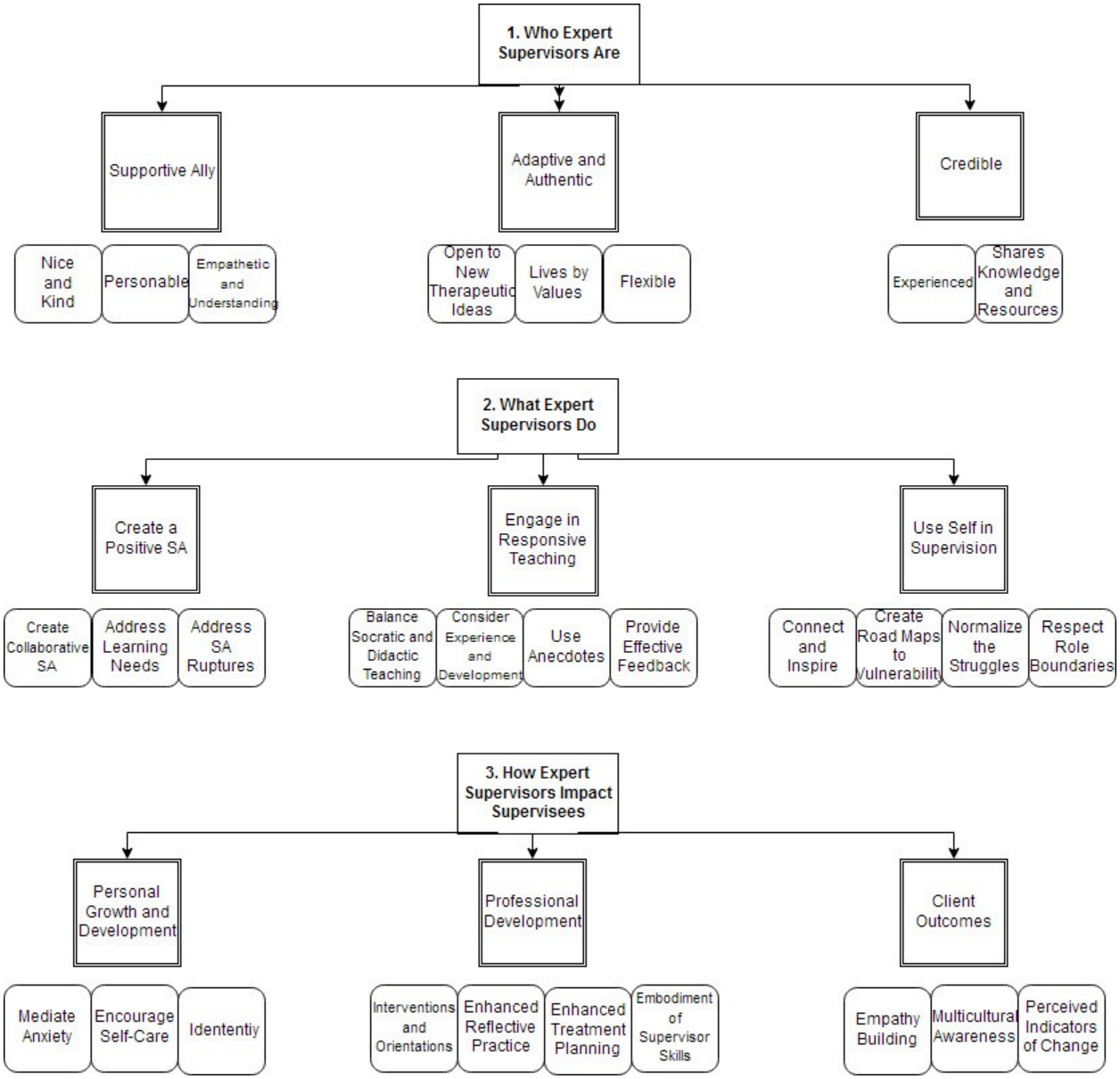
The three supervisees who had three separate supervisors all expressed a common concern that is worth identifying as it may provide further context to their experience. They reported a concern that because they were changing supervisors three times during the span of a year, that depth of learning would suffer. Specifically they identified concerns about not being able to develop a deep relationship with their supervisor, and not learning from that supervisors' full repertoire of expertise. Throughout the interviews this did appear to be a continued concern that arose, especially if they felt a positive bond with their supervisor. CW for example desired to either stay with her first or last supervisor, as she felt she gained a lot from both where she gained little from her second supervisor. This was a common consensus among all three, that each one had a supervisor they wish they could have had more time to learn from. At the same time however, they also described seeing the benefit in having multiple supervisors. For example, they indicated that they would be given more opportunity to learn different therapeutic orientations, interventions and skills by having multiple supervisory opportunities. So they may have learned a lot in regards to breadth of topics, but suffered compared to other participants in this study in relation to depth of the supervisory bond.

Shared Experience of Supervision

The following section will outline the main themes that arose from the qualitative analysis process. During this process there is a level of interpretation that occurs: though these themes will still be connected to the descriptive experience of each participant, they are refined by the researchers understanding of supervision. Chapter 5 will provide more in-depth connection of the themes to the wider context of supervision as a whole and will outline implications for future research. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of how the themes are connected and inform each other. This illustration only outlines master and superordinate themes. Who experts are, what they do, and how they impact supervisees are the master themes, and the words below the super-ordinate themes of each master theme.

Figure 2

Illustration of Themes and Subthemes



For this section it is important to note the differences between supervision classifications. The term "expert" is used to identify those supervisors that were peer nominated as experts in

this study. All those nominated as experts were also identified as experts by their supervisees during the debrief stage of this study. All supervisees agreed that their experts were individuals they would recommend to a fellow psychologist to receive supervision from, and that their supervisor helped them provide better therapy with their clients. In reviewing the additional criteria suggested in the nomination process, all supervisees in this study stated their experts met the following: is reflective of their limitations, biases, demonstrate openness to feedback and consultation, shows or is known for the ability of being self-evaluative and self-reflective and would be considered genuine as a supervisor. Supervisees also reflected on additional criteria they believed adequately described their expert supervisors. These included: not being afraid to make and admit to mistakes, not easily fazed by supervisee personal disclosures or emotions, being able to manage the rupture/repair process of the SA, and are able to provide specific training related to client needs and supervisee orientation.

Some participants in this study were also supervised by other supervisors during their year of training and therefore these groups of supervisors are labeled as "non-nominated or other supervisors". These supervisors were not explicitly part of the study, but as supervisees were discussing their training, were included in participants' stories and provide an important comparison group. This distinction is created to help the reader compare and contrast how experts and other supervisors provided supervision. Some of these other supervisors were defined by the participants as good supervisors, while others were identified as poor supervisors that supervisees reported not having a positive experience with. This comparison is provided to help highlight the skills and attributes supervisees identify within experts as impactful.

Theme 1: Who Expert Supervisors Are

Through supervisee descriptions and stories of their supervisory process, a main theme arose that identifies specific expert supervisor characteristics that had a positive impact on the supervisory dynamic. Expert supervisors were identified as being supportive allies, individuals that live by their values, people who are credible, flexible, and are open to their supervisee's therapeutic world-view.

Supportive Ally

Supportive ally is a term chosen that encompasses the main criteria supervisees used in describing expert supervisors. A supportive ally is someone who is nice and kind, personable, and empathetic and understanding. A supportive ally was seen as someone that would, "support you if something came up with clients or other staff" (CW, 3). They were someone that would "have your back" (Titan, 1). When describing their expectations of supervisors, supervisees reported it important to get the sense that their supervisor is there to not only, "protect the public" (East Coast Girl, 1) and, "make sure you're staying ethical" (Amanda, 3) but is also supportive of the supervisee. Amanda stated:

> …Supervisors should be supporting the work you're doing with clients and also supporting any reactions you might be having to a client or if for some reason it brings up your own stuff, I'm not saying they need to do therapy with you right but to support you as a professional struggling with something related to a client (Amanda, 1).

Supervisees expected supervisors to be supportive, and overall this expectation was met. Having experienced difficulties in supervision throughout her training, CW remarked that it was nice to finally have a supervisor that made her feel like, "someone [was] standing in your corner to support you" (CW, 3). Though all supervisees stated that supervisors are meant to "…hold you

accountable" (CW, 1) and "mentor you through the process while you're doing your training…" (Melanie, 1) experts were identified as doing so in a, "supportive…and non-judgmental way…" (Titan, 2).

Nice and kind.

Expert supervisors and some other supervisors in this study were often described as being nice and kind. For example, CW said that her supervisor "doesn't have a mean bone in his body" (1). For Katie, these were some of the basics of building a relationship: "I think there are the basics you know? He's relaxed, he's humorous, and he's nice" (Katie, 1). Titan stated his expert supervisor was:

> Smiling, he was very compassionate almost, very patient... he listens well, he listens to me and he gets me and he respects me and he does not judge me (1).

When the supervisor was perceived as being nice and kind this helped to foster a positive relationship between supervisee and supervisor. "It was like a nurturing growth…growth enhancing relationship..." (Katie, 2). Both East Coast Girl and Summer Breeze, who shared the same supervisor, indicated that, "She's just really compassionate, caring, nice… just a nice person" (East Coast Girl, 2). For Amanda, because her supervisor was seen as, "calm and collected…he was very warm…" (3), it signaled to her that she could be open and honest within the supervisory relationship. When the supervisor was perceived as nice and kind, Melanie felt that she could be more vulnerable and share, "that I was feeling exhausted…and not really enjoying the work at times…"(2). All supervisees stated it was, "nice to be able to have those conversations with somebody who is in this type of role and…knows the work" (Melanie, 2). In addition, caring was also seen as not only being directed toward the supervisee, but visible within the relationship the supervisors had with their clients. For example, Amanda indicated

that when she observed her supervisor working she got the sense that, “he really cares about them doing well…he’s really nice with his clients” (3). When supervisees felt that their supervisor cared for the well-being of them, as well as their clients, it created a sense of trust and respect toward their supervisor and enhanced supervisees abilities to be vulnerable within the relationship.

Personable.

The descriptors “genuine” and “shows interest” were often described separately from “nice and kind”. These appear to indicate that the supervisor is both honest about their interpersonal relationship with the supervisee and even with clients. Genuineness was often described as a, “lack of ego” (Katie, 1), or the supervisors’ ability to know themselves and speak to it; “He’s the most genuine person I know…” (CW, 1). Genuineness was often interpreted as the supervisee feeling their supervisor was not lying or falsifying their feelings or responses in the supervision relationship. As part of a supervisors role is to, “evaluate you…” (Katie 2) and to “keep check on me to make sure I am doing things right and not making huge errors” (Melanie, 1), being personable and genuine helped ease supervisee nervousness around this process. Because East Coast Girls supervisor was, “very compassionate…and genuine” (3) it helped her to “know her feedback was to help me…” (2), instead of feeling criticized or blamed.

Being genuine and personable also meant that the supervisor genuinely cared for the well being of the supervisee. Experts were identified as being concerned about supervisee health and well-being throughout their training, and actively inquiring and helping their students to deal with difficult situations so they didn’t feel overwhelmed. For example, East Coast girl and Summer Breeze both stated that, “I feel she genuinely cares about us as supervisees…” (1, 2).

For Katie, her supervisor inquiring about, "self-care…and how I am taking time for myself…" was a demonstration that her supervisor wanted to make sure she was doing well personally.

Experts were identified as caring for the well being of their supervisee when they showed an interest in the supervisees' life, from both a clinical and personal standpoint. Melanie stated that her supervisor's interest was, "nice because we had an initial meet and greet and he asked me about my background and history…he wanted to get to know me as a person" (Melanie, 1). For Summer Breeze, her supervisor demonstrated interest by, "being attentive to my needs in the moment…I get the sense that she wants to know about me and why I react the way I do…" (Summer Breeze, 2). Amanda sums it up nicely, stating that being genuine and showing an interest in a supervisee demonstrates the supervisor's authenticity to the supervision relationship:

> They care about how the supervision is going, and they want to know what it's like as a supervisee…they want to support me as a student…get to know me…and that says a lot about them as a person because they don't have to do that… (3).

Empathetic and understanding.

Two other distinct descriptors that were used to identify expert supervisors included being empathetic and understanding, whereas these terms were not always present or used to describe other supervisors. The word, "empathetic" (Melanie, 1) or, "empathy" (Amanda, 2) were used as statement words in the interviews to encompass specific characteristics of expert supervisors. When prompted to speak to this, a main aspect of empathy that supervisees perceived was important was supervisors' abilities to be non judgmental. This arose when supervisees reported discussing difficult clients or personal issues with their supervisors and feeling like they were not being judged for it. For example, CW stated:

> He's very supportive and understanding… I definitely cried in his office…maybe once or twice… so he gives a really safe environment and I don't think he thinks less of me because of it… (1).

Melanie discussed an example of talking to her supervisor about the frustrations of payment, and being financially stressed. She indicated that she felt her supervisor was being understanding because of his non verbal behaviours that were perceived as, "warm" (1) and because he "didn't argue or say anything rude back…he just said that he understood…" (2). This ability to be empathetic appears to mimic, "basic relational skills or counselling skills…" (Katie, 3).

Another important aspect of demonstrating empathy and understanding was the fact that expert supervisors did not show a response to supervisee disclosures. This appeared to be a significant difference between experts and other supervisors, where some supervisors would often demonstrate a negative response to supervisee disclosures. Experts were described as, "not getting activated by things…" (Katie, 3) or "not getting freaked out by emotions… not [being] fazed by it at all…" (Melanie, 2). Titan stated,

> When I open myself up a little bit and told him about what I was struggling with… He remained almost like poker faced…He wasn't you know "Oh my God!"...He was really calm and didn't seem fazed…It showed me he cared…he was listening… (3.)

This ability to remain unfazed by self-disclosure, either personal or about client difficulties, helped assure supervisees that their supervisor could handle the situation. It provided them with confidence to know, "[they] had seen it before" (Summer Breeze, 3). However, a second important component was the incorporation of validation. Without validation it may appear that the supervisor did not care, however, when validation was utilized it created a sense of the supervisor being present with the supervisee and demonstrating empathy:

> She really validated it you know? She would say…"it sounds like that's hard" "it sounds like that was tough"…validating the feelings and it helped…it made me know she was listening…that she understood a bit of what I was going through or saying…(East Coast Girl, 1).

Adaptive and Authentic

Supervisees reflected on how they wanted to connect to supervisors they perceived to be open to learning, authentic, and flexible. Those who had the opportunity to choose their supervisors stated that these were important defining characteristics of an expert supervisor because it indicated to them someone who was, "adaptive and curious about new things" (Titan, 1). Those who worked with expert supervisors described them as individuals who did not only want to learn more about the supervisee orientation, but were constantly enhancing their own learning. These experts were also described as living by their values, and were perceived as highly flexible in adapting to supervisee' needs and circumstances. These are addressed below.

Open to new therapeutic ideas.

Expert supervisors were identified as being both open to and actively interested in learning. This included openness to supervisee orientations, wanting to learn new interventions, learning new skills, and generally being perceived as curious. A good example of supervisors having openness to interventions and others orientations is through Amanda's experience. Amanda discussed how her supervisor is not only curious about her orientation, but even open to trying an intervention from it and asking for input. This signaled to her that they had a, "collegial relationship built on trust" (Amanda, 3). Amanda stated that she felt her supervisor had "respect for what I did…even if she would rarely use [that orientation]…I did get a sense that she respected it" (Amanda, 3). Though supervisees expected their supervisors to have, "their own

orientation and experience" (Katie, 2) experts were clearly identified as wanting to expand their knowledge.

Supervisees did not expect their supervisors to always incorporate their orientation into the supervision hour or their work; however, they expected supervisors, "to be respectful of my worldviews" (CW, 1). Expert supervisors were able to demonstrate a level of respect and curiosity about their supervisee's work. For example, Summer Breeze stated that her supervisor:

> Would always revert more to her somatic stuff that she knows…and that's been really helpful to learn with the population I work with… she's been open that [my orientation] isn't her strong suit… but that she does value it and let me talk about it. (2)

When supervisors are seen as trying to incorporate, or at least respect their supervisee's orientation, it creates a sense of collaboration and mutual respect. For CW, this created the sense that her and her supervisor, "were a team [working together] to help our clients" (3). On the other hand, when supervisors did not demonstrate respect to their supervisees' orientation this created a rupture within the relationship. For example, CW felt it was not safe to try out new orientations or intervention with one of her supervisors, and in fact stated, "I would just do [her orientation] because that makes her happy" (2). CW reported often feeling pushed to incorporate this supervisor's orientation in her work, and felt that her own understanding of the world was disrespected and not seen as important. She stated her supervisor would "actively challenge or demean my perspective…" (2). With this supervisor, CW had to shift her lens and way of working with her clients to avoid judgmental statements from her supervisor, which led to a poor supervisory experience. This created tension and a poor learning environment as she was trying to, "avoid conflict" (2).

Openness to learning also included supervisors actively participating in workshops that enhanced their skills. For example, East Coast Girl reflected on how her supervisor took a week off to go to a workshop, and that this created excitement in her as a supervisee knowing her supervisor, "cared to keep learning more" (2). Experts, and some of the good supervisors, were often perceived as wanting to expand their knowledge through being open to learning new things, both from workshops, and from their students.

Lives by their values.

An important descriptor defining expert supervisors is that they are seen as individuals who, "live by their values" (Titan, 2). This category covers such concepts as honesty, authenticity, and practicing what they preach. All experts were described using the word, "honest" throughout the interview process. For example, Amanda indicated her identified expert supervisor was, "very honest about the areas where he is less experienced and less able to guide me" (3). Whereas Katie reported that her identified expert was, "honest about his own feelings" (2) and for CW it was that her supervisor was, "honest about what he could teach me" (1). For participants, honesty was tied to not withholding important information, the supervisor being aware of and open to disclosing mistakes, areas of growth they may have, and or gaps in training or knowledge.

Honesty also seemed to lead to the descriptor "authentic", where supervisors who were not withholding information were seen as, "being true to what she knows" (East Coast Girl, 1). This also tied into supervisors acknowledging their preference for orientations, or interventions. For Summer Breeze, authenticity included the supervisor being aware of their own emotional responses in supervision, and disclosing if they felt a rupture had occurred or not. Other supervisors who were not identified as experts lacked these descriptors, and some were even

described as “inauthentic” and “says one thing but does another” (CW, 1). Those viewed as inauthentic were not only labeled as such by their supervisee, but also by others in the study, implying that this is a trait that goes beyond the supervision experience.

Experts were also described as not only being honest and authentic, but that they lived by their values. Specifically, Titan reported instance where his supervisor would suggest that he, “take some self-care time” (2) and that as a supervisee, he knew his supervisor was saying this from a place of authenticity. He stated that:

> My supervisor knows that sometimes the best you can do with clients, that won’t be enough for some of them. So finding a colleague, a friend, attending therapy, self-care to deal with these things is important…he recommended those things, but not only that, I see it in his lifestyle (1).

For Titan, knowing that his supervisor values and engages in the suggestions he provides to his supervisee helped to enhance the supervisor alliance. It also proved to Titan that these were important things to consider as he could see the benefit they had for his supervisor. For Katie, East Coast Girl and Summer Breeze, an important aspect of, “practicing what they preach” is the simple fact that if a supervisor is providing supervision, they should also see the benefits of it and enjoys it. East Coast Girl stated that it just, “feels good” knowing that her supervisor, “wants to be the best supervisor she can be…and wants professional growth too” (2). This appears to ease supervisee’s nervousness about their supervisors’ intentions in supervision, as there is a clear knowing that not all supervisors want to be supervising and may be doing it due to employee requirements.

Flexible.

Another important characteristic that experts were described as having was the ability to respond to different circumstances, needs and requests of their supervisees. In other words, supervisors were flexible. Flexibility in meeting times and places was especially important to help ease supervisee's level of stress and anxiety. This was especially prevalent in the first month of supervisee's supervision process. For example, Titan discussed an incident where there was miscommunication around a supervision meeting time. He stated that his supervisor had shown up, but that they had misunderstood the day supervision was to happen, and that his supervisor was flexible in that he did not charge for the missed session, acknowledged it was a mutual error, and simply rebooked the time and date. Another instance this arose was when Titan had a personal issue he was struggling with and needed supervision quickly. He called up his supervisor and asked, "Do you have an hour?" (Titan, 2) and his supervisor responded by "making things available so he could talk to me…so for me it meant that wow, he's doing this for me…so again really flexible and caring" (Titan, 2). For Summer Breeze and East Coast Girl, they both indicated that at times their supervisor was flexible in allowing the location of supervision to change to a place more suitable to their needs, which they highly appreciated. In these scenarios, supervisees reported that this flexibility helped them to feel appreciated and respected by their supervisor.

Some experts struggled with time-management and demonstrating flexibility in time, which did heighten supervisee's stress in the beginning. For example, CW indicated that her supervisor's, "schedule is jammed…" (1), which would lead to her "consulting with another intern or another psychologist that is free…" (1). This struggle to connect with their supervisors in the first month, paired with an expert or not, caused an increase in frustration, anxiety, and

slowed the formation of a positive relationship between supervisee and supervisor. This was especially prevalent if supervisors did not make time to foster a relationship with their supervisee in the first few weeks of their working together. This may be caused by taking vacations, having too many supervisees to supervise or having too large of a workload to provide adequate supervision time.

Credible

Being seen as credible was another important characteristic that was present for both good and expert supervisors. Credibility was described as being tied specifically to the supervisor having a vast array of experience, knowledge, and resources. When comparing experts and other supervisors, there was a clear descriptive difference in that experts appeared to demonstrate their experience more readily than other supervisors, and have more diverse experience. When experience, knowledge and resources were present together, supervisees reported feeling they could trust the information their supervisor was presenting them. For example, when discussing what he was looking for in a supervisor Titan stated, "I think [supervisors] with a lot of experience command wisdom and [they] command knowledge…and I respect that" (1). This also helped supervisees be more open to trying new interventions or ideas, and also decreased their stress in working with new populations of clients if they knew their supervisor was experienced in that area.

Experienced.

Expert supervisors were deemed to be highly experienced practitioners. Experience primarily related to having worked at multiple locations, having a wide repertoire of interventions to suggest, and having worked with different client populations. Upon entering into supervision, supervisees had the expectation that if their supervisor had more experience, it

would help them, "see the bigger picture…to deal with the details that are necessary..." (Katie, 1). Experience also mattered when engaging in specific interventions: "If I'm working with something like OCD, and you have a specific intervention, the skill, experience and knowledge of my supervisor is key in supporting me" (Katie, 2). Experience was an expectation of a good supervision experience. Specifically, their supervisors should be individuals who have, "more experience than [themselves]" (Katie, 1) as to ensure that, "they have something they can teach [us]" (Katie, 1) "otherwise what is the point is?" (Amanda, 1). For example, Summer Breeze stated:

> I searched very hard for a supervisor that would understand the community and the clients I'm with, so somebody who has a lot of trauma experience and somebody who has an understanding of, you know, inner city vulnerable high risk...(1).

For Summer Breeze it was imperative that she feel her supervisor could both understand the client population she was working with, and help her help these individuals.

Experience was such an important criterion in determining credibility that it influenced the supervisor they choose to work with. Those who got to choose their supervisor, Melanie, Titan and East Coast Girl, also all reported seeking out someone that not only was considered reputable and kind, but had direct working experience with their client population. "I searched very hard for a supervisor that would understand the community and the clients I'm working with…" (Summer Breeze, 1). For Titan, he actively sought out a supervisor that past supervisees said had a lot of experience, as this, "adds to the credibility factor" (1).

For those that were not able to choose their supervisor, there was some nervousness about what their supervisor could provide them, creating an initial sense of doubt about their experience. For example, Amanda had training working with a specific disorder that she worried

her supervisor "might not have experience working with" (1). Though these supervisees felt their supervisors would be generally experienced in psychotherapy, specific orientation or client population experience was uncertain. Expert supervisors were able to ease this nervousness within the first two weeks of supervision by providing an overview of their backgrounds.

An important aspect of experience is how it ties to a supervisors' ability to provide feedback:

> I've been matched up with supervisors before who have a different theoretical orientation and that's fine but then their ability to give you feedback on how you're working is limited. In the sense that if you're a CBT therapist and you have a CBT supervisee it's easy because the modality in which you're working you have a framework and so you can kind of like give them feedback based on that you know what I mean? If you're a CBT therapist and you're watching somebody who is doing EFT you're going to feel a little bit out of your comfort zone for giving feedback because they're going to do things maybe you don't agree with or you don't feel like you have the ability to give coaching on you know what I (Melanie, 3).

For Melanie and others, seeing that their supervisor possessed a wide variety of experiences helped to ease this anxiety and nervousness. The more experience a supervisor possessed, the more supervisees reported feeling that, "if [a supervisor] gets the sense that I didn't handle the situation properly or appropriately, [they would] have the responsibility and experience to let me know" (Titan, 2). Therefore, experience leads to credibility and helps supervisees feel someone is holding them accountable based on past experiences. For example, it was important to Melanie that:

> He knows everything when it comes to regulations and rules…he knows it off the top of his head so that's really helpful because when you have an issue or you're not sure it's like, "this is what you do." The information comes readily. Based on his work experience he also has a lot of theoretical knowledge in the sense of he can be like, "this theory and this theory and here is how it's different"…he's almost like an encyclopedia of knowledge…and I really appreciate that (2).

An important aspect of having experience is it facilitates a sense of, "definitely having something to teach" (Titan, 1). "A mentor is someone who has been there and has experienced something similar…. Someone who can help you think and reflect…" (Titan, 2). This learning is described as not being limited only to clinical work but also to personal issues. Amanda for example found it helpful to, "learn from someone who has experience in the field to learn about things like burn out…" (2) and other professionally related concepts.

In contrast to experts, other supervisors appeared to have experience, though it may be limited to specific sites or client problems. This did not appear to lower supervisees' view of their supervisor's credibility; however, supervisees did comment that they knew at times they would have to, "seek supervision for [topic] elsewhere because it wasn't their area of expertise…" (Amanda, 2). Therefore, expert supervisors were able to provide more insight and feedback on multiple topics such as client presenting issues and orientation specific questions. When experts were identified as not having an answer, these supervisors would be described as "looking into it to help me find an answer" (Melanie, 2). In contrast, other supervisors were identified as not taking time to enhance their experience, or even "lacking confidence in themselves and their knowledge" (CW, 2). If supervisors were perceived as having less

experience than their supervisor this negatively impacted supervisees believe that "[they] could teach [them] something" (Katie, 3).

Shares knowledge and resources.

Another aspect that informed credibility was the felt sense that their supervisor had a lot of knowledge and resources to share with their supervisees. This differed from experience in that a supervisor could be experienced, but struggle to share this information with the supervisee. For example, supervisees had the expectation that supervisors should be able to teach about the field of psychology and ethics. Supervision is seen as a place for, "General guidance…[where a supervisor is] someone to learn from…[someone] to act as a source of information that you can consult with…" (Melanie, 1). Knowledge was specifically defined as not only having the information, but being able to share it in useful ways. This often related to how supervisors' could identify the knowledge supervisees were seeking, have the knowledge readily available, and then share it with the supervisee. This may be in the form of formal resources such as handouts or sharing of stories that relate to the supervisees situation. For example, Summer Breeze stated, "She sent us an article because we were talking about something and she was like, "I got something on this"…it showed me her excitement and passion for her profession and the clients she has…". East Coast Girl corroborated this by stating the same supervisor was "…very resourceful, she's always got something to give me…" (East Coast Girl, 2). Melanie described how having knowledge is important but sharing resources is a way to translate this into action:

> It's really helpful if they can point you to sort of additional resources like books or something they know is great because you can't cover everything [in an hour] but at least they can point you in the right direction and that's really helpful… (2)

For CW, having these resources provided, “real practical things which I know are more specific that I can use if I need to” (3). Supervisees would indicate that they might not always utilize these resources, but that having them increased their confidence in both their own future intervention skills and their supervisor’s knowledge.

An expert supervisor’s ability to share their knowledge also helped supervisees feel like they gained something from supervision. This is important as it helped protect against the feeling of “automaticity” in supervision. Of the seven participants, five described what has been termed, automaticity within the supervision context. This refers specifically to a felt sense that at times supervision was routine, perhaps boring or unproductive and that supervisees would rather have spent the time engaging in other relevant activities. This would often lead to the supervisee also feeling like they may not be paying attention in the supervision session or that they were counting down the minutes until it ended. For example, Summer Breeze spoke to how at times supervision felt taxing, where “there [were] moments where [she would] think “**** I have supervision”. It’s still good but sometimes two hours is a lot of time and when I’m done its like “Yey, I’m out of here!”” (2). For some participants this arose because of the fact that they felt overwhelmed or tired due to the amount of work the provisional process requires. Melanie for example worked at a location where she has a large caseload and many high demand clients. Therefore supervision could sometimes be seen as, “annoying” because it “[took] up all these hours” (1) that could be used in helping her prepare for her sessions.

An important aspect of automaticity that arose was uncertainty around what could be addressed in supervision, or what to do when supervisees had few cases to talk about. In general all supervisees indicated having a vague sense that supervision was to focus on client issues and

case conceptualization, but were not informed of broader purposes such as being able to do things like role play, or discuss and practice different interventions.

Experts sharing their knowledge helped reduce the sense of automaticity. East Coast Girl for example reported that although supervision would be tiring due to having to set aside time for it, she always knew that "[she] would get something out of it" (3). Many supervisees reported at times feeling that supervision had become "automatic" (Katie, 2) or "routine" (Summer Breeze, 2), but knowing that their "[supervisor] always has something to offer in every single situation" (CW, 3) helped them to look forward to their supervisions sessions. For CW, one of her supervisors, who was not identified as an expert in this study but she felt should be, had a distinct ability to always leave her feeling, "like I could spend years with my supervisor and still be learning things" (3). This knowledge and experience that supervisors would always have something to provide them as supervisees often offset the feeling that they had to "make supervision work for me" (Titan, 3). Titan actively expressed never being bored or feeling like supervision was redundant because he always sensed that "[his] supervisor would always have something valuable to share" (2).

Theme 2: What Expert Supervisors Do

Supervisees outlined specific actions they believed their supervisor engaged in that helped create a positive supervision experience over the year. These included: ways in which they felt their supervisor actively worked on creating a positive supervisory alliance, worked on being a responsive and active teacher, used self-disclosure intentionally within the relationship, and asked for feedback to enhance their practice. Each of these are described below in detail, outlining how supervisee's felt expert, good and possibly harmful supervisors engaged throughout the supervisory process. In some categories, distinct differences exist between

supervisor type where experts are perceived as being more active, focused and intentional about their role as a supervisor.

Create a Positive Supervisory Alliance

Supervisory literature often focuses on the bond developed between supervisee and supervisor. This is also a common phenomena experienced in the therapeutic relationship, and is often cited as the main agent through which change occurs in therapy. The same goes for supervision, where literature often cites how a positive alliance enhances supervisory dynamics. It is no surprise then that this was a large theme woven into supervisee experiences of supervision. In the previous theme supervisors characteristics that might influence the bond, such as being a supportive ally, were addressed. This section focuses more specifically on what actions supervisees perceived their supervisor engaging in that helped create a positive SA. These included the supervisor working on: creating a collaborative relationship, discussing supervisory learning needs, and actively addressing ruptures in the SA. When these three components were perceived as occurring in the supervisory relationship, supervisee's felt that the power differential was lowered and that they could be more authentic and honest with their supervisors.

Create a collaborative relationship.

The quality of the relationship formed between supervisee and expert, as well as good supervisors was often described as "fantastic" (Titan, 3). When addressing actions the supervisor took to create a positive relationship, they explicitly stated that they perceived their supervisors as taking time to create a "safe environment" (Titan, 1) where supervisees could be, "free to make mistakes" (CW, 2) "without fear of judgment" (East Coast Girl, 3). When discussing how their supervisors managed to create this safe environment, the most quoted explanation was that

supervisors, "made it a collaborative relationship" (Melanie, 1). Throughout the interview process specific factors were identified that supervisees perceived their supervisor engaging in that helped create a collaborative relationship. These included considering the function of time, equality, and mutual risk and vulnerability within the supervisory relationship.

Within each supervisory dyad, supervisees reported that on average the relationship took one month to develop. When examining the amount of hours of supervision that occurred in a month, it appears that a positive relationship was created in, on average, 10-15 hours of supervision time that was spent either individually or in group. "Within the first month for sure there was some understanding of each other" (Katie, 1). If extenuating circumstances occurred during this time, the relationship was a bit slower to develop. For example, CW reported that the first month of supervision she had no individual supervision which got in the way of her and her supervisor, "…having one-on-one time to develop a relationship" (1). When this breach in time was viewed as beyond the supervisor's responsibility, for example being due to work related issues or changes in site demands; it did not negatively impact the relationship. In fact once CW was able to accumulate time with her supervisor, the relationship developed at the same pace as others.

The reason time played such a large role in how the dynamic formed, was because without the one-on-one supervision, a sense of, "safety had not yet been formed" (Katie, 1). Time was also important because it allowed supervisee's to "get a feel for what [their] supervisor was like" (Melanie, 1) and assess "how the year might look" (Titan, 1) based on a snapshot of the relationship. It allowed supervisees to, in a sense, test the waters of the relationship and gave them time to decide how they wanted to connect with their supervisor. Supervisees perceived that expert supervisors were good at respecting this time, and the pace at which supervisees

wanted to disclose personal issues. Supervisees felt that their supervisors were, "aware that it takes time to share things" (Titan, 1). When supervisors disrespected the function of time in building a relationship it often led to quick ruptures. For example, CW stated one of her supervisors asked her in their first session:

> Where my critical voice came from. Which I was really offended by because I was like, "I do not trust you nor do I have the relationship with you yet to disclose about my critical voice and where it comes from." So I was [mad] at that because it was a question asked way too soon… (3)

Interestingly, it was typically around the one month mark that supervisees reported, "hitting a groove" (CW, 2) with their supervisor that was comfortable and enriching.

Another feature that was important in the development of a collaborative relationship, which appeared with all experts, was supervisors identifying they had equal responsibility in the relationship. "I think it's an equal responsibility…I knew I had to be okay trying new things and he made it so it was okay to do so…" (Katie, 3). Supervisees often described their supervisor actively discussing their own roles and responsibilities, and specifically identifying that the relationship was, "a two way thing" (Amanda, 3). Titan provides a metaphor his supervisor gave him:

> He always says therapy and supervision is like dancing, a dance how do you dance with the other person? How do you ask the other person to dance with you? Do you follow the analogy? And if the dance isn't going so well what techniques do you do to stop the dance or restart the dance? So things like that that (2).

When supervisors specifically identified that supervision was an equal relationship with shared responsibility, supervisees reported feeling, "less anxious" (Summer Breeze, 1), "more open"

(East Coast Girl, 1) and, "okay to make mistakes" (Katie, 2). Supervisees also reported feeling that when supervisors identified their own responsibilities, there was a sense of "mutual respect" (Katie, 2) that enhanced the relationship.

Another action that supervisees stated expert supervisors engaged in was that they identified the relationship as one of mutual risk and vulnerability. This means the supervisor acknowledges that they too experience risk and vulnerability in the relationship and what that might look like:

> I think it's equal…she talked to me about how there is risk for her being en evaluator and if things go bad…that she trusts we can work together and grow…and that she will be open with me and vulnerable if I am with her and only if I feel comfortable doing so… (East Coast Girl, 1).

For Summer Breeze, part of the discussion of risk was related to, "being transparent about roles…feeling comfortable in terms of laying it all out there…" (2). This sharing of information helped to normalize supervisee's nervousness about the relationship. Risks appear to be related to the supervisor's responsibility as a gatekeeper, however, Titan outlined that the relationship itself has an inherent risk:

> Well I think there is risk in the relationship, as is in any relationship… I would imagine that there might be a time in which he's guidance or his tips or his suggestions… may not jive with me I guess because it's human nature. We don't all agree, all the time, in everything. So potentially that might be one risk…the risk of you know disagreement … (2).

When supervisors acknowledged that supervisees may not always agree with them, and could actively disagree with their advice or ask for clarification, this enhanced the alliance. For Titan it meant his supervisor, "respected the two way nature of the relationship" (2).

Another form of risk and vulnerability described by supervisees was when their supervisor allowed supervisees to observe live sessions. By being observed, supervisors allowed supervisees to see, "their foibles and excellence" (East Coast Girl, 3), which helped supervisees to, "feel closer to [them]" (East Coast Girl, 3). Being observed also helped to normalize that even expert supervisors don't always have great sessions. Experts were perceived as both being more open to being observed, and readily inviting supervisees to watch them. Other supervisors were reported as being less open to being observed, or actively finding ways to not be observed. For example, CW often felt one of her supervisors "made up excuses" (3) as to why observations could not happen. In addition, in comparison to other supervisors, experts would routinely request feedback from their supervisees about the live supervision, which created a sense of "collaboration… and like we are more colleagues than supervisor-supervisee" (Amanda, 2). Supervisees reported that they not only learned a lot when they had the opportunity to observe their supervisors, but felt that it meant their supervisor also trusted them to provide "them with a judgment free atmosphere" (CW, 3). Having an openness to being observed, and requesting feedback from their supervisees also helped supervised feel that the power hierarchy "inherent in supervision" (Katie, 1) was lowered.

An important part of supervision is that supervisors act as gatekeepers to the profession. Supervisees in this study are following rules and regulations guided by their local regulating body. These guidelines stipulate that supervisors are to evaluate supervisees twice formally throughout their supervision year, and informally while observing interactions with clients and

other staff. Supervisees acknowledged that the evaluative component of supervision is often, "nerve wracking at first" (Titan, 1), and often, "not explicitly discussed" (Melanie, 3). When a positive SA is created, and evaluation is addressed it, "flattens that hierarchy" (Katie, 1). For Katie, the only way in which the power differential can lower is if supervisors actively work towards creating a strong SA, along with the features previously identified. She stated, "In order to flatten the hierarchy as much as possible they have to be open to that…and not just say it's a collaborative process but work on it…"(1). All supervisees reflected on how evaluation is a "part of the process" (East Coast Girl, 1), and that it should be addressed in an open and honest way with the supervisee as a way to develop and enhance the relationship. In this study, not all expert supervisors addressed the role of evaluation, but all were identified as "being open to discussing it if I brought it up" (Titan, 2).

Other supervisors were identified as either rarely discussing evaluation or "overly focusing on the evaluative component of supervision" (CW, 2). When supervisees felt that evaluation was more important than the development of a positive SA, it created a rupture in the relationship and left the supervisee feeling, "like it's just about evaluation and not my learning" (CW, 2). By respecting the aspect of time in the development of the relationship, identifying roles and responsibilities of the supervisor, being vulnerable and even requesting feedback from supervisee's, and addressing the evaluative component of supervision, a collaborative relationship was created that respected the supervisee as someone with valuable information in the supervisory dynamic. When this power differential is lowered, supervisees reported feeling safer, comfortable, understood, respected, and valued in the relationship.

Address Supervisee Learning Needs

Supervisees reported that expert supervisors spent time, specifically in the first session or two, discussing learning goals and mechanisms for which these would be achieved. This was important to supervisees as it indicated to them that their time was respected, and their learning needs were important to consider. Supervisees viewed themselves as having to be active participants in the supervision process. This included openness to being vulnerable, sharing difficulties, but most importantly having openness to learning new things. "The supervisee needs to come in with the willingness to be open and to be flexible and…teachable" (Katie, 1). As supervisees had this expectation of themselves, they also expected supervisors to talk about goals in supervision and how learning would occur. For Katie, discussing goals and learning is not only about "the initial stages of getting to know each other" (1), it's also a way to formulate specific "outcomes of supervision" (1). A discrepancy that arose was that learning goals were more readily discussed than how learning would occur.

Discussing goals of learning: Supervisees indicated that the first couple of individual sessions with their supervisor focused on the supervisor getting a sense of the supervisee learning needs. This was received well by every supervisee, and in fact when it didn't occur or was delayed, as was the case for CW, it caused a rupture in the relationship and also left her feeling like she was missing out in comparison to her colleagues. Main topics that arose in this conversation included a discussion of previous supervision experience, what supervisees might want to get from supervision, and how the supervisor might be able to aid in this. For example, Amanda stated:

> It was generally discussing what I want to get from this supervision experience in particular…what particular skills and modalities that I am looking to develop…those sort

> of things… He wanted me to take a day and kind of think about and write about very specific goals we could move toward…he said he does that because he wants to check in with those goals every once in a while (Amanda, 1).

Similarly, Titan stated:

> We talked about what my goals are and I told him that I'm working here …and I want to become registered and I do want my own private practice down the road and want ideas on how to get there… I want to learn more about family stuff and asked him about training he could give me around this… (Titan, 1).

Part of this process of identifying goals also included discussing how topics such as ethics and difficult situations might be addressed. For East Coast Girl, she identified a specific goal of wanting to learn, "more about ethics to make sure I'm not doing any harm…" (1). This was an important goal for her as her previous training had not been in the counselling discipline, and therefore her previous work experiences may not have taught her a lot about ethics and standards of practice. For Melanie, a main goal of supervision was to get support on, "processes of registration…" (2). Supervisees' perceived that through their supervisor asking about their goals for supervision, supervisors were actively demonstrating an interest in wanting to be good teachers. Therefore, having this discussion helps to identify and narrow specific learning goals supervisees have identified as important to their growth.

When discussing goals, all supervisors did so verbally and supervisees reflected on the lack of a physical document such as a formal contract to retain this information. Supervisees reflected on how they themselves would like a physical document as it's easy to "forget what we talked about in the first few days" (Katie, 3). Of those experts that verbally addressed these issues, supervisees reported it helped to enhance the alliance and create a, "common

understanding" (Katie, 1) of what the upcoming year would look like. However, simply addressing it verbally was not always seen as sufficient, as often topics a supervisee may be interested in got missed. Both Amanda and CW stated that after they had received an in-service on supervision and learned about contracts, "[they] wished this was something that had been incorporated into [our] year" (3). This in-service was presented by Katie, who reflected on the importance of contracts in supervision as a way to ensure a common understanding of topics such as goals, responsibilities, and orientations to supervision and work. CW added that although she had a positive experience overall with her expert supervisor, she often did not know, "what [she] was getting out of supervision" (3), which was predominately influenced by the simple fact that she did not know her supervisors supervision style. She stated she found out more about his style when they did the final formal evaluation for the college, many months after their supervision was over:

> That came two months after we were already done together… had I known that it [during our supervision] maybe it would have given me some clarity on his process and thoughts because most of the time I was like "what is your point here, what is the purpose?" so that would have helped me understand what the heck he was doing which I think would have made it easier for me to give him feedback and to say if what he was doing was working for me or not. There was no real communication about the process that was happening between us and that was hard (3).

Other supervisees also mentioned the importance of a contract, stating it would have been nice to, "have something on paper to refer to if a problem came up" (Summer Breeze, 2), or just to know, "what my roles and responsibilities actually were" (Melanie, 3). CW stated,

> It's funny because nobody tells you what to expect from supervision. You have no idea!...and in the in-service I was reading what a contract should have and one of the things it was talking about was, "if you're triggered and vulnerable" and I was like "Okay! So that's actually expected well now I know!" (3).

Beyond a physical document, supervisees also reflected on the importance of checking in on goals. They stated that most discussions on goals occurred in the first few sessions; however three expert supervisors stood out because they were seen as continually monitoring and checking in on this process. "You know we talked about goals, setting up processes so we could get to them…and we're still talking about that…" (Katie, 1). "He kept checking in to make sure we were focused on what I wanted to learn" (Titan, 3). This monitoring of goals was important to these supervisees, and they felt it was a further indicator that their goals mattered to their supervisor, and that their supervisor wanted them to both have a positive experience and succeed in supervision. For those participants who self-identified as having less experience, or were entering into the supervision process post-masters degree, checking in on goals was a way to help alleviate their nervousness about the supervision process as a whole. Those supervisees also reported wanting more from their supervisors in regards to guidance and support. For example, in the beginning of her supervision, CW reported feeling she was the, "weakest link and [that] it kind of felt like everybody assumed [she] had way more experience than [she] did" (1). As she didn't have the opportunity to discuss goal setting within the first few sessions it added to her nervousness and left her feeling uncertain about her work. Once she was able to meet up with her expert supervisor, continually addressing goals and receiving feedback on her progress helped to alleviate some of her nervousness. CW also reported that the supervisor with whom she connected to the most was always checking in to make sure they were addressing her learning

goals throughout their work together, giving her a sense that her goals were an important part of the process. On the other hand, the supervisor with whom she struggled to connect to was often described as "not even being open to talking about goals" (2) which led to further struggles in the relationship.

Finally, one area of improvement that Melanie addressed in regards to discussing goals is that only relying on a supervisees understanding of what they need to learn may not be wise. She indicated that:

> I think that's where it's a little grey because I think some supervisors rely on the student to set that direction or goal…I think there are a lot of limitations to doing that… we don't always know what we don't know…or what we need to know… I think the supervisor needs to be part of identifying what the goals are too... (3).

Though supervisees identified that they have a responsibility to, "reflect on what I want to learn" (Titan, 1) and identify specific goals, they also noted they might not be aware of "what [we] don't know" (Katie, 2). Other supervisees shared similar concerns when discussing difficulties with evaluation. For example, CW indicated that having more information about what supervisors are looking for would help highlight specific learning goals related to the profession as a whole. Overall supervisees perceived a lack of guidance on macro goals that might be important to the profession of psychology. Whether supervisors actually considered these or not are beyond the scope of this paper, however, it can be said that these were not actively shared with supervisees who identified wanting to have this form of guidance.

Though the discussion of goals is seen as a positive part of developing a supervisor relationship, and a way in which the supervisor and supervisee can, "get to know each other" (Summer Breeze, 1) and can provide "a framework to supervision" (CW, 2), checking in is

perceived as important. So too is formulating goals together, versus simply relying on the supervisee to identify their learning needs. This is especially important when supervisees may have little counselling experience, may be fresh out of school and uncertain as to what to expect in supervision, or generally may not be good at reflecting on their goals themselves.

Discussing mechanisms of learning: Supervisees reported that overall they were not asked about how they wanted to learn, but instead were told about the "typical process that occurred" (CW, 2). This referred to supervisors telling supervisees how supervision would occur in regard to group supervision, peer supervision, and types of observations (e.g., live observation, video, co-therapy, or audio). This commonly occurred in training centers, where supervisees did not have an active choice in certain mechanisms of learning. For example, those in this study who worked at centers did not use video or audio recordings for feedback. Those who worked with an external private practice supervisor were more likely to have a discussion about mechanisms of learning and how they wanted to be observed. However, they were often limited to the methods that their agency could provide, and little conversation about "what other ways we could get feedback" (Melanie, 2) were discussed.

Supervisees reported that beyond the first session, where they were given an overview of how learning would occur in supervision, mechanisms of learning were not addressed or often revisited unless the supervisee brought up the topic themselves. Supervisees as a whole indicated they were not bothered by how supervision would be set up, but that at times there was frustration that other mechanisms of learning or being observed could not be included. For example, a common statement by many supervisees in this study was that they wished they could "observe [their supervisor] a lot more to learn by watching…" (CW, 3). This was perceived as important because it is:

> A huge learning opportunity, it's valuable learning. I'm a visual learner, so if I can see it then I can integrate it. So it's practical for me…I think the moments where she will ask one question in session and the client totally breaks down, right? It's like wow to watch that and learn…and she can demonstrate skills we've talked about in supervision… (East Coast Girl, 3).

Supervisees also reported wanting to have the opportunity to video tape and review sessions. This was often limited to not having the appropriate technology or supervisors stating that there would not be enough time to do this in supervision. Here a difference between supervisors arose. Expert supervisors were seen as being open to having a conversation about different mechanisms of learning, and were open to creating opportunities to be observed. Other supervisors may have been open to discussing other mechanisms, but struggled to implement these such as having live observations. On the extreme end, some supervisors outright refused or avoided being observed and were often perceived as avoiding the discussion of exploring alternate ways of learning.

Supervisees also indicated wanting to be observed more by their supervisor. For example, Titan stated that he valued observation. "Seeing me once a week here in my office and talking about clients is not the same as seeing me in action for a full day" (Titan, 2). Titan was able to negotiate a few sessions where his supervisor actually observed him for an entire day. He indicated that this was extremely beneficial as it allowed his supervisor to, "see [him] in action" (2) and gave the supervisor an opportunity to provide concrete real-time feedback. Supervisees identified that being observed in therapy, either one-on-one or in live observation where other students also observed, was extremely beneficial to their learning. They reported that, "yes it was nerve wracking" (Amanda, 1) but that it was normally always a beneficial experience:

> I think the live observations are really important. It's a learning tool, you know sitting in supervision talking about clients is very different from observing somebody with clients… you know what I see through my lens is what I see. Having a supervisor observe live is very different because they might see very different things or hear different things… (Summer Breeze, 2).

Some supervisees indicated that a live observation may not have been informative, but this appeared to rely more on the client presenting issue, a client not showing up, or a client changing the concern or trajectory of therapy. Overall lives were indicated as being beneficial when supervisees were willing to, "bring in that tough client" (Melanie, 3), or when their supervisor was observing the application of a specific intervention or skill and providing feedback on it. Despite the nervousness and frustration of when live observations did not go well, supervisee's felt it was beneficial and in fact wanted more opportunities to engage in them. Though often requested, the opportunities for live observations were limited at one centre due to time and staff availability, coordination of schedules and client needs. In settings with an external supervisor, live observations became a bit more challenging due to scheduling and payment concerns. Overall, though there were often external factors playing a role on the ability to change mechanisms of learning, supervises reported that they respected when their supervisor was open to the idea, and tried to create opportunities for different ways of learning.

Address SA ruptures.

As supervision is an interpersonal process that involves two people, a breakdown in the relationship (ruptures) is a common process. Supervisees identified ruptures as moments in the supervisory relationship where the supervisee felt frustrated, angry, misunderstood, not heard or even disrespected by the supervisor. Supervisees identified that they have an active role in

establishing and maintaining the supervisory relationship. Six of the seven participants explicitly identified roles and responsibilities that they, as a supervisee, bring forward in the supervision dyad. Supervisees stated they need:

> To be sharing with my supervisor, not only concerns but also things that I think are going well and things that I think might be going well but just need to get more information about, like a sounding board…. And to be willing to take feedback and be willing to you know; get out of my comfort zone (1).

Melanie also reported having, "a responsibility to be honest about…sort of like my experiences, my perceived weaknesses, my struggles, the things I'm wondering about…" (1) and that this honesty entailed being open to being "vulnerable with [her] supervisor" (1) and being okay to "[disclose] about those pieces" (1). Being an active participant also included having a non-defensive attitude when receiving feedback. For Titan, having a non-defensive attitude was strengthened by identifying that supervision is focused on, "[helping him] develop [his] own identity as a psychologist" (2). Despite their role, supervisees also stated that supervision, "is a two way street" (CW, 1) that may not always be positive or impactful. For example, Amanda stated:

> Supervision cannot be impactful or positive every time because then it takes away from the impact. Then the norm becomes the impact- you just expect that. It's like going through the motions and understanding that any relationship, any action there is some peaks and some normalcy (Amanda, 2).

Titan also agreed with this sentiment, stating that supervision had to have both ups and downs, because it was these, "down moments" (2) that made the "high moments so special" (2). In the case of CW, sometimes ruptures occurred due to external variables such as, "not being around

for the first month because of vacation" (1). Therefore, in good relationships, ruptures still occurred, even with expert supervisors. In fact, of the seven supervisees, only one described experiencing a rupture free relationship. Ruptures could occur at any point in the supervisory process, and also varied in intensity. Ruptures that occurred with expert supervisors however had distinct features. These ruptures did not negatively impact the SA, expert supervisors actively tried to repair ruptures, and ruptures occurred less frequently with experts.

A large external factor that often negatively influenced the relationship was a supervisor's schedule and perceived lack of availability. This often caused frustration as supervisees felt they could not approach their supervisor when needing support, or that their supervisor was not making them a priority. For example, Katie reported that although she had a good relationship with her expert supervisor, she knew he was busy. This often led him to be, "so very distracted, as there is a lot going on" (1). Though this did not negatively influence the relationship from her perspective, it did, "make it tougher [for her] compared to other supervisee's" (1) because she did not feel she could stop and chat with him after the "requisite hours" (1). CW reported that one of her supervisor's schedules was "so jammed…" (1) which led her to "consult with other psychologists or interns…" (1). Though this is an external factor, supervisees reported that expert supervisors would acknowledge and discuss this, demonstrating an awareness of its impact on the alliance. This often helped to reduce supervisee frustration and allowed a repair to occur.

Another factor that appeared to often cause ruptures was when the supervisee felt that they and their supervisor "were on different pages" (CW, 1). This could be caused by a misunderstanding, miscommunication, or the simple fact that at times supervisor and supervisee have, "different ways of operating" (CW, 2). This also included differences in value systems,

that may have been evident in differences in world view and differences in therapeutic orientation. If a "push pull…or tension…" (Amanda, 2) was felt by the supervisee due to perceiving the supervisor as not respecting their difference in opinion; this caused ruptures in the relationship. Another way in which this arose was if a supervisor attempted an intervention, in service of trying to teach their supervisee something, and the intervention flopped. For example, Summer Breeze discussed how her supervisor had, with her permission, tried to teach her an intervention to help a client using a personal dilemma that had occurred recently. She stated that, "it kind of backfired…that it wasn't a positive experience for [her]" (2). Though she indicated knowing her supervisors intention, the actual intervention and timing was simply not effective.

Ruptures also occurred when supervisors were unable to discuss emotions or handle supervisee break downs in the supervisory relationship. This was often seen as creating difficulties in communication. For example, Amanda identified that her good supervisor struggled with emotional language, which at first "was awkward" (1) and slowed the development of the relationship. Though with time she indicated she was able to adapt, and that her supervisors ability to "acknowledge it's not his strong point and find other ways to talk about it…" (1) was useful in repairing the relationship.

Regardless of the type of rupture that occurred, or what caused it, repairing the ruptures was the single most important part of creating a positive alliance. Expert supervisors were identified as actively addressing ruptures, either as they occurred or soon afterward. One reason that discussing ruptures is so important is that it can flatten or broaden the sense of the power differential in the supervisory dynamic. For example, when ruptures were addressed Summer Breeze reported feeling safe with her supervisor. When ruptures were not addressed, or the supervisor did not acknowledge supervisee concerns, "it affects [supervisee] perceptions" (CW,

3), and can create a negative outlook about the relationship. For Katie, an important part of addressing ruptures is discussing responsibilities and the power that is inherent in the supervision dynamic:

> I think that sometimes the power differential and ruptures are not handled that well. I think that depending on the structure, the site, the context, that students or supervisee's rights and responsibilities should be made explicit and problems addressed…I think you walk in and your vulnerable to the max and that would maybe take the edge off that vulnerability or the power differential can be flattened… I mean the power differential is not going to go away. They are evaluative, that's their role, as it should be, but mitigating that in such a way that supervisee's have more confidence and I think that actually would affect their own practice and their own development as you know blossoming therapists (3).

A lack of acknowledgement regarding supervisee feelings can also, "[recognize] that the [supervisor] holds so much power over whether or not [supervisee] can become registered" (Summer Breeze, 3). When a positive alliance existed, and ruptures were repaired, this power differential "became less of an issue or concern" (Titan, 3).

When discussing supervisors' abilities to repair ruptures, a descriptive difference arose. Some supervisors were identified as being unable to repair the rupture, often due to a lack of acknowledging that a rupture had occurred. Even when the supervisee actively tried to address the rupture, it was met with hostility or denial. Worse yet, at times blame was put on the supervisee as was the case with CW. Other supervisors were identified as, "open to talking about the rupture" (Katie, 2), or at times would bring up the topic themselves in a roundabout way. For example, Amanda reported that one of her supervisors would often, "generally check in on the

relationship…" (2) to address any issues that the supervisee may want to address. Experts on the other hand would engage in two distinct behaviours in relation to repairing ruptures that set them apart from other supervisors.

When a rupture occurred, often experts would be the first to query its occurrence in the relationship, even if one did not exist, and to request feedback about the SA. When dealing with ruptures, experts were often defined as being intuitive, open, respectful, and clearly valuing the relationship. For example, Amanda's experience was that her supervisor was:

> … just very intuitive of things. So we had a rupture the other day and it was very minimal, I debated about bringing it up and was like "you know that's probably not worth it"…and the next day I had supervision with him and he just asked me point blank, "How did you feel about supervision yesterday?" so he brought it up…so we had a conversation about it and it was like repaired within five minutes kind of thing and that was really nice. He's not afraid to have those conversations, he cares enough and wants to make sure we're good (3).

For supervisees, when experts asked about a possible rupture, regardless of if one actually occurred or not, it signaled to them the importance the SA had to the supervisor. "I know she really cares" (East Coast Girl, 2). Supervisees even indicated that if asked, and no rupture happened, it still opened up a dialogue and indicated that if a future rupture had occurred, this SA would be a safe place to explore that.

A second way in which experts responded to ruptures was through openness, reflection and apology. If the expert did not notice that a rupture had occurred, and it was brought up by the supervisee, they acknowledged it and made it a point of discussion. For example, CW

described how she addressed with her expert their lack of ability to formulate a relationship due to his busy schedule:

> I did eventually talk to him about it…well its funny because he had no idea!! So I felt bad…I mentioned [the lack of one on one] and it was kind of a surprise to him…and it's like how had he not considered that you know? I don't think that he had that level of awareness until I brought it up…but it was huge in relationship because he apologized…and we discussed it…and he gave me a little bit of feedback about how I had the courage to bring that up to him…and yeah…obviously it helped a lot in our relationship! It was huge! (1).

Melanie also indicated that ruptures had happened, that she felt the supervisor was unaware of until they discussed it, but that her supervisor was "really open to me sharing my frustration" (2). With some ruptures, no real resolution was present. For example, Melanie shared with her supervisor the frustration at the payment process and CAP requirements. Though her supervisor could not actively change this, simply sharing it, discussing it and acknowledging that it was impacting the relationship at times helped eliminate the power it had over the SA. Therefore, despite the content of the rupture, supervisor's active engagement with, readiness to discuss, and ability to acknowledge the rupture is what either repaired or enhanced the SA.

Engage in Responsive Teaching

In discussing learning that occurred, supervisees reflected upon what they believed their supervisors did to enhance their growth. Beyond creating a positive SA, supervisors were perceived as engaging in specific actions related to teaching. These included: balancing Socratic and didactic teaching, considering developmental needs, using anecdotes to teach, and providing effective feedback. Providing feedback will be highlighted as its own subtheme, but will also be

integrated into other aspects of responsive teaching as supervisees often described them as informing one another.

Balance socratic and didactic teaching.

Supervisees identified that expert supervisors were able to balance Socratic and didactic teaching methods. These terms are chosen as they reflect supervisees' language around this topic. Katie explained:

> Well I think there are different dimensions of supervision. There is didactic process where there is teaching and learning…that is more direct…and there is a collaboration also where the supervisor is a role model…it's not as directive…so it's a balance of both (2).

Therefore, didactic teaching is often focused on providing theoretical knowledge, where the teacher is seen as a knowledgeable or authoritative figure who gives knowledge to a student (Jarvis, 2002). Socratic teaching is focused on collaborative learning where the teacher is a co-learner helping the student to uncover new knowledge (Jarvis, 2002). Supervisees perceived that expert supervisors were able to appropriately choose when to use each method according to the situation or learning need:

> It's subtle right… it's not like we sit down and say "how do we do this", it comes through conversation…and through that conversation and analysis of what my assumptions were he goes backward and reflects on what I learned or how I did that…it's a mutual teaching process… (Titan, 2).

Supervisees indicated that expert supervisors were good at incorporating a Socratic style of questioning in most of their teaching. For example,

> He said he will always ask me first, "what do I want from him from this observed session?" and it's kind of up to me to reflect on what I'm looking for to learn…he's not here to judge me…he would always ask me open ended questions so we could explore together what happened in live.. (Melanie, 2).

Socratic teaching was perceived to occur more readily when discussing case conceptualizations, intervention choices, and other therapy related questions. It often involved open-ended questions reflecting on how supervisees chose an intervention. Socratic teaching was identified when the supervisor focused on supervisee motivation or assumptions, or when supervisors used questions guided to help them reflect on these topics, with the intention of, "helping you come to your own conclusions and learning" (CW, 2).

On the other hand, didactic teaching was used more often when discussing ethics or difficult client cases. For example, supervisors would provide explicit instructions on steps to take when supervisees were dealing with issues related to child custody, suicidal clients and issues related to release of confidential information. When these situations arose, other supervisors were described as being more "direct in what to do" (Amanda, 2) versus allowing the supervisee time to reflect and come to their own decision. In these same situations, expert supervisors were identified as, "using stories to teach me what to do" (Titan, 2) or "answering specific questions I had about it" (CW, 2). Therefore, experts used didactic methods only when supervisees requested it, and tended to use Socratic methods more often as a teaching tool. For example, East Coast Girl reflected on a time when she asked her supervisor about an ethical dilemma at work, and when unable to provide her own answer she simply asked "What do I do?" (2) and the supervisor provided specific learning. "She like…points it out very specifically and says this is what you need to focus on and go there and say this, and here's why…" (2). For East

Coast Girl this was extremely beneficial use of didactic teaching, as it provided her with guidance she felt she could trust. In other cases, East Coast Girl's supervisor was reported as always following a more collaborative form of teaching, and always checks in on her supervisees learning:

> She manages that piece very well because she checks in with me. "Do you understand what I'm saying?" and if I don't she will give me an example and she will bring it back to the session "when he did this or he said that did you notice this or what their answer was?" right. So she brings it back to a specific moment so I, I have that piece that context. She tries to integrate it into an experience versus just telling me what to do… (2).

In all but two cases experts were perceived as matching their supervisee learning style in regards to use of Socratic and didactic teaching. The discrepancy arose when experts were using Socratic methods, but their supervisees reported explicitly wanting more didactic teaching. Of the two supervisees, one reported asking their supervisor for more didactic teaching, and that their supervisor was able to, "adapt to that" (Melanie, 2) in most cases. Melanie also reported that this might have been enhanced had they had more hours of supervision together prior to the completion of this study. On the other hand, CW indicated that she tried to discuss with her supervisor the need for more didactic teaching, but feeling that "he wouldn't know how to provide it even if I asked" (CW, 3). This created a small rupture in the relationship, though she indicated it did not impact the bond fully, it did make it difficult to, "know what I'm getting out of this" (2). This difficulty for CW was particularly evident when it came to receiving feedback, as she explicitly wanted more didactic feedback when working with clients.

Balancing when to use Socratic or didactic feedback was also important. All experts were identified as using a form of Socratic Method when giving feedback. "He puts it in a question,

"you may want to consider this", I have never heard him say that I need to do something. Language is a powerful thing…" (Titan, 3). Socratic feedback was also used in situations where didactic learning was occurring. For example, when discussing ethics and difficult client situations, supervisees reported that their experts, "used open ended questions" (Melanie, 3) or "Asked what I thought first" (Summer Breeze, 2) in order to teach about difficult topics. East Coast Girl stated that her supervisor:

> Always wants me to justify and explain my rationale before she provides me with any form of feedback…so that's a gentle approach…because she could be like "absolutely not! You can't do that, CAP would tell you this!" but she's not…because she's interested in why I did it that way because I think she's trying to take me back to you know why I did it and help me see it so I can stop it…to connect the dots… (1).

Good supervisors appeared to oscillate between Socratic and Didactic feedback. For example, one supervisee reflected on how their good supervisor would at times use open ended questions, but when discussing ethics or difficult client cases would, "tell [her] what standard of practice or ethical guideline I had to consider and why versus asking me to think about it" (Amanda, 2). One supervisor (non-expert) was only reported ever using didactic forms of feedback, where often the supervisee felt like she was always being told what she was doing wrong, why, and how to fix it versus having an open dialogue about it. The use of a didactic method in giving feedback was often seen as harsh, punitive, judgmental or overly critical. When it occurred, supervisees reported often being unreceptive to the comments. They indicated they would listen, but incorporating what their supervisor was trying to teach when using harsh didactic methods was difficult as they were emotionally activated and unable to concentrate. With all supervisees the

use of Socratic feedback in both Socratic and didactic teaching scenarios appeared to create the best results according to supervisees reported experiences.

Consider experience and development.

Supervisees described that throughout their year of supervision they went from a place of building confidence to building competence, and that experts helped to facilitate this through titrating learning to their developmental needs and recognizing their level of past experience. The first part of their training appeared to focus on creating a sense of confidence in areas such as their roles and responsibilities as supervisee's, their basic clinical skills, and understanding the administrative tasks of their location. In the beginning, most supervisees reported feeling they did not have, "enough experience or training yet…" (Melanie, 2). They also reported often second guessing their knowledge or previous experience: "I don't know what I don't know" (Katie, 1). CW in her first interview even indicated that a part of the nervousness may be due to a new environment with new and unknown expectations. "You know when you first come it's a lot of mental health professionals who know what they're doing and it's all intimidating and you're like- I'll just blend in over here!" (1). Summer Breeze also related to this, indicating that, "it's like being in school for the first time again…" (1).

Supervisees stated that expert supervisors focused on developing the alliance first, prior to focusing on skill building and competence. They reported that by doing this, it created a felt sense that learning was being titrated to match their shift from confidence to competence. Experts spent time at first, "getting to know their [supervisees]" (Titan, 2) followed by a shift toward clinical work. For all supervisees, they reported that, "real supervision" (Amanda, 1) had not started until the alliance had been built, which as identified in previous themes was around the one month mark. Katie stated "we have yet to get into the meat of the conversation in terms

of it, because really we're still just on the getting to know each other phase…" (1). For supervisees they indicated that this development of the alliance first was important in getting them comfortable for the real work of supervision. Supervisees also reported that within the confidence phase, most expert supervisors focused their feedback on administrative issues, such as note taking and bookings. They indicated "appreciating this" (East Coast Girl, 2) as it was viewed as supportive and for the purpose of, "helping [them] get into [the process]"(Titan, 2) of being a psychologist. For Amanda, this helped "ease [her] into the placement" (1) and better understand the "expectations" (1) of the centre she was working at. Once an alliance had developed, and confidence had been built around administrative rules and expectations, supervisees identified a desired and noted shift toward clinical learning. For example, Summer Breeze reported that after a month of getting to understand the centre, learning about her supervisor and clients. "There is an expectation of you know, taking and integrating more stuff on my own now…a bit more independence…" (2).CW indicated around the same time supervision shifted to:

> Creating that accountability, it makes you think about that right and you become prepared to answer those questions…"What tells you that its working, What made you choose that? (2).

The second half of their learning, especially once supervisees reported feeling confident in these areas, appeared to shift towards a focus of wanting to be a competent psychologist. Competence was often defined as feeling that they were choosing effective interventions for their clients, having better retention rates, better outcomes if they were at a location that used process outcome measures, and a felt sense of being more efficient. The shift from wanting to gain a sense of confidence to wanting to gain competence was most apparent during the second

interviews, where supervisees indicated feeling confident in their understanding of their administrative roles and responsibilities, and their role as a provisional psychologist in general. When reflecting upon this change, Summer Breeze reported:

> It's been a more recent shift, and it probably has to do with where we are in the process. It feels like now we're at the halfway mark, so that's signified things for me... I'm at a different phase of supervision…like before was at the beginning with just learning basics and now this is the middle…it's less focused on building, or the supervisor protecting me, and more now on how I can handle this on my own and we can make this more efficient and how I can learn more (2).

Summer Breeze provides a metaphor to explain this change:

> I'm looking for an image… you know the little kid in the adult clothes? I feel more like the adult now. I've grown up in the process in terms of supervision. Yeah, I feel more grounded in the work I do, confident with the clients that I work with. More competent (Summer Breeze, 3).

Once the alliance was developed, expert supervisors were viewed as being more intentional in their line of questioning in order to help supervisees reflect on their work. For example, East Coast Girl reflected on the change by stating that halfway through her supervisor would "…would ask me about my case conceptualization of the client and what I thought I should do next" (2) before giving suggestions herself.

Supervisees indicated that expert supervisors were able to provide learning that "gently pushed [them]" (CW, 1) but did not go beyond the supervisee capability:

> He was very good at pointing out things that went well in session as well as things, learning edges is what I called them, you're on your learning edge it's uncomfortable and

> okay…so he would couch the learning edge in a good way…it takes some skill to say something to somebody without creating or activating that self-critic… (Katie, 2).

For supervisees this was an important balance of acknowledging supervisee strength and growth, and encouraging further development of skills. Expert supervisors were defined as being able to provide a balance of constructive criticism and support. An aspect of this balance, as perceived by supervisees, was expert supervisors finding that fine line between skills gained and skills to be learned:

> He has a nice approach in terms of catching what happens and a nice way of kind of going about it, it's not really black and white it's more just like "okay maybe you can go a little bit this or that direction", "here was an opening, you could have gone here" you know that kind of thing so that's helpful in teaching me more and where to go next time… (Meghan, 2)

Part of achieving this balance according to Katie was that her expert supervisor "[respected me] as a learner… as someone that can make mistakes…" (Katie, 3). For East Coast Girl it was her supervisor's acknowledgment that it's okay to say, "I don't know" (3). It was also key that her supervisor:

> Gently pushed me when I wasn't sure or didn't know…she would say, "come on, you do know" and then she will ask me in different ways to help me…it's good, it's learning… (3)

For Amanda this balance was achieved by knowing her supervisor actively stepped back and "trusted me" (3) to make clinically relevant decisions when working with clients. Therefore, for supervisees an important aspect of titrating learning is couching it in support, validation, and gently focusing the supervisee to reflect on new areas of learning and growth.

Supervisee's noted that the process of going from confidence to competence was not always linear. Katie for example stated that:

> I don't think it's a linear process, I don't think you go from A to B. I think you go from A to G and then back to E and then up to H…. so it's not a straight line of you learn this and then you learn this…. (Katie, 3)

For Katie and a few other supervisees, there were moments of shifting from a sense of confidence to focusing on competence and skill building, but also moments where their confidence waxed and waned, even toward the end of their supervision. Melanie described that overall she felt competent in working with clients, and being able to create a safe environment for them, but not feeling confident in her ability to incorporate multicultural practices fully at this time. She reported wanting more training or knowledge in how to include this in her practice. Supervisees reported feeling that expert supervisors were aware of what stage the supervisee was at and was able to provide "related support to my learning needs" (East Coast Girl, 3). Part of this included identifying supervisees as experienced learners and adapting lines of therapeutic questioning according to supervisee need.

Supervisees identified that experts were able to inquire about and acknowledge supervisees clinical backgrounds. This was important to supervisees as they indicated wanting a supervisor that recognized their current level of skill and knowledge as they felt it would help inform their supervisor on, "how much support [they] might need" (CW, 1). For example, Titan stated, "You're in your professional infancy but maybe you're farther ahead than other people based on your experiences, you have to give credit to that too" (1). This was especially relevant for supervisees that identified as having a large background of experience. Although they recognized there would still be time spent learning, "the administration tasks" (Katie, 1) of the

center they were at, they reported being more prepared for "big questions" (Titan, 2) and wanting to be challenged clinically. Experts were perceived as actively considering supervisee experience to inform the types of questions they asked. Supervisees stated experts actively "[asked] about my previous experience" (Katie, 2) and were seen as, "considering what I knew already when giving me feedback or asking me to think about a case" (Titan, 2).

Expert supervisors were viewed as being able to shift their teaching style to accommodate supervisees experience level in regard to their level of autonomy. For supervisees who had more clinical experience, the shift from confidence to competence often occurred quicker. These supervisees reported wanting more autonomy with guidance, specifically in the form of wanting more intentional feedback early on. For example, Summer Breeze stated:

> I hope she can be more uhm…giving me …more raw feedback but more critical feedback like if yeah so learning purposes versus …I've learned to integrate and put into play what we've talked about and what I'm learning..now I want the skill to be developed and more advanced…(Summer Breeze, 2),

CW mirrored this statement when working with her expert supervisor:

> Just in that uhm I wanted a bit more like direct feedback. I think I respond really well to that, even if it's like critical, I mean I would be like some strength based in with the critical stuff (2).

What was evident by the third interview was that these requests were met by expert supervisors, though not always by other supervisors. Supervisees reported getting more active feedback in relation to skills, interventions and case conceptualizations.

Use anecdotes.

Use of anecdotes is differentiated from a later theme of self-disclosure, as anecdotes focuses primarily on supervisors active use of past clinical stories in supervision versus personal stories. Supervisees readily identified that all experts and some of the other supervisors shared clinical stories often when trying to teach supervisees about different situations. For example, Titan stated:

> He tells me about his specific clinical experience and how he deals with that and that helps me because there is more of a human element to that as opposed to just handing out a piece of paper. He tells me about how he handles situations (1).

The sharing of clinical stories with supervisees created a sense of shared experience, connectedness, and mutual understanding. Supervisees reported that by hearing their supervisor discuss their past clinical experiences they really got, "to know about [a supervisor] and that's important because it's a relational thing" (Titan, 3). Supervisees reflected on how use of anecdotes has two primary benefits, normalizing a situation, and enhancing teaching.

For students who may be facing a difficult client situation for the first time in practice, supervisors sharing similar experiences helped to lower supervisee anxiety. It also helped supervisees perceive that their supervisor understood them: "She's been there, she's felt the same" (Summer Breeze, 2). This was important in helping supervisees feel that their struggles were common and that they were not, "messing up" (East Coast Girl, 1). For example, East Coast Girl shared an experience of having a client write a letter to a boss, complaining of the service she provided. She reported this caused her a lot of anxiety, but that her supervisor was able to put this into perspective:

> She was telling me that one of her clients just wrote to a [government official] about her, right so that won't be my first letter with a complaint and that sometimes clients that are unwell will seek validation in other areas…The first time you go through it, it's going to be the hardest time…so sharing that experience helps know you're not alone…(East Coast Girl, 3).

Melanie summarized the impact of sharing clinical experiences nicely:

> It's nice to have somebody that is like, "Oh yeah that's right. Been there, done that and this is what happened and this is what you do and here are your responsibilities and here are some things you should think about (3).

An overarching lesson that supervisees reflected upon learning when supervisors shared these stories, was identifying that there is, "not one single right way of doing anything" (Summer Breeze, 1).

Beyond anecdotes helping to lower supervisee anxiety by normalizing difficult experiences, it also served as an important teaching tool. Supervisees indicated that by listening to their supervisors' stories they were able to conceptualize cases better, learn more skills and interventions and "learn their language" (Katie, 3). The use of stories allowed supervisees to consider feedback in different ways:

> As a supervisee you're like "I have this one client and I don't know what to do", the supervisor can use examples and be like, "I had this one client with a similar issue this one time and this was the approach I had to take ….(CW, 2).

Supervisees reflected on how using stories in such a manner allowed them to be more open to different approaches or ideas when working with difficult clients. It also helped them to lower their defenses, especially if they were already feeling poorly about their work with the client as

they were presenting it to the supervisor. CW reflected on how she learns "so much more"(2) when her supervisor uses past stories to teach as she gets to "hear what he might say…the language he might use…"(2). This also allows her and other supervisees to actively reflect on what skills or wordings they might want to use from their supervisors stories. In this way, anecdotes help enhance teaching by respecting supervisee autonomy in their learning. Amanda provides a concrete example of wanting to know how to manage clients that may not be ready for therapy:

> Listening to her speak about clients where she's had those difficult conversations or been very upfront and direct and she just owns it and I really respect that… but hearing her stories I was able to witness how she deals with difficult conversations or situations in a really direct way…(Amanda, 3).

For Amanda it was through these stories and learning her supervisors' language that she was able to pick and choose how to have this difficult conversation with her own client.

Supervisees also explicitly noticed when supervisors would not use anecdotes to teach, and reported craving them as a way to learn. For example, Amanda reported that one of her other supervisors, though good at normalizing her anxiety, would not share his own experiences which she felt would have, "helped more" (1) in building context and validating her experiences. With another supervisor, use of anecdotes was never discussed and was explicitly identified as something the supervisee wanted. This desire for shared experience may be due to the fact that sharing of clinical experience, "is so valuable…" (Summer Breeze, 2) as it helps normalize supervisee experiences and decreases their anxiety. All supervisees reflected on how it's "just beneficial" (Titan, 2) to know someone has been through similar experiences and can "act as a mentor…guiding you through it" (Katie, 3).

Provide effective feedback.

Supervisees spoke to how they perceived their supervisors both giving and receiving feedback. They indicated that feedback was an important part of the supervisory process, as it informed their learning, and that they had specific expectations around topics of feedback and how it should be presented. They indicated that expert supervisors were good at being receptive to feedback, and providing feedback in a "sandwiched" way that included validation and constructive criticism.

In their discussion of supervision as a whole, supervisees elaborated on specific types of feedback they expected their supervisor to give them throughout the process of becoming a registered psychologist. These focused on providing information about administration support, and feedback on client work and supervisee growth. Feedback on administrative tasks were suggested to include such topics as quality of notes, ability to schedule, and if supervisees were making mistakes at an administrative level at their location. Feedback on client work included identifying if specific interventions were being used efficiently, providing, "verbal feedback on what can be improved, what is going well and suggestions and ideas for the future" (Summer Breeze, 1). For Meghan this included, "giving feedback on small indirect ways that improves your sense of competence in your own skills" (1) with clients. Feedback on client work is also focused on:

> Having somebody to give some honest feedback about sort of where I am in the process… and really the focus is on the training part so making sure that I'm an ethical and qualified professional (Summer Breeze, 3).

A final focus of feedback is to provide information to the supervisee about their growth. This typically focuses on, "giving us feedback in order for us to become aware of our own bias

and our own limitations" (Katie, 1). "A supervisor is supposed to help [supervisee's] develop [their] own identity, finding what kind of modality [they] am more prone to..." (Titan, 1). As supervisors are seen as experienced clinicians with strong background knowledge about the process of becoming a registered psychologist, it makes sense that supervisees expect feedback on their growth towards becoming a psychologist themselves.

Supervisees also outlined specific expectations about how they hoped feedback would be provided to them by their supervisors. Specifically, feedback is expected to be given in the form of supervisor stories and experiences: "What their experiences have been like and where they have worked and what they would recommend and what they think is important about being a psychologist" (CW, 1). The way that supervision feedback is given to you, "ideally is constructive criticism but with …as much as a positive spin as possible…" (Amanda, 1). The purpose of framing feedback in such a manner is considered one way to help students be, "more receptive" (Titan, 3) to it, so they can also, "see [their] growth" (Amanda, 1).

Experts were identified as meeting supervisee expectations of feedback, and providing feedback in a gentle, open, and curious manner. These features were the main foundations of all good feedback; however, effective feedback was specifically identified as occurring when feedback was put in a sandwich format. Sandwich feedback was identified as containing both positive and constructive elements, in the form of positive, constructive, positive, to achieve optimal impact with supervisees. When sandwich feedback was used, supervisee receptiveness to the feedback enhanced, and this positively influenced the likelihood of them incorporating the feedback into their work. It also helped to lower the perceived power differential: whereas feedback that was more didactic and included no validation was often viewed as the supervisor "demonstrating their authority" (Summer Breeze, 3).

Positive elements were identified specifically as utilizing validation to enhance feedback. Validation often included supervisors reflecting on supervisee strengths, positive integration of interventions with clients, and areas the supervisee has improved in. This created the sense that supervisors were "complimentary" (Melanie, 1) in their giving of feedback.

Including validation also provides supervisees with an understanding of how their supervisor views their work. For example, CW stated:

> Just knowing that he doesn't think I'm a shitty psychologist… Makes you more confident… Just to have the reassurance that actually there are good things about you as a psychologist and you're not harming your clients…(2).

This is perceived by supervisees as beneficial, as often they report not knowing what their supervisors may think and this can be a source of stress for them. By using authentic feedback, supervisee's feel they are given a sense of where they stand in the relationship.

Supervisees identified that expert supervisors were able to balance constructive criticism with support and authentic validation, where other supervisors missed the mark. For example, Katie stated the optimal balance for her is:

> I like to be encouraged…but I don't need a constant barrage of your awesome or you're so great…I need a balance of that and being able to challenge me at the same time….feedback without being criticized…(3).

Too much validation made supervisees identify their supervisor as inauthentic, as "no one is perfect" (East Coast Girl, 2), and too much criticism created ruptures in the relationship. Some of the other supervisor at times erred on the side of being too validating. This was often perceived as being "cheerleadery" (CW, 3) and caused ruptures in the relationship where supervisees felt their supervisor was trying to placate them.

A small dose of validation therefore appears key to helping supervisees feel receptive to constructive feedback:

> Just to hear the feedback as I've gone along in terms of my growth and how far I've come…then providing me with some areas to think about, areas of further growth. It's okay to create that safety and to be mindful of places to keep working on at the same time…(East Coast Girl, 3).

Supervisees indicated that constructive feedback was necessary to their learning. Supervisees reported that when their supervisor provided constructive criticism this acknowledged to supervisees that their supervisor was, "being honest with [them] about how [we] could do better" (Summer Breeze, 3). The use of constructive criticism was also a sign that "my supervisor wanted me to get better and be the best psychologist I could be" (Melanie, 2). Titan stated that constructive criticism left him feeling that:

> My supervisor is with me and shadowing me and taking notes and giving me personalized feedback on how to improve, access points, things that I may want to consider…(Titan, 3).

In addition, when comparing and contrasting how expert supervisors approached each supervisee, it became evident that the form of their feedback mirrored supervisee wants. For example, East Coast Girl and Summer Breeze shared the same supervisor, who was often described as providing more open ended feedback to East Coast Girl, and upon request more constructive or critical feedback to Summer Breeze. This changing of feedback style was evident in all experts, where supervisee stories of how their experts approached "pushing that learning edge" (Katie, 3) differed. Therefore, experts were perceived as more consistent in tailoring feedback to the supervisee's preferences along with incorporating a sandwich style of feedback.

One area in which supervisees' felt feedback was missing and that they wanted more information on was a formal discussion about the evaluation process and what this entailed. Of the seven participants, only two reported that their supervisor discussed the evaluation process in detail. Though other supervisees indicated expert supervisors, "mentioned that it would happen" (JF, 2), no expert or other supervisor provided formal written information about the evaluation process, and few addressed what it would entail. When discussing her understanding of the evaluation process, Amanda stated:

> It's just getting it signed, getting it filled out so like descriptions of the activities the hours you get that kind of thing it wasn't – pretty basic you know. I'm assuming the evaluation stuff like…because I don't actually know how it works to be totally honest especially with three supervisors so I'm guessing at some point that will come up with our supervisors? But no it hasn't' yet for me (1).

The overall consensus of was that evaluation was, "just something that's going to happen…" because, "[supervisors] are that authority figure…and [they have] a role to play in [supervisees] process of becoming psychologists…" (Summer Breeze, 2)

Of the two expert supervisors who did discuss the evaluation process with their supervisees, it was identified as being an informal discussion, primarily to help decrease supervisee anxiety. For example, Titan's supervisor explained the midterm evaluation as a, "conversation" (2) that would be had between the two of them to identify strengths and areas of improvements. For Titan this was reliving, and helped to lower his nervousness about being "seen as a bad therapist" (2). No discussion was had about the final evaluation and the impact it could have on supervisees' registration process, or what the evaluation comprised of more specifically. This may be due to the fact that none of these participants were seen as potentially

harmful future psychologists. However, for Melanie this was a source of frustration. She reported feeling that if one is actively paying for supervision that is to, "teach [them] relevant work, skills and interventions…" (3), students should be aware of how they are going to be evaluated on these same concepts. For a couple of supervisees, such as Katie, discussing the process of evaluation could have helped to create a collegial environment quicker and lower the perceived power differential by, "not keeping it a secret" (3). She stated:

> [Supervisors] are evaluative, that's their role, as it should be but mitigating that in such a way that the supervisee's have more confidence and I think that actually would affect their own practice and their development as blossoming therapists. Grow in a place that is fertilized, right? … There should be a way to know what a supervisor is looking for, so you can work towards it with them…(3).

For all supervisees, having a clearer understanding of what their supervisors were evaluating them on was thought to be a possible beneficial form of feedback. They indicated feeling that it might have helped focus goal setting, provided them with a sense of direction, could act as a way to lower the power differential and would be seen as the supervisor being up front and honest about their role as gatekeeper.

Use Self in Supervision

The use of self in supervision is a theme that reflects supervisors' use of personal self-disclosure to their supervisees. Supervisees identified that supervisors use two forms of self disclosure: professional and personal. Professional self-disclosure includes such information that may be seen on supervisors' curriculum vitas; information about their training, education, and upcoming seminars they may be attending. Personal self-disclosure relates to supervisors disclosing about their family, emotional states, reactions to events, or beliefs and values.

Personal self disclosure could take on the form of "small talk" (Summer Breeze, 2), where surface topics would be discussed briefly prior to supervision, or more in-depth disclosures about feelings that involved being vulnerable and "transparent" (Titan, 1) about oneself in supervision. Self-disclosure was identified by supervisees as important to the supervisory dynamic, and an expectation when working with someone for so long. "I like to make connections with people, I hate excessive formality, especially if I'm working with this person very intensely for the next while…" (Amanda, 1). When discussing self-disclosure, supervisees indicated feeling their supervisors engaged in such behaviours for the benefit of the supervisee. Only in one situation did a supervisee report a self-disclosure having a small negative impact on the alliance, and was perceived as being for the benefit of the supervisor versus supervisee. This occurred when a supervisor complained about having a busy schedule and did not contextualize how this related to the supervisee. In all other scenarios, personal self-disclosure was seen as having three positive roles. It served as a way to connect and inspire supervisees, acted as a roadmap to vulnerability within the relationship, and helped supervisees view their supervisors as human. A final theme that's important to mention in this section is that, expert supervisors specifically, were identified as being able to mediate the boundary between self-disclosure and therapy effectively.

Connect and inspire.

Supervisees reported that supervisors' choice to self-disclose in the supervisory relationship acted as an indicator that their supervisor wanted to connect to them. It informed them that, "this person is invested because they are sharing something personal with me" (Titan, 2). "It's relationship building I find….it strengthens the bonds and it's nice to have a conversation" (Summer Breeze, 1). Therefore, self-disclosures, especially topics that revolved

around "small talk" were identified as SA enhancers. East Coast Girl reflected on how her supervisor would have supervision in her home, which demonstrated a level of "…connection and trust…" (2) in her as a supervisee, because her supervisor was "sharing parts of herself openly and honestly" (3). This form of self-disclosure helped East Coast Girl view her expert supervisor as "a person" (2) and not just someone to learn from. Katie indicated that her supervisor was able to facilitate a positive SA through:

> …Small talk. You know talking outside of supervision? That's an important thing…When you can talk about I don't know, kids and all of those things you can connect on a human level that is outside of the work environment and is part of building that relationship…(3).

For Melanie she described it as, "nice and welcoming" (1) when she and her supervisor would spend time outside of the work environment, "going for coffee" (2) to, "connect and chat" (2). Katie reflected on how the relationship is still a "relationship" (3) and how this incorporates "…being good at listening and being good at sharing…" (3). Without an openness to share and connect, supervisees felt that the relationship would be "missing something" (CW, 1) that would allow the supervisee to relate to the supervisor.

Supervisees also indicated that personal self disclosure helped inspire them in their own personal and professional lives. For example, Titan indicated that when his supervisor talked about family vacations and how he connected to his daughter, this created an inspirational goal for Titan. He stated, "That's what I want to be!....when I'm older I want to do the things he's doing" (2). For both Summer Breeze and East Coast Girl, having supervision in their supervisors home was inspirational in that it created a sense of, "[we] could one day have this too" (Summer Breeze, 2). When supervisors shared their positive successes and goals, it was

seen as motivational to supervisees, giving them, "something to look forward to" (Katie, 3) in their own personal development and growth.

Create a road map to vulnerability.

For supervisees, the use of supervisor self-disclosure was a signal that they could allow emotions into the supervision dynamic. Many supervisees reported being uncertain about how much of their own personal and professional struggles to share, and the supervisors level of self-disclosure helped guide their own ability to be vulnerable. They indicated a desire to open up, but at times were not certain if their supervisor would be, "comfortable with an overt emotional disclosure" (Amanda, 1). When a supervisor limited self-disclosure this acted as a prompt, where supervisees, "followed [their supervisors] lead" (Katie, 2). This roadmap helped guide supervisees and created a sense of safety:

> "I know a little bit more about her and what's going on in her personal life and I think it creates a sense of safety too, like she knows whatever she says to me is confidential as well" (East Coast Girl, 2).

Supervisees identified that experts excelled in making this roadmap clear. They indicated that their experts would be the first to self-disclose, both around personal and clinical issues and that by doing so their supervisor acted as a role model, demonstrating what was appropriate to share in session. For example, Melanie recounted a story where her supervisor discussed his values around spirituality in their first meeting, and that this helped create a connection and, "let [her] know he was open to talking about these topics" (1). Expert supervisors were also described as actively trying to encourage supervisees to self-disclose:

> "I was having a bit of an emotional day so he wouldn't let me go leave for a few minutes and just gently kept asking how I was, and poking and I just…he asked me something and then the water works came on" (CW, 2).

Experts were not only seen as being able to share, but were also able to manage the emotions that arose from supervisee self-disclosure. Other supervisors were described as, "not knowing how to react to my emotions" (Amanda, 3) whereas experts were able to "sit in the uncomfortableness of it with me" (Summer Breeze, 2). In contrast to experts, other supervisors were often not seen as the first to self-disclose, creating that roadmap for supervisees. This often led to supervisees disclosing less in the beginning of the relationship due to the uncertainty of what was appropriate. For example, CW indicated not being clear about, "how much I could say" (1) in the beginning of the supervisory relationship. This caused some anxiety for the supervisees, and being vulnerable often occurred more as a need (e.g., stressful situation) versus a want (e.g., desiring to share).

The ability of expert supervisors to self-disclose, encourage self-disclosure, and manage the emotions that arose from this also influenced what information supervisees felt safe sharing. Part of this was also mediated by the creation of a positive SA. When a positive SA was developed and perceived by the supervisee as existing, supervisees reported being able to disclose more readily about personal and client issues. For example, supervisees reported being able to be, "more vulnerable" (Melanie, 2) with their supervisor when they felt the relationship was one of mutual respect and safety. When a negative alliance was present, supervisees often reported withholding information both personally and about client difficulties.

When ruptures occurred and there was a positive SA, lack of self-disclosure only related to supervisee personal struggles. Supervisees described still being open to disclose client issues

and difficult cases, but withholding their personal reactions and emotions about a situation. When assessing the reasoning for non-disclosure, all supervisees reported that they withheld either to "process [their] own reaction" (Summer Breeze, 2) or to assess "if it's even worth mentioning" (Amanda, 2). For example, in the incident where an intervention flopped with Summer Breeze and her supervisor, she reported that she did not immediately share her reaction because she "needed time to process things…"(2). She explained how she thought about her reaction to her supervisors' intervention over the next few days, trying to assess if it was something about the supervisory relationship, her own personal struggles, or related to the client issue that she was upset about. Part of her processing was to identify, "if it's worth it… maybe just don't want to rock the boat so to speak…" (3) Eventually she decided to share it with her supervisor, and although the conversation, "didn't provide any clarity or closure for me…" (3), discussing it helped her "let go of it and move on" (3). Similar stories were recounted by other supervisees, where lack of disclosure often revolved around personal triggers, and needing time to identify if it was merely an "annoyance" (East Coast Girl, 2) or "something worth bringing up" (Katie, 2). In these scenarios, supervisees were more likely to disclose if their supervisor had previously disclosed personal information. "I knew eventually I could talk to her about it because she's shared hard things with me" (East Coast Girl, 3).

With other supervisors, where personal self-disclosure was lacking, or the SA was described as mediocre or negative, supervisees actively reported not disclosing around both personal issues and client issues. For example, CW, who had a negative experience with one supervisor said:

> I was very selective of what I would tell her and I was very protective of myself because I'm normally very open and go into supervision and admit all my mistsakes and crumble

> and be like "I suck", but with her I just like…the wall was up. I didn't let her in, I was selective about what I'd say to her…(2).

Self-protection often involved withholding of emotional responses to events in supervision, as well as to issues that arose with clients. This was often because CW feared her supervisor would "go on a soap box…and be quick to blame me…" (CW, 2). She indicated feeling that her supervisor was more focused on the gate keeping aspect of supervision, and evaluation, versus the learning component and trying to support her supervisee. These fears arose after numerous negative events had occurred in the relationship. In addition, CW had attempted to repair the ruptures with this supervisor, and was met with hostility and criticism, therefore creating the sense of an unsafe environment. CW would therefore only bring, "technical aspects to supervision" (2) such as going over case notes and discussing basic client issues. CW reported if she was struggling with a client concern, especially if there was a personal component related to it, she would seek supervision from a different supervisor whom she had a positive SA within the past.

Other supervisees described less intense versions of lack of self-disclosure. Their withholding of information was described as a way to "avoid being judged" (Katie, 1) or feeling their supervisor "wouldn't know how to handle my feelings" (Amanda, 3). With expert supervisors, supervisees indicated overall being able to share both personal and professional issues. Though there were times, especially if a rupture had just occurred with a good supervisor, where supervisee's felt, "hesitant to bring up an issue I was having with a client" (Summer Breeze, 2). This typically related to the fact that the relationship felt a bit "rocky" (Melanie, 1) and bringing up difficult client issues could worsen the SA. Supervisees often stated they would

wait until the SA was stronger or repaired before discussing the issue they were withholding, essentially waiting until it felt "safer to talk about it" (Melanie, 3).

Normalize the struggles.

One benefit of personal self-disclosure, as well as using anecdotes as previously discussed, is that it helped supervisees see that others are also struggling with life. This created a sense of trust in their supervisor, and helped to lower the power differential. Supervisees indicated that it allowed them to, "relate to [their supervisor]" (Titan, 2) because they could view them as human beings versus putting them on a pedestal. It was important to supervisees that their supervisor was open to sharing personal information for the purpose of normalizing both becoming registered, and struggling as a supervisee. For example, Summer Breeze stated that when her supervisor shared past stories about her own struggles as a supervisee, this made it so "there was no pedestal. We are human and we all have, you know, moments…we all have our foibles" (2). It also allowed East Coast Girl "to relate to her better" (3), knowing that her supervisor had experienced the same forms of worry and anxiety that she was as a supervisee. Supervisees identified that at times it's hard to forget that their supervisors are not perfect, and in that self-disclosure of their foibles and mistakes make them relatable:

> When I feel my supervisor is being that open and sharing the crazy shit that happens too, it's very humanizing, like right you're a human that struggles with life too…I remember one supervisor she came in with her hair up and like there was a little curl over there and I thought it was super cute and she's like, "I'm a disaster today, I slept on wet hair, and it looks weird now" and it was hilarious, this is your daily life. It's like we all struggle to human! (Amanda 3).

Experts were identified as not only being open about their past struggles from when they were a supervisee, but also about their current concerns. In contrast to other supervisors, experts were identified as sharing personal struggles only if identified by the supervisee, as per the example Amanda provided, or if it was pertinent to the supervision. Titan reported that his supervisor, when late for a meeting, shared the reason behind this and how he "was having a busy day" (3). For Titan this form of self-disclosure normalized his own experiences of being late at times, and was "a validating experience for him to acknowledge it" (2).

Respect role boundaries.

Supervisees clearly distinguished that self disclosure was useful in helping their own growth, but was not therapy per se. They perceived expert supervisors as being able to create solid boundaries around what forms of self-disclosure occurred in the therapy room. These boundaries were often created through an open dialogue, where a supervisor would ask, "do we have permission to get emotional here? and like is that okay?"(Amanda, 3). These boundaries were also created by supervisors choosing to disclose but being mindful of not imposing their struggles on the supervisee:

> If he was having a tired week or a tired day he would say so, but he also wouldn't tell me about his kids did this and then this and his wife fought or like that information, it's not like that…(Amanda, 2).

Titan labeled the use of self-disclosure as, "counselling adjacent experience" (2). He stated that supervisors are not providing therapy through the use of their self-disclosure, but that it can be normalizing and prompt self-reflection on the part of the supervisee that can mirror therapy. He stated:

> Through the sharing, the element of mercy and the element of humbleness and non-judgment…I feel comfortable so I think that helps me as a human being. It helps me as a person by helping me deal with my own issues- he's not providing me therapy but supervision for me is a form of therapy (2).

One way in which supervisors were perceived as creating this boundary was ensuring that topics of self-disclosure, "did not take up the entire hour" (Titan, 2). Discussions on personal self-disclosure were, "quick check ins" (Summer Breeze, 3) to assess how both the supervisee and supervisor were feeling before returning to the main topic of supervision.

At times supervisee's discussed how supervisors would practice therapeutic interventions on them in relation to personal issues, as a way to model how to use the intervention on a client. This was described as a practice that bordered the line between supervision and therapy, and at times even with experts would, "fall flat" (Summer Breeze, 1). For example, Summer Breeze provided a story about how her expert supervisor attempted to use a specific somatic skill on her in relation to something she had been struggling with in her personal life. Summer Breeze indicated that this did not go over well, and she left feeling poorly about it, and even "a bit frustrated" (2) at her supervisor. This was also seen as occurring with good supervisors:

> It was good except for afterwards I was like, "Did I treat her like my psychologist?" and then the worrying came up and I wanted to talk to her about it the next session and ask if it was okay (CW, 3).

A large difference that arose between expert and other supervisors was that experts were described as checking in on how this form of modeling went. They were also open to discussions if the modeling went poorly, and most importantly respected if the supervisee stated they, "needed time to think if it bugged [them] or not" (Summer Breeze, 2). Experts were perceived as

not, “needing to know right now how I felt about it” (CW) for personal reasons, and would trust that supervisees could work with their own emotional needs if they didn’t want to share. Experts would also, “always bring it back to the client” (Summer Breeze, 2) within the hour session of supervision that the modeling occurred in. In this way it was always explicit that the purpose behind the intervention was not therapy, but was for the benefit of learning a new skill for the client.

Another way in which expert supervisors were identified as balancing the boundary between therapy and supervision was that they did not give advice. Instead, experts were described as often providing tentative suggestions. For example, if they thought their supervisee could benefit from therapy they would, “recommended a couple of therapists for me to see…but didn’t tell me I had to...it was just an option” (Titan, 2). In addition, Summer Breeze’s supervisor also self disclosed about her own process of receiving therapy, “to make it more comfortable for me …to validate that it was normal and normalize my experience…” (3). Therefore, experts were seen by supervisees as being able to mediate this boundary between supervision and therapy effectively, while respecting supervisee feelings and desires to disclose, and at the same time returning the learning always back to the client issues.

Theme 3: How Expert Supervisors Influence Supervisees

A main theme that arose while discussing the process of supervision was the impact supervisees thought supervision had on themselves and clients. These are broken down into supervisee growth and development, supervisee identity development, and perceived client outcomes. The impact of supervision was described as not always being a linear process, instead it was described as often taking a couple of days, weeks or months for something a supervisor had taught to be relevant to a supervisee’s growth needs or to a client situation. For example,

ethical principles and the decision making model in the code of ethics was sometimes discussed in supervision, but may not need to be immediately applied to a client situation if it doesn't warrant it. Supervisees also asked their supervisors questions they were interested in, such as how to work with a client who is presenting as resistant, even though they did not have a resistant client on their caseload at the time. A general rule that appeared in the interviews was that learning was more linear and apparent when focused on teaching specific interventions for specific clients. For example, Amanda discussed how she was working with a client suffering from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and how her supervisor provided her with a step by step treatment regime to work with this individual. Learning in this case was quick and apparent, as she was able to apply the model and interventions taught to her client during the next session in order to assess if this treatment modality was helping the client or not. When discussing personal growth and perceived positive client outcomes, stories are a mixture of both linear and non-linear learning outcomes.

Personal Growth and Development

Supervisees reported that supervision helped them grow both on a personal level, such as learning to better manage their anxiety and enhance their self-care, as well as on a professional level, such as influencing changes in interventions, therapeutic orientations, and levels of intentionality. They also described a unique experience of, "embodying" their supervisor, which was an indication that skills, techniques, or discussions in supervision had "stuck" (Melanie, 2) and were making a positive impression.

Mediate anxiety.

Expert supervisors were identified as helping mediate supervisee nervousness. They did this by helping to encourage supervisee confidence in the beginning of supervision, through the

development of a positive SA, and by encouraging competency development through titrated teaching. Melanie stated that without supervision she may not have learned to, "trust [her] skills" (2) and that she might still be, "feeling green" (1) if it wasn't for her supervisors support. For CW she identified that supervision helped her shift from being, "panicky" (1) in new situations to being, "able to belief in [herself]" (3) and her skills to cope. Supervisees identified that their supervisors helped decrease their anxiety through normalization, validation, and use of self in supervision. Hearing about supervisors difficulties and their own level of nervousness as they went through the registration process acted as a validating tool that allowed supervisees to "worry less" (CW, 3) about the learning stages of being a supervisee. For Titan, his expert supervisor was able to teach him the importance of owning his worth as a professional and to not be "nervous about charging that sort of money" (3) in his future private practice. Summer breeze reported that her supervisor's "confidence in my ability to learn" (3) helped ease her self-doubt about herself as a future psychologist.

A large part of decreasing supervisee anxiety was expert supervisors' active role in encouraging supervisees to trust themselves, and believe in their skills and abilities. For example, East Coast Girl stated that her supervisor helped her to realize that she had a lot of the basic counselling skills from previous career experiences already. This helped ease her nervousness about becoming a psychologist. For Amanda, her supervisor was able to help center her into listening to her own self while working with clients:

> What I really got from him was to learn to trust your intuition, being authentic, being okay with dabbling in things you're not familiar with…sitting with experience and trying to help the client sit with that experience…(Amanda, 3).

"There is general encouragement to be yourself with your clients and be genuine and do your way of counselling…" (CW, 1). It is this encouragement from supervisors that is identified as helping supervisees, "come out of [their] shell" (East Coast Girl, 3). Summer Breeze indicated that through her supervisors support, sharing of knowledge and training she was able to go from feeling like a kid to feeling stronger about her abilities:

> I just, yeah, I just feel really small in the room and I feel real incompetent and it's like… and then it's like my brain shuts down and I can't put two words together and it does not go well for me…." (2) to "You know the little kid in the adult clothes? I kind of feel more like the adult now (laughs). Like I've gotten, I've grown up in the process in terms of supervision. Yeah. I feel more you know grounded in the work that I do, confident with the clients that I work with (3).

Encourage self-care.

Expert supervisors, by being authentic and living by their values, were able to model the importance and value of self-care and the role it has in being a well-grounded psychologist. Titan described a story where his supervisor shared that in times of stress, he takes time to go for walks and spend time with family, and that this allows him to be a better psychologist. Titan stated that this, "highlighted the importance of taking care of yourself" (2) versus simply "telling your clients to but not doing it yourself" (Katie, 3). Titan stated it was, "easy" (3) to believe in his supervisor's recommendation of self-care, because he had seen the benefits self-care had for his supervision during their supervision. Through role modeling, Titan and others in this study were able to enhance their own well-being through self-care techniques such as increased exercise, meditation, spending quality time with family and relaxation. For example, Katie stated:

> Learning to do things like exercise and riding my bike…you know those things were key in me being able to be emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually available for my clients (Katie, 3).

She identified that although these had been important parts of her life before, supervision helped her to reflect on the value of these in stressful times. CW reported that self-care acted as a "buffer against being too overwhelmed"(3) as the training process is long and hard. Supervisees would acknowledge that they knew the importance of self-care through their training programs, as it's often discussed, but that applying it personally was different. It wasn't until they actively saw their supervisor engaging in self-care, or had repeated conversations about its benefits that they were more open to incorporating it into their own lives. Once achieved, they indicated that self-care was supportive in helping them cope with the stressors of their supervision and allowed them to feel less anxious overall.

Identity development.

Supervisees indicated that an important impact of supervision was how it focused them to reflect on their identity as a future psychologist. This was especially relevant for those who had previous jobs in related fields, but weren't necessarily familiar with what it meant to be a psychologist. For example, East Coast Girl discussed how her supervisor was able to help her navigate the difference between her previous job, and her role as a provisional psychologist, along with the ethical and professional identity components that come with being a psychologist:

> She made me realize my role isn't case management, where I have done a lot of that in the past, she made me realize I need to connect more to the [client]….I'm changing because of my supervision…(East Coast Girl, 2).

Part of identity development includes discussing topics such as identifying where a supervisee may want to work (e.g., private practice or a hospital setting), what client presenting issues they want to work with (e.g., addiction, depression, etc.) and what type of case load is manageable for themselves. For Melanie, conversations with her supervisor made her, "reflect on if this is the type of work…the client issues…location… I want to work with full time" (3). Though she identified that being a psychologist is the job for her, she indicated that the location and client population was often demanding and left her coming home tired. It was through open discussions with her supervisor that has helped her identify that she may not want to work with this population long-term as she worries she may, "risk burnout"(2). Titan stated that:

> With supervision I think it allows me to know more about the field…it's preparing me to move into private practice… it influences the type of person that I am and what type of psychologist I want to be…(Titan, 1).

Identity development was often discussed as occurring later in the supervision year, typically towards the end of the supervision hours. At this point supervisees reported that they felt confident with their client work, but were still lacking knowledge about, "what [they] wanted to do]" (Melanie, 3) and where they wanted to work. Supervisors were described as being, "skilled psychologists that have been through this career process" (Titan, 2) and therefore could have an informed discussion with their supervisee about options. Supervisors were also seen as individuals who had connections, resources, and insight into the registration process which could also help benefit supervisees as they try to navigate their identity development in this way.

Professional Development

Supervisees reported that supervision helped them not only grow on a personal level, but also impacted their professional development. They reported that when working with expert

supervisors they were able to learn new interventions and orientations that were perceived to positively impact their professional knowledge. Supervisees also indicated that supervision taught them how to be more reflective in their work, enhanced their ability to choose effective interventions when working with client issues, and that they learned to embody specific supervisor skills.

Interventions and orientations.

Changes in supervisees' intervention repertoires and choices, as well as therapeutic orientations were the most impactful way of knowing supervision was making a difference. All supervisees reported having learned specific skills and interventions from their supervisor, and some supervisees even disclosed that their orientation preference, or their ability to incorporate orientations, had drastically changed. Katie stated that she knew supervision was helping her because she was:

> Learning about some specific interventions for concerns that you haven't worked with like OCD or trauma or phobias and those kinds of things…and learning to deal with those in specific ways and learning that they can be done differently…like learning to do exposure therapy…(Katie, 3).

Each supervisee was able to share stories of how expert had changed the way in which they were working with a client. For example, East Coast Girl and Summer Breeze both indicated incorporating more somatic work when working with their clients that they felt has led to positive outcomes. Summer Breeze indicated that this way of working with clients was vastly different than her usual style, but seemed to, "resonate with my client needs" (3). East Coast Girl stated that it was learning about somatic work that helped to improve her work with families, and

that she has further developed an "interest in learning more about it in the future" (3). Amanda stated that supervision:

> It informs my work largely through teaching me CBT, like I'm feeling much more comfortable with using that modality and I feel like I'm capable of using it and doing it if a client needs it…(Amanda, 2).

She also reported that another supervisor was able to, " [make her] much more behavioural …and taught[her] the importance of incorporating that…" (Amanda, 3). For Amanda, her growth as a psychologist was informed by the fact that she had numerous supervisors who were able to teach her different orientations and skills, and the importance of each in relation to client needs. This was a common experience with supervisees who had multiple expert or good supervisors. They all reported feeling that they had gained a large breadth of knowledge from multiple supervisors that would help enhance their practice in the future. Those with one supervisor throughout the entire year also reported learning a lot about their supervisors, "orientation, skills, and ways of working with clients" (Titan, 3) that has positively benefitted their understanding of themselves as a psychologist.

Enhanced reflective practice.

Supervisees reported that supervision was able to enhance their ability to work intentionally with clients and to be reflective about their practice. Intentionality was often described as choosing interventions that fit the client presenting problem and client personality style, as well as pacing sessions according to client responsiveness. For example, being intentional for CW means:

> Not just going out there and doing what you think is working but gathering evidence that it is working for the client, that they're getting better..gathering feedback data and also

> knowing you're following a specific approach…knowing what you're doing and why you're doing it (CW, 2).

A direct way in which expert and good supervisors were seen as helping enhance intentionality was through the use of open ended questions. For example, making supervisees engage in case conceptualization and asking them questions such as, "how did you get to that?...what intervention were you thinking of?..." (Katie, 3) prompted them to reflect on their work.

Reflective practice was described as taking time to consider the importance of being intentional, as well as reflecting on how the supervisee, supervisor, and client all informed the work they were doing. For example, Summer Breeze indicated that her supervisor would often make her reflect on if, "I was being triggered by my client at all… and how that might impact our work together…" (3). East Coast Girl discussed a story about how her supervisor helped her reflect on the different levels of management at her work place and how that can sometimes impact the work psychologists do with clients. She indicated that focusing a supervision session on this was extremely beneficial as it helped her, "put aside business" (2) to, "better help [her] client" (2). A main goal of reflective practice that arose in these interviews was the focus on assuring that supervisees were more attentive to the client's needs, and how supervisee factors could impact the therapeutic process both positively and negatively.

Enhanced treatment planning.

Supervisees reported that expert supervisors were able to positively influence their professional ability to engage in treatment planning: to determine a treatment plan for a client based on their presenting concern. Treatment plans may include realistic expectations and outcomes, methods of helping the client achieve these through such things as interventions, and identification of goals that fit with the clients social-emotional, and financial situation. For

Amanda, supervision taught her to be more intentional in her treatment planning. "Supervision makes me think more about what I am doing, what I think I need to do next, and why…so really setting out a session for my clients needs and abilities" (Amanda, 1). For East Coast Girl, an important part of treatment planning was learning to slow down her work with clients first, in order to identify their needs:

> Through supervision feedback I learned how to stop…you know when a client comes in and they just need to talk and tell you everything?...she taught me how to be polite and say things like "wow you just said something interesting there I need to get more information" and how to be more structured in terms of when they're giving you information and how to slow it down…being mindful of the time and giving the client something in the session…(2).

Learning how to treatment plan was especially important when supervisees were working at a location that required short-term treatment models. For example, three of the seven participants had to learn how to create treatment models that fit their organizations session limits. This was both difficult at first and beneficial in regards to knowing how to, "think about change in a short-term model" (Amanda, 2). CW stated that, "supervision has helped me learn how to try to keep a shorter model so you make sure what you're doing in session is actually getting somewhere…have a plan…ask for feedback…" (3). CW reported how she actively saw changes from the beginning of her supervision to the end, where she felt she was able to, "help clients in fewer sessions than [she] could…compared to the first 2 months" (2).

Through supervisees' discussions, a component of treatment planning that supervisees learned from their supervisors was sequencing. Sequencing is the process of creating small ordered steps to achieve an outcome. For CW, this included learning to identify smaller

interventions prior to trying a large one, and for Amanda it meant creating smaller behavioural activation goals before asking a depressed client to go engage in a social gathering. For Summer Breeze, supervision helped her, "identify client issues faster…" (3), which allowed her to, "plan achievable and specific interventions sooner" (3). For Titan, better sequencing means having a more structured and cohesive intake process that helps him identify client needs quicker. It also includes assessing client needs and choosing interventions appropriately, as well as sharing those interventions with the clients in ways that resonate with their learning needs or ability. So for example it may be breaking an intervention into smaller chunks if he's aware that the client is extremely depressed and struggling to behaviourally activate.

Embodiment of supervisor skills.

A unique theme that arose while discussing how supervision impacts supervisees, was this felt sense that, "supervisor skills get embodied" (Amanda, 3) into the supervisee's way of working. For Amanda and Titan this meant that at times they would find themselves, "using their [supervisor's] language" (1) when working with clients. They both described stories where they were working with a client and said something that mirrored, "what my supervisor would say" (Titan, 2) in a very intuitive and unconscious manner. They even indicated being shocked that this had occurred, and reflecting on the benefits of it after the session had ended with the client. A main component of these stories is that they both felt they had "embodied their [expert] supervisor's ability to work with clients" (Summer Breeze, 3) which therefore felt like it enhanced their practice. They stated that it felt that the use of their supervisor's language often helped to prompt a quicker move with the client within the session. CW provides a good summary of this phenomenon:

> I think that your supervisor is one of those voices you internalize and sometimes my supervisors voice comes out in session with my client when you're talking about these issues and they're conceptualizing it in such a way…even saying something they might say or do with their client or whatever you carry that voice with you so it's present in every session and it helps you...it gets you there faster than if you didn't have that (CW, 3)

Similarly, East Coast Girl reflected on how she remembered saying something to her client in session that was, "exactly what my supervisor would say" (3). These moments seem to be impactful to supervisees because they demonstrate that unconscious learning has occurred where they have incorporated aspects of their supervisor they respect or admire into their own session. This was often followed by how they felt this language or, "way of questioning" (East Coast Girl, 2) helped to prompt the client to faster change than if these particular words or interventions weren't used.

Perceived Mechanisms to Client Improvements

When supervisees discussed the impact they believed supervision had on clients, a clear divide arose between participants. Four of participants were adamant that supervision has a direct impact on client outcomes, and were able to provide stories about how this occurred. Three participants stated they were uncertain if supervision had an impact on client outcomes, but hoped it did. For example, Katie stated, "what's the point in doing supervision and supervision if you're skill level doesn't change? So I hope it does change my therapy…" (Katie, 1). Summer Breeze reported thinking supervision should have an impact, but being uncertain to how to measure it. She stated that it's had a positive impact on her own development, but with client outcomes it's, "maybe not been as much as I thought it would…" (2). Melanie also felt like it

should have a positive impact, and that she feels she's seen it in her clients, but that, "it's difficult to put your finger on…in terms of how... I know it impacts client outcome but I'm not sure how.." (3). Even towards the end of supervision, identifying specifics in how supervision impacted client outcome was difficult, though supervisee's had some reflections to share.

Despite this uncertainty, supervisees were able to discuss possible mechanisms in which supervision helped them enhance their work with clients. These included helping supervisees be more empathetic and consider multicultural issues when working with clients. Supervisees also shared stories about how they felt supervision impacted client change, and what changes in their clients confirmed this. These concepts are discussed below.

Empathy building.

Supervisees reflected on how supervision with expert supervisors helped enhance their abilities to demonstrate empathy toward a client, which they felt would facilitate better client outcomes. Katie reported that the supervision relationship, though different than a therapeutic one, had some overlapping aspects, such as empathy. She indicated that through demonstrations of her supervisor's empathy, she was able to develop a fuller understanding of what this might look like when provided to her clients. This also allowed her to learn more non-verbal behaviours that demonstrated empathy and to mirror those in session, such as "having an open body stance" (3). Similarly, Titan reported that the supervision relationship helped him become more comfortable, which in turn impacts his work with clients:

> My supervisors been instrumental in me feeling comfortable and being okay to try new things…and seeing how he shows empathy… I think that translates into my job as a psychologist because essentially that's what it is- empathy toward others right? (3).

Empathy was explained by some supervisees as their ability to focus in on the client, and let go of their own worries as developing psychologists. This was especially relevant when engaging in live supervision, as many of the supervisees reported feeling nervous about being observed, though they knew that, "the feedback would be great" (Melanie, 1). If a positive relationship existed between the supervisee and supervisor, then supervisees reported being able to focus their energy and empathy towards their clients, which would translate into better client outcomes:

> Supervision really helped me learn to focus more on the client in the room…not to worry about what I do next…or my own issues…to really be empathetic to their needs…hear what they were saying so I could figure out interventions or treatment ideas faster instead of being worried about being judged or observed…(CW, 2).

Multicultural awareness.

Supervisees reported that expert supervisors helped them become more culturally aware and sensitive, and that they felt this helped to improve client outcomes. Expert supervisors were identified as focusing supervisees on learning about and incorporating multicultural awareness into their practices. This only arose for a couple of supervises, but appeared to be an important element of how supervision impacted client outcomes. For example, Titan stated:

> Supervision has helped me be a little more conscious of things like culture and multicultural issues… and I think that helps me relate to my clients better…understand them better…(2).

Supervision was able to accomplish this by the supervisors actively discussing multicultural issues, and asking supervisees to reflect on how this might be a component of their work with clients. Supervisees stated this was done professionally and kindly, often by supervisors asking

open ended questions, or stating, "I wonder if spirituality…or gender…or whatever plays a role here?" (Melanie, 1). For Melanie, this was especially important as she worked at a location where multicultural issues were the forefront of what arose in therapy. Her supervisor having training, knowledge and background in this area helped her to grapple with these issues as they arose. This directly translated into being able to better connect with and demonstrate empathy toward her clients. For example she discussed how at times her work would overlap with social work topics, where clients would expect her to come to their home, or be available to talk on the phone and discuss issues around legal or financial concerns. Her supervisor having flexibility in redefining the therapeutic role, as well as providing her with insight, interventions and support helped her work better with her clients. Through this reflection on multicultural issues, there was a felt sense that client outcomes would enhance due to "being aware these were concerns clients are facing…" (Melanie, 2).

Perceived indicators of change.

In discussing client outcomes, supervisees were able to reflect on indicators that helped them know supervision was having a positive impact on client outcomes. These included having fewer no-shows, better client retention over time, increased referral rates and client feedback. For example, East Coast Girl worked at a location where client drop outs was relatively high for many practitioners, as a function of the clients she works with. She reported noticing that as supervision progressed, her retention rate improved:

> My retention with my clients is higher, I have clients that keep coming back after first session and I think that speaks better to the quality of my work now. Where prior to supervision I would see clients only once and they wouldn't return (East Coast Girl, 3).

For other supervisees, less client drop-outs and no-shows were positive indicators of change. If clients returned after the first session this seemed to relate to supervisee's feeling that, "we really connected and they think I can help them" (Titan, 1). This was especially prevalent for those supervisees that worked at multicultural centers, or were working with groups of individuals who were more likely to not return to therapy often.

Increased referrals from previous clients were also positive signs that supervision was having a positive impact on client outcomes. East Coast Girl reported how she noticed few referrals prior to her supervision, but towards the end of her supervision hours of training numerous clients had been referred from happy past clients. This seemed to imply that clients left with positive results, and created a sense that, "they think not only can I help them but I can help others too..." (East Coast Girl, 3).

A final indicator that informed supervisees that supervision was having an impact on client outcomes was clients' stating in session that therapy was working. This was especially relevant when supervisees felt stuck in supervision, had asked their supervisor for direction, and then saw a change in their client or their client even stated that therapy was suddenly more effective. For example, Amanda provided a story where her expert supervisor taught her how to provide feedback to a client, if the belief was that the feedback may prompt change. With this client Amanda had been feeling stuck, as no progress had been made after numerous sessions. Through role plays with her supervisor she learned how to gently provide feedback about the nature of therapy, appropriateness, and client readiness to the client. She was then able to take what she learned in supervision and apply it to the client. Amanda recounted that:

> The client thanked me for it, which was a bit surprising when it happened but the feedback I have typically gotten since then, depending on the person right, but for most

> of them it's been good. This client said, "that's actually really helpful, I appreciate you giving me that feedback"…(Amanda, 3).

The outcome of the work with this client was described as improving after this feedback was given, as it helped prompt the client toward new insights and change. Amanda recounted numerous stories like this, with the main theme being that she learned a skill needed in supervision, and was then able to apply it to her client which often resulted in positive client changes. These changes were either improvement in symptoms, improvement in the therapeutic relationship, or increased client self-awareness. Amanda also described that it was often easier to assess if there was an impact on clients improving in therapy when the interventions were concrete, behavioural or cognitive interventions she could learn and then apply with the client. Katie also stated that direct impact on client outcomes were visible when she learned a specific skill or intervention to try with a client. For example she discussed how when working with someone who has OCD, it was beneficial in supervision to address specific tools she could give the client, as she had not had a lot of prior experience with this issue. Katie stated:

> This is a different clientele, it's a different centre and I'm dealing with different issues I haven't had a lot of experience with before…so supervision is helpful in teaching me these things (3).

Katie also recounted stories where she had learned specific modalities that helped her work with clients, and appeared to enhance client outcomes. Specifically she discussed how it was helpful to learn, "specific treatment modalities for trauma" (Katie, 3). For her, the main purpose of supervision in relation to enhancing client outcomes is that it, "develops enough skills to work with a lot of different client issues" (Katie, 3). For Summer Breeze it was actively learning new skills and interventions from her supervisor that she might, "otherwise not have

taken up or tried to learn" (2) that enhanced her work with clients. Therefore, when given concrete, novel, or insightful interventions for specific clients, supervisees perceived this as beneficial as it guided them in how best to support their clients.

Summary of Findings

Supervision is a process fraught with growth and challenges. Supervisees reflected on how the learning process was never linear, but that supervisors were an integral part of making supervision a positive experience. They identified specific attributes of supervisors, and actions in which they engaged in that made supervision effective. An important supervisor attribute included being a supportive ally, which identified a supervisor that was nice, personable and empathetic and someone that had their supervisors back. Other attributes that supervisees identified is that experts were viewed as supervisors who live by their values, are credible, knowledgeable and experienced, and open to learning and receiving feedback from their supervisee. Knowledge and experience were seen as imperative when they linked directly to the client population supervisees were working with, as well as when tied to supervisee orientation. If there was a difference in orientation, it was important that supervisors be flexible and open to both learning from the supervisee about their orientation, and were non-judgmental about differences in world views. Experts were often identified as having all these attributes and demonstrating them within the supervisory relationship.

Actions important to supervisees were that their supervisors take time to develop a positive SA, focus on creating a collaborative relationship and listen to supervisee learning needs. When ruptures occurred, as they appeared in nearly all supervisory dynamics, expert supervisors were described as being more aware of the rupture, and actively taking charge in addressing and repairing it compared to other supervisors. Another important action that

supervisors were perceived as engaging in was tailoring learning to supervise needs by balancing socratic and didactic teaching methods, titrating learning and being intentional about feedback. Expert supervisors were also described as engaging in two distinct behaviours which enhanced learning: using anecdotes to teach and using self-disclosure intentionally within the SA. Use of anecdotes helped supervisees relate to their supervisor, and provided an alternate way to teach that was seen as more welcoming to supervisees. Self-disclosure of personal life events in supervision had three important roles: it helped to normalize supervisee anxiety, provided a roadmap to how vulnerable supervisees could be in supervision and allowed them to explore therapeutic issues without supervision becoming therapy. Experts were identified as being best at balancing the boundary between supervision and therapy with their supervisees by always returning the learning to client issues, and allowing supervisees to process their responses at their own pace.

Supervisees also reflected on the impact of supervision. They indicated that positive supervision helped them grow in regard to personal and professional identity. It guided them in creating positive realizations about themselves, as well as helped them identify important topics such as where they may want to work, client issues they are interested in, and their strengths and continued areas of growth in the field of psychology. They also reported that supervision with an expert supervisor had a positive impact on client outcomes as their supervisors helped them enhance their intentionality, case conceptualization and sequencing skills. This led to better outcomes such as less dropout rates, improved retention rates, and client reports that change in interventions had had a positive impact on their work.

Chapter Five

Discussion

Supervisors of psychotherapy differ in their ability to provide supervision, yet it is not clear as to why. The aim of this study was to explore supervisees' experiences of being supervised by an expert supervisor to identify what qualities and characteristics these supervisors possess, as well as what they do that leads to a good supervision experience. Though researchers have focused on expert supervisors' perspectives of their own work, gaining an understanding of the person receiving that supervision is equally important. A supervisor may have the intention of providing feedback or challenging a supervisee, but how this translates into actual practice and is perceived by the supervisee as effective may differ.

Expert supervisors were identified through peer nomination and convenience sampling, where psychologists who had received supervision in the last five years were asked to identify a supervisor they described as highly effective. Supervisees receiving supervision from these expert supervisors participated in three semi-structured interviews during their supervision. For this study, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to identify commonalities and differences within supervisees' experiences of being supervised by an expert. By exploring the lived experience of supervision we may create a broader understanding of this phenomenon.

Supervisees identified characteristics of expert supervisors as well as distinct skills and interventions they used that were important in creating an effective supervision experience. Findings from this study highlight that supervision is an interpersonal process, where a supervisee's experience of being supervised is influenced by the supervisor's attributes and actions. Supervision was viewed as a positive process that impacted supervisee development and growth, especially when a positive relationship existed between supervisor and supervisee. In

this chapter, key findings will be discussed and how they relate to existing theory and research will be outlined. Implications, limitations and suggestions for future research will also be addressed.

Expert Supervisor Characteristics

Supervisees identified that expert supervisors have character traits that make them personable and relatable, making it easier for supervisees to form an interpersonal bond with them. Experts in this study were described as individuals who are nice, kind, empathetic and understanding. They were described as being interpersonally sensitive, genuine, authentic, and honest. These character traits align with previous studies on good and expert supervisors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), and to Riggs & Bretz (2006) findings that supervisees perception of a supervisors' ability to make positive-attachments impacts the quality of the alliance. This study highlights that supervisees perceive supervisors to have specific character traits that stand out to them as impactful and that influence the quality of the supervision experience.

Openness to learning and flexibility in incorporating others views and beliefs about the supervision process was, to supervisees, key qualities that expert supervisors possessed. When experts were faced with differing opinions on therapeutic orientations, intervention choices, or more global views such as differences in religious beliefs they were seen as being genuinely interested in these differences. Nelson and colleagues (2008) found that wise supervisors described themselves as excited to learn from their supervisees, and master therapists are characterized by pragmatism and flexibility (Kottler & Carlson, 2014). Findings from this study corroborate the importance of supervisor genuineness to learning, and add that supervisees actively notice when supervisors are open.

Experts were also perceived as being both self-reflective, and turning this reflection into behavioural actions. Expert supervisors 'practiced what they preached'. Beyond providing support, suggestions and advice, expert supervisors were active in implementing the tools they gave to supervisees either with their own clients, or in their own personal lives. This study further supports the literature that engaging in self-assessment and reflection are important aspects of being an expert (Kemer et al., 2014; Kottler & Carlson, 2014). In the current study supervisees reported that seeing expert supervisors engage in self-reflection and utilize their own suggestions of self-care helped enhance the quality of the SA, and helped supervisees self-disclose. Supervisees reported that other supervisors in the study may have engaged in self-reflection, but there were no behavioural actions viewable by the supervisee that indicated they were 'practicing what they preach'. Similar to Nelson and colleagues (2008) findings, this created a sense of frustration and led to conflict and small SA ruptures.

A final quality that stood out to supervisees was that expert supervisors were viewed as "credible", which was a term that differed from experience alone. Credibility included the expert having experience as a psychotherapist, as well as having resources and knowledge to share with the supervisee. Experience was defined as having worked with similar clinical populations, and having similar or broad training in therapeutic orientations. Though all supervisors were identified as having knowledge and experience in this study, experts were described as having experience across presenting issues, client populations, and work settings. Strong (1968) outlined that when an individual is viewed as credible it allows a subordinate to give interpersonal power to the credible individual as they are perceived as having resources, knowledge or information to meet the persons need. In the current study, all supervisees reported the expectation that their supervisor have more knowledge than them, and be able to disseminate this knowledge in

meaningful ways. If this expectation was met throughout their supervision, supervisees reported that it helped enhance trust in their supervisor and positively impacted the bond.

In the current study, credibility goes beyond experience, as how a supervisor disseminates knowledge impacted supervisees experiences of supervision. Supervisees noted that receiving resources, such as handouts or books, was important even if they did not actively spend time reviewing the information. They indicated that the fact that their supervisor could share this information enhanced their belief that their supervisor was credible. With other supervisors, the quality of supervision was lowered when supervisees perceived their supervisor struggled to disseminate their experience into usable resources or interventions. This often led to a lack of self-disclosure by the supervisee regarding difficult clinical cases. Though their supervisor may be experienced and knowledgeable, the fact that this doesn't translate into resources the supervisee can use hindered supervisee perceived effectiveness of supervision. As a part of supervision is to enhance supervisee knowledge (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), it seems common sense that supervisors would need to be experienced, however, this study highlights that how "experience" is measured may not be clearly defined. These findings suggest that experience alone may not be sufficient for expertise, and an important consideration within expertise is how information is disseminated and how it relates to supervisees placement or client population.

What Expert Supervisors Do

Supervisees identified specific actions their supervisors do that they perceive enhance the supervision experience. Expert supervisors were described as focusing on developing the supervisory alliance and using their own clinical experiences, as well as personal experiences, to enhance the relationship. They were also described as being responsive teachers who

incorporated different teaching methods to fit supervisees' developmental needs, as well as providing constructive feedback in an effective way.

Focus on the importance of the supervisory alliance.

Supervisees identified that expert supervisors actively spent time developing and maintaining a positive supervisory alliance, which was viewed as crucial to effective supervision practices. This mirrors the last half century of research, where the SA has been identified as a critical component of successful supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Expert supervisors were perceived as being intentional in their development of a strong SA as they focused on developing mutual goals, identifying supervisee learning needs, and found ways to relate to their supervisees. These findings are similar to Kremer and colleagues study (2017) where expert supervisors indicated actively spending time developing, conceptualizing and reflecting on the SA. Supervisees indicated that expert supervisors acknowledged that the supervisory relationship is a mutual process built on respect, authenticity, genuineness and risk taking. In contrast, other supervisors were not seen as discussing the relationship as openly as experts, nor did they reflect upon their roles within the relationship as often as experts.

Supervisees in this study highlighted the importance of considering all aspects of the bond within supervision. Bordin's (1983) pan-theoretical vision of the SA is often considered to have three distinct components: (1) the bond between supervisor and supervisee, (2) collectively established goals between supervisor and supervisee and (3) agreed upon tasks, which include how supervision may be observed such as audio-recordings, reports, or presentations of cases. According to supervisees, expert supervisors focused on the bond by identifying their roles and responsibilities within the relationship, checking in on the quality of the relationship throughout the supervision experience, and were actively aware of their own response to the relationship.

Supervisees reported that they perceived expert supervisors as being open to acknowledging their biases and limitations, which supervisees' felt improved the SA. Other supervisors in this study were described as either having limited or no discussions around biases and limitations, which supervisees' felt lowered their ability to connect to the supervisor. Within the literature, self-reflection is often described as an important aspect of moving from therapist to supervisor and a basic competency within supervision (Fouad et al., 2009). According to Goodyear, Lichtenberg, Bang and Both Gragg, (2014) one aspect of self-reflection is the ability to take on a hypothesis testing stance to problems versus a confirmatory response, and be open to changing impressions. Though this study only explored supervisee perceptions of supervision, expert supervisors were described by supervisees as using open ended questions when addressing potential ruptures within the relationship and being tentative in their conclusions when discussing issues related to the SA. It may be that expert supervisors are actively taking on a hypothesis testing stance when working through issues that arise in supervision.

Expert supervisors were described as taking time within the initial session to formulate a concrete understanding of supervisees' goals throughout supervision. They also checked in on these goals periodically throughout the supervision process, and reflected on supervisee growth within these goals toward the end of supervision. In contrast, other supervisors did not spend as often assuring supervisee goals were being addressed, or checking on their progress throughout therapy. Creating an understanding of shared supervision goals has been identified as a critical part of supervision, as it guides the supervisory experience (Watkins, 2014). Within this study it is clearly an important factor to supervisees that supervisors consider, discuss, and evaluate supervisee goals and their progress with them.

Discussing goals often necessitates a discussion on tasks (how these goals will be observed). Interestingly, nearly all supervisors were perceived as not actively addressing the aspect of tasks within the SA beyond the first session. Though supervisees identified wanting to discuss tasks more often within supervision, the lack of discussion did not negatively impact the SA in the long-term if a positive bond had been created and goals had been discussed. Supervisees from this study reported having a pre-conceived expectation of what approaches to observing their goals could be provided (e.g. observations, groups), which may have decreased the need to have an active discussion related to tasks.

Develop a 'real relationship'.

Supervisees identified that there was a qualitatively different relationship built with experts than there was with other supervisors. Supervisees reflected on how a positive bond comprised of openness, honesty, and respect, but that they felt expert supervisors also valued developing a 'real relationship' as well as a professional one with their supervisee. Indicators that experts valued a personal relationship were that they started a session by inquiring on how the supervisee was managing, were open to discussing personal events supervisees disclosed within supervision, and were genuine in sharing their emotional responses in session. Expert supervisors also took time to move the session outside of a therapy room, often taking time to get coffee with the supervisee, walking outside, or having sessions in a supervisor's home which demonstrated a more personal connection than professional one. In this sense, expert supervisors focused on developing both a bond (professional) and real relationship (personal, attachment based) relationship. These findings support Watkins (2017) differentiation between the supervisory alliance, built on bond, task and goals, and the real relationship which is a complement to the bond and refers to the personal non-work relationship that develops between

supervisor and supervisee. Watkins (2017) identifies the real relationship focuses on, "professional belonging, attachment and social connection" (p.203), which are components described by supervisees in the current study as important factors expert supervisors should focus on building to enhance the SA.

Use self-disclosure effectively.

Supervisees also perceived supervisors personal disclosures as another indicator that they valued developing a personal relationship. Other supervisors in this study were described as rarely disclosing about their personal lives or reciprocating details about their lives when supervisees shared their own stories. For some supervisees this decreased their readiness to disclose and lowered the perceived strength of the bond while for others it did not impact the effectiveness of supervision but did create a sense that it was more professional than personal. In the literature self disclosure in supervision has been identified as a useful interpersonal tool to help enhance the SA (Kozlowski, Pruitt, DeWalt & Knox, 2014; Knox, Burkard, Edwards, Jacquelyn, Smith & Schlosser, 2008) and enhance connection (Watkins, 2017).

Though self-disclosure can create a comfortable and safe environment that enhances supervisee disclosure (Yourman, 2003), it can also create boundary violations if the supervisor discloses too much (Kozlowski et al., 2014), or the supervisor withholds disclosures (Ladany, Mori & Mehr, 2013). Supervisees in this study were able to help distinguish what forms of self-disclosure may be useful to use within supervision to enhance the alliance. Experts were described as disclosing information about their demographic variables, world-views, personal beliefs, or personal experiences of supervision in the first few sessions when it was relevant to build a positive bond or act as a teaching moment for supervisees. In these cases experts were described as being active in self-disclosing past clinical issues they struggled with or other

concerns related to the registration process, which helped to normalize supervisees' own challenges. Expert supervisors shared how they may have coped or what they had found useful when in similar challenging situations, without imposing this as a rule for the supervisee to follow. These forms of disclosure appear to mirror Knox and Hill's (2003) there-and-then disclosure type, where a clinician reflects on their life or skills they have to help enhance therapy. In these cases, disclosures are used due to their relevance in enhancing connection, teaching, or improving the bond.

Another form of self-disclosure identified by supervisees was when expert supervisors discussed their personal reactions to incidences in the supervision room. Experts were described as identifying their emotional responses, challenges, or beliefs as they arose within the supervision dynamic and exploring these with the supervisee. Other supervisors were identified as never engaging in this form of self-disclosure. Supervisees indicated that this form of self-disclosure showed the supervisor was being self-reflective, and was open to discussing relational issues as they arose. This type of disclosure appears to also mirror Knox and Hill's (2003) here-and-now disclosure, which relate to events occurring in the therapy room as they happen and are shared to help enhance therapeutic outcomes. In this study when experts were perceived as using there-and-then disclosures it helped to humanize the supervisor, and when here-and-now disclosures were used supervisee's stated it helped improve the interpersonal connection between supervisor and supervisee.

One important distinction that caused ruptures in some relationships was when supervisors used here-and-now disclosures to express their feelings about non-supervisee related concerns, such as their stress about their own personal time lines. This often created a space where supervisees felt they had to be more tentative about putting demands on their supervisee,

therefore limiting potential learning opportunities. Though this study demonstrates the importance of self-disclosure as an interpersonal tool to enhance the alliance, caution is recommended that self-disclosure always be in service of learning and development. One may err on the side of not engaging in self-disclosure as to avoid ruptures, however, when self-disclosure was not present, as was the case with some other supervisors in this study, these supervisors were perceived as less interpersonally skilled and difficult to connect to. This led to supervisees being hesitant to self-disclose about themselves in supervision, as well as about difficult client issues, a similar finding found in other literature (Kozlowski, Pruitt, Dewalt & Knox, 2014). An interesting finding from this study was that supervisees determined how much they could self-disclose based on the level of self-disclosure their supervisor initiated. Future studies could benefit from further addressing how supervisor self-disclosure mediates supervisee disclosures, and how this may impact consulting on difficult cases.

Address ruptures.

Finally, it is important to address ruptures, as all relationships experience breakdowns or conflict (Safran, Muran & Eubanks-Carter, 2011) over time. If a supervisory relationship experiences a rupture, and it is not repaired, this could create lasting problems for the supervisee and their work with clients (Arkowitz, 2001). In the present study supervisees described two different forms of ruptures, those that occurred due to miscommunication or those that occurred due to a difference in therapeutic style. In both cases experts were identified as being able to address and repair these ruptures. Supervisees felt that experts were the first to identify if a rupture had occurred and were up front and open about their own responses to the rupture. When having a conversation about the rupture that occurred experts were described as being calm, genuine and requesting supervisee feedback on the discussion. In the present study, experts were

perceived as better than their counterparts at actively resolving ruptures, which may indicate that experts have a certain level of self-awareness and self-reflective practice (Kremer et al., 2017) that enhances supervision dynamics.

When addressing ruptures and supervisee anxiety, experts were identified as explicitly not taking on a counselling role, but not being rigid within their empathetic response as well. Within supervision, role conflict may occur where a supervisor may feel the need to play a more therapeutic role, and having a strict boundary on this can be detrimental toward the SA (Frawley-O'Dea & Sarnat, 2001). Expert supervisors were reported as always framing advice, suggestions or interventions back to the clients presenting issue. This mirrors suggestions given in the literature, where it is suggested supervisors frame their interventions in service of the client issues, as it is difficult for supervisees to leave supervision if a rupture occurs due to this (Page & Woskett, 2001). In the current study, when experts modeled an intervention in relation to supervisee concerns, it was done so in a respectful, consensual manner and focused on the learning the supervisee could gain from the intervention itself. Experts were identified as providing space to the supervisee to reflect on their emotional response, but always checked in at a later date to assure a rupture had not occurred. If and when advice was given, it was always framed tentatively and as a suggestion, to respect the supervisee autonomy in making their own choices in regard to their mental health. A key finding from this study is the importance supervisees place on the supervisor being the one to identify and question if a rupture had occurred, as it was an indication that the relationship was important to the supervisor, and helped ease supervisee anxiety. The supervisor actively addressing ruptures helped lower the power differential and gave space for supervisees to voice their concerns.

Manage and discuss evaluation.

The SA is also influenced by processes that involve both supervisor and supervisee, such as the supervisors' evaluative practices (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Evaluation is an inherent part of supervision, as supervisors act as gatekeepers to the profession (Falender & Shafranske, 2017). For this reason, it is suggested that supervisors be clear about the evaluative process, outline expectations, and discuss how feedback will be given (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). No supervisor within this study provided a formal written contract that addressed these concerns, though some verbal contracts did occur. This is a curious finding, as supervisory contracts are considered to be a basic competency within supervision training models (Falender et al., 2014). Why physical contracts were not used was not identified in this study, though it should be noted that supervisees indicated wanting both a physical document, and more formal discussions about the evaluative process. Supervisees reported that a physical contract would help reduce nervousness, as supervisees felt overwhelmed within the first few weeks when evaluation was briefly discussed. This often meant that they either forgot this discussion, or were not actively processing what was discussed until evaluations occurred.

In this study, experts were identified as discussing the evaluative process within the first few sessions by outlining how it would occur, what to expect, and that it was a mutual process versus a hierarchical one. Experts were also identified as trying to ease their supervisee anxiety by normalizing the mid-term evaluation process and identifying it as a mutual conversation. Supervisees indicated however that no supervisor fully discussed what supervisees were being evaluated on, which often created frustration and was one way they felt that the power hierarchy was maintained. Overall the lack of discussion on evaluation and lack of a physical contract was identified by supervisees as more of a frustration than a large negative impact on the quality of

the alliance, if the alliance was strong. They predominately noted wanting these to occur more frequently to help ease their own experiences of anxiety throughout supervision. Though it is suggested as a competency and basic practice to engage in, further research may benefit from identifying how a physical contract actually influences the SA.

Teach effectively.

Findings from this study highlight the importance of developing a strong SA, especially in relation to developing a bond built on trust, empathy, mutual consideration and respect. Supervisees also reflected that expert supervisors, though personable and able to create a positive SA, were also good teachers. Similar to research findings, they indicated that a positive SA itself does not appear to be sufficient in creating an overall good supervision experience, and that a significant part of supervision is its "formative" (Proctor, 1986) or, "educational" (Kadushin, 1976) focus. Supervisees indicated that expert supervisors were able to provide learning within the supervisees developmental needs by considering supervisee experience and were able to balance their teaching style and provide effective supportive feedback.

Developmental needs. Within this study, all supervisees reported different levels of anxiety or confidence when entering into the supervision process based on their level of experience. Supervisees past experiences of supervision also created a set of expectations of how their current supervision process would unfold. Though the timing of when this occurred differed for each supervisee, all supervisees identified shifting from a place of anxiety to confidence, and once confident wanting to focus on gaining clinical competence. Results from this study mirror the stages in different developmental models (Haynes et al., 2003), where supervisees move from a place of wanting to gain confidence and develop the relationship, to wanting to learn active interventions and move towards a sense of competence as a future psychologist.

Experts in this study were perceived as actively addressing all the aforementioned supervisee experiences. They openly discussed supervisee nervousness, and inquired about supervisees past supervision experiences, focusing on what supervisees felt worked well for them and what did not. Watkins (2017) identifies that belief and expectation alignment between supervisee and supervisor is integral to creating a positive SA. Part of exploring expectations includes addressing and considering supervisee anxiety and preparedness toward supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), which expert supervisors are identified as doing in this study. Supervisees indicated that experts were aware of, and discussed, supervisee anxiety in the beginning of supervision, and also paid attention to when supervisees were moving to a place of wanting more feedback on skills versus administrative tasks.

A final consideration that supervisees identified was important in considering developmental needs was addressing the fact that not all pre-licensed psychologists are novices, which is the entry point for many developmental models of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Experienced supervisees reported that it was important that their supervisor not treat them like a novice and recognize they may have years of practice experience already. Expert supervisors spent time understanding their supervisees past experience and how that might influence the level of feedback they would require, which positively impacted the quality of the SA. Results from this study imply that a supervisor should consider supervisee experience and how that might influence their learning needs within the supervision process, as assuming all pre-licensed psychologists are novices with little experience may create a rupture early on in the relationship.

Balanced teaching style. Supervisees identified that expert supervisors were not only able to create a positive alliance, but were also good teachers. Being a good teacher consisted of

being able to balance using Socratic and didactic teaching methods, using anecdotes as a way to engage supervisee learning and providing effective supportive feedback. Supervisees felt that Socratic methods, such as open ended questions and reflective statements, were used to help enhance supervisee self-learning and engage them in higher order thinking. Expert supervisors were identified as using didactic teaching only when either asked by a supervisee, or when ethical concerns or gate keeping issues arose, whereas other supervisors were perceived as prioritizing didactic methods more often. Supervisees reported that when didactic methods were prioritized they felt there was less room for experiential learning and the ability to make mistakes and learn from them. Although using Socratic questioning as a teaching method to promote a learner's clinical self-efficacy has been suggested in the literature (Curtis, Elkins, Duran & Venta, 2016), this study is one of the first to identify that supervisees feel this is a component of expertise and that they as learners directly benefit from it.

Titrating learning to supervisees' individual learning needs was another important component of being an effective teacher. Supervisees described that experts were able to gently push them to learn new things, and if the supervisee was unprepared, nervous or anxious, that the supervisor was able to provide gentle steps to encourage development. Expert supervisors were described as effectively disclosing clinical anecdotes from their own experience as a way to help supervisees learn and move through gaps in their knowledge. This was evident not only through supervisee reported experience, but through comparison of how experts worked with different supervisees and their unique learning needs across the year. For example, interventions and anecdotes shared by an expert supervisor who had multiple supervisees were often similar, but how they were brought up and when they were shared differed based on where the supervisee was in their learning. This enhances Kember and colleagues (2014; 2017) results that expert

supervisors self-identify as spending time thinking about how to "push" the supervisee, and "model" improvements to supervisees pace of learning, by highlighting that supervisees also notice and experience this within supervision.

Supervisees described experiences of how experts teach effectively supports the idea identified in previous studies that supervisors may want to consider and have knowledge about zones of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1967).The ZPD is the gap between what a learner can and cannot do with help and is the movement from what is known, to what is not known and novel with the aid of an experienced learner. To shift from a skill a student knows, to one not known, small incremental steps are often used to acquire the new skill (Harland, 2003). Through this process, called scaffolding (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976), the level of aid given shifts and tapers off when the skill is learned. Often it is through open ended questions, modeling and other teaching mechanisms that support is given (Crain, 2010). The importance of considering the ZPD in supervision has been identified in other studies: James, Allen and Collerton (2004) found that supervisors were able to manage the ZPD when assessing how emotions were handled in supervision, as have Johnston and Milne (2012) when assessing how supervisees received cognitive behavioural training.

In the current study, when the ZPD was not considered, as was the case when working with other supervisors, supervisees often reported frustration that their supervisor did not recognize that a skill had been learned, and did not provide validation to that learning. In contrast, expert supervisors were identified as validating learned skills, and helped supervisees to engage in reflective practice with learned skills to help solidify the learning. These findings mirror Kemer and colleagues (2017) findings that expert supervisors are able to role model the importance of reflective-practice with their supervisees. This study adds to these results by

identifying that this role modeling occurs through the use of Socratic dialogue by having supervisees reflect on how to use a previously learned skill in a new context, asking supervisees for advice on their own clients, and incorporating learning into other contexts. Interestingly, when working with other supervisors, supervisees reported feeling that supervision had become automatic or stagnant when their ZPD's were not being challenged. This indicates that experts may be consistently providing new and novel learning throughout the supervision process. Further research would benefit from assessing expert supervisors understanding of the ZPD to identify if this is a model considered by them in their work, as well as to identify their process of identifying supervisee scaffolding needs along with choice of interventions to meet these needs.

Giving and receiving feedback. Supervisees indicated that receiving feedback was an important part of the supervision process, which aligns with the fact that it is an essential component of counselors-in-training experiences (Borders et al., 2011). Supervisees identified that the quality of feedback differed between expert and other supervisors, and that good feedback occurred regularly and was provided in a non-judgmental manner. Expert supervisors were also able to provide feedback on supervisee personal characteristics as well as their work with clients, whereas the literature often identifies this as a challenge for supervisors (Hoffman, Hill, Holmes & Freitas, 2005). Supervisees reported that feedback helped them challenge their previous conceptualizations, enhance their work with clients and learn new skills. Several studies have demonstrated that supervisees place importance on receiving feedback, and that when reflecting on past supervision experiences the form and quantity of feedback stands out (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

What stood out most to supervisees when discussing feedback was expert supervisors adapted feedback to supervisee needs by changing their feedback to match specific supervisees'

personalities or level of anxiety. For example, expert supervisors tailored their level of feedback based on individual supervisee requests, whereas other supervisors were described as struggling to be flexible in their feedback style. This is similar to Kemer and colleagues (2017) study, where they found that expert supervisors actively reflected upon and changed their supervision feedback, depending on if they found a supervisee easy or challenging.

Supervisees often discussed feedback as 'constructive criticism', and stated that expert supervisors framed feedback in a sandwich style. This format was described as providing a supervisee with a validating statement of their skills, giving constructive criticism in a gentle manner, and then reinforcing their ability to learn through more validation. Expert supervisors also asked supervisees to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses. Supervisees indicated that feedback given in this form allowed them to be more receptive to critiques, and allowed them to feel challenged without feeling they were being criticized. The use of constructive criticism is emerging as an important part of learning (Heckman-Stone, 2004; Abbott & Lyter, 1999), and this study further validates the importance of it in supervision. Interestingly the sandwich form of feedback is often criticized as it includes a 'but' juncture in the feedback that may negate previous positive reflections of supervisee skills (James, 2015), yet it's identified in this study by supervisees as being an effective method to provide feedback. Further research in this area is warranted to understand how expert supervisors provide sandwich feedback in a way that is well received by supervisees.

In this study supervisees reported that supervisors being open to feedback on their feedback style helped enhance the supervision experience. Other supervisors were identified as listening to feedback but not always changing their practice in subsequent sessions, whereas expert supervisors made an active effort to change their supervision to meet the supervisees

learning needs. When feedback was not heard, as was the case with some other supervisors in this study, supervisees reported feeling frustrated and often distanced themselves from trying to provide feedback a second or third time. This adds to Kemer and colleagues (2017) findings that expert supervisors self endorse actively listening to their supervisee, being self-reflective about feedback given and being aware of how to use feedback in supervision. However, one area that supervisees reported all supervisors struggled to be flexible with was providing more feedback on the evaluative function of supervision. Supervisees wanted to know more about what they were being evaluated on, how this evaluation was occurring and when. This is an interesting finding as discussing and maintaining documentation on summative evaluations is considered a best practice guideline (Borders et al., 2014), yet supervisors are identified as not having detailed conversations with their supervisees about this. Identifying supervisors' conceptualizations of this was beyond the scope of this study, but it may be that many of these guidelines are new and have yet to still be incorporated into supervisors work.

The Impact of Supervision

The current study provides information on how supervisees felt effective supervision impacts their work with clients and their own development. Supervisees reported, especially when working with an expert supervisor, that they had less client dropout rates, increased referrals, and clients self-reporting more improvements in therapy. These results add to Rast, Herman, Rousmaniere, Whipple and Swift's (2017) findings that supervisees report supervision reducing client dropout rates and increased efficiency of treatment. As a primary purpose of supervision is to ensure client welfare (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), it is important to improve understanding of how supervision influences outcomes. Results are mixed in regard the impact supervision has on client outcomes (Rast et al., 2017; Watkins, 2011; Bernard & Goodyear,

2014), where some studies claim a positive impact (Bambling, King, Raue, Schweitzer & Lambert, 2006; Callahan, Almstrom, Swift, Borja & Health, 2009, Reese et al., 2009) and others claim null results (White & Winstanley, 2010). The current study indicates that supervisees do have positive expectations of supervision impacting client outcomes (Rast et al., 2017) and that dropout rates, referral rates and client satisfaction may be important mechanisms to study further.

Supervisees reported that when working with experts they felt their outcomes improved as they learned how to be intentional and reflective of their work with clients. This included learning how to: demonstrate and use empathy effectively with clients, treatment plan effectively, and include multicultural issues in a sensitive way within therapy. Supervisees reflected that education may be limited in teaching these skills, and expert supervisors were more intentional than other supervisors in modeling, discussing, and teaching these components in supervision with live examples and case studies. The literature supports that this gap may exist. For example, supervisors are generally more aware of multicultural issues, such as multiple identities, and current training programs may not address all multicultural concerns (Ratts, Singh, Nassar McMillan, Butler & McCullough, 2016). Further research is necessary to identify if these perceived mechanisms of change are identified by other supervisees and supervisors, and to explore if they have an impact on actual client outcome.

Beyond impacting client outcomes, supervision also influences supervisees. This study lends further evidence to the importance of supervision on impacting supervisee sense of self and their growth as a future psychologist. Supervisees reported that supervision given by expert supervisors helped them shift from a place of anxiety to confidence. They also indicated incorporating more self-care into their practice, and engaging in reflective thinking about their identity as a psychologist. Though all supervisees reported supervision as a positive training

experience that was impactful in their development as a future psychologist, regardless of supervisor type they were working with, those with expert supervisors reported a greater sense of confidence. They indicated being ready to engage in independent work if needed, as this was often a discussion had with expert supervisors. Research on the impact of supervision on supervisee development indicates that it positively impacts their self-awareness, therapeutic skills, self-efficacy, and growth (Watkins, 2011; Wheeler & Richards, 2007), which is corroborated by results from this study. These studies illustrate that if a positive SA exists, supervision can have a positive impact on supervisee development (Shaffer & Friedlander, 2017).

Implications for Future Research

This phenomenological study aimed to answer the research question, "What are supervisees' experiences of being supervised by a nominated expert supervisor?" and "What qualities, characteristics and actions do they identify as important aspects that lead to effective supervision experiences?" The results from this study contribute to the research literature on expert supervisors by addressing supervisee experiences, as the literature has to date has only focused on expert supervisors' cognitions or reflections of their work. This study provides insights into what characteristics supervisees identify as important in an expert supervisor, and what specific actions they believe an expert does that translate into the supervision experience. Although the purpose of qualitative research is not to make generalizations, findings from this study provide a unique lens to the literature on expert supervision and shed light on experiences that may have been missed through the use of quantitative methods alone. Findings from this study have implications for supervisors and researchers interested in better understanding what leads to effective supervision experiences.

Looking to expert supervisors may be a way to bridge the gap between conceptually creating competencies and best-practices models, and actively addressing what is occurring within supervision that is beneficial. Falender and colleagues (2014) outline specific attitudes, skills, and knowledge needed to assure effective supervision practices. Expert supervisors in this study appear to follow these guidelines: they are perceived as valuing supervision, are focused on creating a collaborative relationship focused on mutual goals, and attend to personal factors that can impact the alliance. Expert supervisors were also described as being aware of their own bias, were self-reflective, and flexible to other world views. Most importantly, expert supervisors focused on developing the alliance and incorporating supervisee feedback to enhance the supervision experience.

A best practice, clearly defined within the literature, is the focus on the SA (Borders, 2014). This study highlights the importance of the relational aspect of supervision and identifies that supervisors must balance a series of roles such as being a supportive supervisor, being a teacher, and a gatekeeper (Johnson, 2007) while also trying to create a real relationship with a supervisee (Watkins, 2017). Key aspects of the relationship included experts being open to self-disclose, not providing therapy, being genuine and being open to creating a personal and professional relationship. Expert supervisors in this study are perceived as being able to formulate a positive alliance, balance support and critique to challenge their supervisee to learn, while also being aware of the power differential inherent in supervision.

Further exploring expert supervisors' conceptualizations of their work, along with how they resolve ruptures, balance the power differential and think about their role as a teacher may help enhance training of supervisors in the future. For example, in their review, Falender and Shafranske (2017) state there is a need to assess both supervisor adherence and use of

competencies and best practices, and to address how these impact the supervision experience. In this study, expert supervisors were not perceived as using certain competencies, such as providing a paper contract or addressing evaluation in a formal and continuous manner. The lack of adherence to these suggested competencies created small ruptures within the relationship, and although they did not have a long-standing negative impact on the supervisory process, they were still clearly viewed as important to supervisees. How this connects to the larger scope of supervision has yet to be identified and requires further study.

This study also served to demonstrate that supervision has an impact on supervisee growth and development, and how they feel it might impact client outcomes. Supervision is clearly an important process in developing supervisee confidence and ability to work independently (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), but can be harmful when not done effectively. Supervisors differ in their ability to provide effective supervision (Ellis, 2011) as was highlighted in this study and focusing solely on supervisor perspectives might miss information that is central to a supervisee's process of change. Moreover, supervisees' perspectives may provide insight on mechanisms of change that influence client outcomes. Research to date has struggled to create a consensus on how supervision influences client outcomes as it has focused primarily on quantitative measures of client satisfaction or outcomes (Rats et al., 2017) however, this study identifies possible alternate mechanisms to consider such as client dropout rates, referral rates, and a supervisees ability to demonstrate empathy effectively. Future research may benefit from exploring these aspects within the supervision process to identify if they impact client outcomes.

Implications for Future Training Programs

Formal education and training in supervision is variable within Canada (Hadjistavropoulos, Kelher, & Hadjistavropoulos, 2010), and most supervisors have little

training beyond their own previous supervision experiences. Knowing how to provide effective supervision can be difficult, as the field of psychotherapy supervision is fraught with numerous models, approaches and views of what's important in supervision (Vec, Vec & Zorga, 2014). Though qualitative studies do not aim to provide generalized findings, findings from this study highlight what supervisees felt was important within supervision which may be important to consider using as information to inform training programs. Supervisors in training may want to prioritize learning how to foster a positive SA, not only a good bond but incorporating ways to foster a real relationship, while also teaching supervisors how to assure they do not provide therapy to their supervisees. Training may also benefit from teaching supervisors how to use both Socratic and didactic teaching methods effectively within supervision, how to be flexible in receiving supervisee feedback, and actively incorporating it into supervision, as well as how to use anecdotes as a way to enhance supervisee learning. Though this study reflects on actions experts engaged in that were experienced by supervisees, future studies would benefit in identifying how supervisors engage in these actions and what meta-cognitive processes are involved.

The current study also served to demonstrate that there are inconsistencies among expert and other supervisors in formulating the alliance and incorporating feedback into their practice. Expert supervisors in this study are described as having the aforementioned characteristics which set them apart from other supervisors and lend themselves to enhancing the supervision experience. Further understanding how an individual develops these traits and how experts demonstrate them in therapy may help to enhance training programs to produce more expert supervisors.

Limitations

Chapter 3 outlines several methodological limitations and how they were addressed in this study, such as reflexivity, transparency, sensitivity and issues of rigour. Beyond these, further issues to address within qualitative work include identification of experts, issues of sample size, transferability, and methods. Experts were chosen by using a peer nomination sample, which has been criticized for identifying individuals solely based on popularity versus actual expertise (Caspar, 2017). Despite this concern, there is no consensus on how to effectively identify an expert, and peer nomination processes have been demonstrated to have good psychometric properties in accurately identifying interpersonal characteristics of an individual (Skovholt & Jennings, 2004). Further, key informants chosen were those who had actively received supervision from the nominated experts in the past, and participants at the completion of this study validated that they too would nominate their expert as such based on the study criteria.

This study focuses on the specific, idiographic experiences of a small subset of individuals, as IPA's mandate is to have a homogenous sample to gain in-depth data (Smith et al., 2009). For this reason, the results of this study may not transfer to other populations and represent only one selected view of this population. Is it therefore up to the reader to decide the extent to which the findings in this study are transferrable to other contexts. In addition, this study can only speak to the experience of supervisees, as studying expert supervisors' experiences of providing supervision is beyond the scope of this paper. A benefit of a small in-depth analysis is that IPA goes beyond general thematic analysis, and is able to anchor findings in participant's experiences and make inferences from these (Smith et al., 2009). As the sample is homogenous, the lived experience only defines a unique population's experience (Pringle,

Drummond, McLafferty & Hendry, 2011) however; this is the practical intent of IPA and this study, to focus specifically on supervisees' experiences.

IPA has been criticized for offering a set of prescribed stages to follow, which goes against phenomenological research (Pringle et al., 2011), however, Smith and colleagues, (2009) argue that these stages are flexible within the given research topic. Though more user friendly, IPA is not a strict step-by-step process and does allow for creativity, such as including wordclouds or alternative ways of compiling and organizing data, which were used in this study. Another argument against IPA research is the notion of bracketing (Smith et al., 2009). Though IPA does not follow Husserl's notion of bracketing, and acknowledges that the researcher will have biases and assumptions, it is still stressed that the researcher should reduce analyzing their data from a particular theory (Brocki & Wearden, 2007). A critique is that this process is often not made evident in IPA research (Brocki & Wearden, 2007), but hopefully is addressed through the steps I discussed above for maintaining quality and further elaborated upon by making my assumptions and biases clear. Despite these limitations, IPA appears to have been an appropriate fit for this research, given IPA's ability to focus in on the lived experience of each individual and then contextualize the overall experience to the literature (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is often used in psychology research, and provides an appropriate way to analyze personal experiences of supervision.

Finally, caution needs to be applied in understanding the findings as they are a retrospective account of supervisees' experiences. Many qualitative studies look at one point in time whereas this study was longitudinal in nature, providing more depth to address retrospective concern. Interviews occurred at the outset, middle and end of supervision, which allows the study to have a well rounded view of the supervision experience. By incorporating interviews at

the outset of supervision, expectations and anticipatory beliefs about supervision were addressed and how they changed over time was included within this study.

Conclusion and Researcher Reflection

The goal of the current study was to gain insights on what expert supervisors do that lead to effective supervision practices by asking supervisees about their lived experience of being supervised by an expert. By interviewing seven participants over the span of their pre-licensure supervision experience I was able to identify themes that reflected expert supervisor characteristics, traits and actions that impacted supervision. Each participant provided a unique lens into the experience of supervision, and I was touched to be a part of their journey as they shared with me their struggles, successes and insights into supervision. These supervisees identified that expert supervisors demonstrated specific characteristics, traits and actions that stood out to their counterparts. What stands out is how expert supervisors not only create a supervisory alliance, but that they focus on the creation of a real relationship containing personal self-disclosure, and are effective teachers that meet their supervisees learning needs in reflective and practical ways. Similar to other studies, this study supports the importance of better understanding supervision as a process and what role the supervisor plays within the dyadic experience. Given that supervision is a mandatory process in registering as a psychologist, and that supervision can still be inadequate and harmful, it is hoped that this study will generate further interest in studying expert supervisors and ways to improve supervision as a whole. By continuing to research expert supervisors we will gain important information on ways to deepen the supervision experience and improve its effectiveness for supervisees and hopefully how it may impact future client outcomes.

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Appendix A

Survey Monkey

Page 1 of Survey Monkey:

My name is Terilyn Pott and I am a doctoral student at the University of Alberta and am contacting you in regards to my thesis. I would very much appreciate your help for my study. I intend to examine, in a longitudinal study, the experiences of provisionally registered psychologists engaging in supervision with identified expert supervisors. I aspire to find out how supervision develops over the span of a year and see what themes emerge in relation to student development and client outcome due to engaging in supervision. This study has been approved by the University of Alberta ethics committee.

In order to gather numerous nominations your help is needed to. Please feel free to forward this e-mail to other currently registered psychologists, or individuals close to registration (completed 1600 hours) so they can help provide further nominations. Another option would be to ask your contacts if you can share their information with me so I can contact them.

You should know that while we will keep the information you give us confidential - in the United States under US privacy laws, the government has the right to access all information held in electronic databases. For this reason the study is only asking for names of the supervisor and yourself, both information which is often easy accessible via the internet.

Thank you for your help and support in providing nominations for my study. If you are interested in finding out more about this study, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at pott@ualberta.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Derek Truscott at truscott@ualberta.ca.

Sincerely,

Terilyn Pott, R. Psych, MSc.

Please go to page 2 for the study questions.

Page 2 Survey Monkey:

Please consider the following criteria in helping you consider who you think is an expert supervisor.

Please name a person that …

(1) You would recommend to a fellow psychologist or provisional psychologist to seek supervision from.

OR

(2) Helped you or other psychologists (that you're aware of) provide better therapy to clients due to the supervision they provided.

Additional criteria you can reflect on to help you think of an individual includes someone who (a) is reflective of their limitations, biases (b) demonstrate an openness to feedback and consultation (c) shows or is known for the ability of being self-evaluative and self-reflective and (d) would be considered genuine as a supervisor.

Question 1: **Name of Supervisor: (Comment box available)**

Question 2: **What makes you believe this? (Optional, can be brief. E.g., Maybe you worked with them, or heard they were good from someone else). (Comment box available)**

Question 3: Your name (This information is used to assure that I do not e-mail you multiple times after you have responded.) (Comment box available).

Appendix B

Information Package for Expert Supervisors

Study Purpose

For my PhD research, I am interested in exploring provisional psychologist's experiences of engaging in supervision with an expert supervisor. After conducting a snowball sample of Alberta psychologists, you have been identified as just such an expert supervisor. As I'm sure you can understand, this makes you and your supervisees very special. Your assistance in relaying recruitment information to your students is therefore essential to enabling me to dothis study.

Supervisees can be at the masters or PhD level, but I am seeking to recruit those who are undergoing a year (1600 hours) of supervised training either as an internship or for provisional registration.

What to Tell Your Students

Please confirm with your students that you have agreed to allow me to interview them about their experiences if they wish to participate. Let them know that participation is not linked in any way to evaluations, and that this is for my PhD research. Please do not tell them you have been nominated as an expert, as we do not want this information changing their experiences or adding pressure to them (or you).

What To Expect Going Forward

After this initial contact, I will touch base with you via email in July or August (depending on when supervision starts for you) to determine if your students are interested, and if they have any questions or concerns. I may ask for your student's contact information, if you are able to

forward it to me, so that I can also ask them personally to participate if recruitment efforts need a little boost.

Appendix C

Recruitment Poster

I want to learn about your supervision experience!

Your supervisor has been nominated as an expert supervisor. This may or may not be your experience with them going forward, and I want to know about it. I am interested in knowing how supervision is working as you get registered as a psychologist.

What will I have to do? You will be asked to engage in three, one-hour interviews at the beginning, middle and end of your provisional registration hours. Also, every 2 weeks you will receive a question by e-mail prompting you to reflect on your supervision experience. The length of your response and the details will be up to you.

What's in it for me? This process will provide you with a venue to discuss your experiences, and debrief about supervision. I understand your time is valuable, and therefore you will be thanked with a $25 gift card for each interview and you will have the opportunity to obtain more $10 gift cards by responding to the e-mail questions.

What are the risks? The risks are no greater than those ordinarily encountered in everyday life. Your participation will be anonymous and in no way linked to your supervision evaluations.

If you are interested in participating or have more questions about the purpose and goals of this study, please contact Terilyn Pott at pott@ualberta.ca or 780-405-0537.

Appendix D

Consent Form for Participants

Title of Study: Supervisees Experience of Engaging with Supervisors

Principal Investigator: Terilyn Pott, R. Psych, MSc, University of Alberta, pott@ualberta, ca, 587-777-5998

Supervisor: Dr. Derek Truscott, Ph.D., R. Psych (AB). Truscott@ualberta.ca

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Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

You are being asked to be in this study because you are currently engaging in your provisional registration hours and meet the criteria for this study. This study is focused on exploring your personal experience of supervision throughout your 1600 hours, in order to get a sense of what contextual elements/factors and situations impact your experience. As supervision is mandated for provisionally registered psychologists, getting an idea of what good supervision looks like is important to inform future practice.

Before you make a decision one of the researchers will go over this form with you. You are encouraged to ask questions if you feel anything needs to be made clearer. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Participant Requirements

1. Should be a provisionally registered psychologist starting their 1600 hours of practice under the supervision of a registered psychologist who has been identified by the primary researcher as a possibly good supervisor.

What is the reason for doing the study?

The purpose of this study is to understand your experience of supervision as you undergo your provisional registration hours. This entails exploring what components and factors of supervision stand out to you as important or not, and your experience of what helps enhance your development as a future psychologist. As supervision is a mandated part of psychologists training, it is important to understand factors that lead to effective supervision practice. This study hopes to identify what leads to effective supervision from the perspective of the supervisee, in order to help enhance supervision practices in the future.

What will happen in the study?

You will be asked to engage in 3, one-hour long interviews, one at the beginning, middle and end of your 1600 hour placement. In each interview you will be asked to speak to your experiences: what factors, situations, or elements of supervision have helped improve your development and enhance your work with clients. Interviews will be held at the University of Alberta. If you are unable to travel to the University of Alberta, interviews can be held at your office or via Skype if no suitable location is available.

You will also be asked to engage in a bi-weekly diary entry via e-mail where you reflect on any memorable moments (good or bad) that happened in supervision. This is a yearlong study that follows your entire experience of supervision, so you are asked to participate for the entire length of your provisional registration hours.

What are the risks and discomforts?

The risks and discomforts associated with participation in this study are no greater than those ordinarily encountered in everyday life. There is the possibility of discomfort in that you

may find some of the questions about supervision to be sensitive or difficult to speak to. Should this arise you are free to ask for a break or withdraw from the study at any point with no consequences to yourself or your supervision. If engaging in this research creates any psychological difficulties, you will be provided with the contact information of three agencies that provide psychological services if you feel you need further support. There may be risks in this study that are currently not known. If we find out anything new during the course of this research which may change your willingness to be in the study, we will tell you about these findings.

What are the benefits to me?

There may be no personal benefits from your participation in this study, but it is hoped that through reflecting on your supervision it may help enhance your experience and understanding of yourself as a provisionally registered psychologist. The information from this study is expected to be helpful and informative about how to conduct effective supervision to enhance supervision in the future.

What will I need to do while I am in the study?

You will need to be reflective of your supervision experience and its impact on you throughout your provisional training. During each interview you will be asked to speak openly and honestly where possible about your experience of supervision. By engaging in bi-weekly diaries, you are asked to report about your experiences as they have happened in the last two weeks. You will also be asked to notify the primary researcher if you decide to withdraw, or if

there is any changes in your supervision contract that could impact the research study, for example if your hours get extended or you change to part-time.

Do I have to take part in the study?

Being in this study is your choice. If you decide to be in the study, you can change your mind and stop being in the study at any time, and it will in no way affect the care or treatment that you are entitled to. Being in this study or withdrawing from it will not impact any evaluative components between you and your supervisor, as your participation is anonymous and not tied to your provisional registration hours or supervision process. You can choose to withdraw from this study up until one month past your final interview, at which point your data will have been de-identified and included in final findings. At the point of withdrawal any information provided will not be directly quoted or used, but may still be in the analysis overall.

What will it cost me to participate?

There are no monetary costs in participating in this study. You are being asked to share your time, and will be provided compensation for doing so.

Will I be paid to be in the research?

To thank you for your participation, you will be given a $25.00 gift card after each interview, to respect that this is what you may get paid for an hour of your time. You will also be provided with a $10.00 gift card after every completion of 4 diary entries (after every 2 months) to thank you for your dedication to completing these. If only partial completion of diaries happen in two months (only 2 entries) you will be provided with $5.00 to thank you for the entries you

did complete. Gift cards can be from the following; Tim Horton's, Starbucks, the Campus Store, ITunes, Chapters or put onto your campus card.

Will my information be kept private?

During the study we will be collecting biographical data and information about your supervision. We will do everything we can to make sure that this data is kept private. Only the primary researcher will have access to your name as it relates to your data, otherwise your pseudonym and all identifying information will be stripped from your data to ensure anonymity. No data relating to this study that includes your name will be released outside of the researcher's office or published by the researchers. Data, such as quotes of your experience, will be used in a thesis dissertation, at conference presentations and for academic papers. If you choose to withdraw, as you have the right to do so up until one month past your final interview, direct quotes, pseudonyms and examples will not be used in any write ups or presentations of this research. However, as data analysis is an ongoing process throughout the year, any information provided is analyzed and informs the final findings of this study. This study has a small sample size, and though pseudonyms will be used some demographic data will be used to contextualize the results (e.g., age range, gender, race, level of education, and years of counselling experience of participants), therefore total anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Sometimes, by law, we may have to release your information with your name so we cannot guarantee absolute privacy. For example, in the case of reported child abuse, identifying information must be released. In addition, the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Alberta always has the right to review study data, and therefore they can have access to participant information.

As required by University of Alberta, all data will be kept for 5 years after the end of the study, after which it will be destroyed. Data is kept in a double locked cabinet, and any computer data on a password safe computer that only the primary researcher has access to. If you leave the study at any point no new information will be collected, but data collected to that point will be kept and used in the study.

By signing this consent form you are giving permission for the researcher to collect, use and disclose information about you as described above.

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions about the research now or later, please contact the primary researcher, Terilyn Pott, at pott@ualberta.ca or 587-777-5998. You may also contact the primary researchers supervisor, Dr. Derek Truscott, at derek.truscott@ualberta.ca.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Informed Consent

Title of Research Project: Supervisees Experience of Engaging with Supervisors

Please place a check mark in the appropriate box.

I received the information letter, have read it and understand its contents.

Yes: □ No: □

I have been made aware of the potential benefits and risks of participating in this study and understand them.

Yes: □ No: □

I understand that my participation in this study will not be used for evaluative purposes.

Yes: □ No: □

My questions and concerns regarding my participation in this study have been clarified.

Yes: □ No: □

I recognize that I can withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason, and with no penalty, up until one month after my final interview. I recognize that due to the nature of this study, information from my interviews may be used in the overall analysis and final findings, but if I withdraw no information will be linked to me, and no direct quotes used.

Yes: □ No: □

Principles and limits to confidentiality have been clearly outlined and I understand them.

Yes: □ No: □

I grant permission to be audio-recorded during conversations with the primary investigator.

Yes: □ No: □

Written **consent**

By signing this consent form, I agree to participate in this study. My signature indicates that I:

1) Fully understand all the information that is presented in the information letter and informed consent form.

2) Consent to be a research participant in this study.

3) Give the principal investigator permission to quote or discuss anonymized information from my story for the purposes of the principal investigator's dissertation, publications, conferences, and workshops.

Please indicate a pseudonym that can be used to identify verbal extracts in any written work: _____.

I am aware that I can ask for further clarification or information throughout this study.

Participant's Name (please print):_____

Participant's Signature:_____ **Date:** _____

Principal Investigator's Signature (Witness):_____ **Date:**_____

Both the principal investigator and research participant must receive a copy of this participant consent form.

Appendix E

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Introduction: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. I would like to start by introducing myself. I am a doctoral student who is interested in exploring the experience of being supervised. I am interested in understanding your unique experience of supervision and how it shapes your development as a psychologist. I greatly appreciate your participation and any insights you wish to share.

Please take a moment to read over the consent form, and feel free to ask questions. [After participant is completed signing.] The interview will take approximately one hour, and the information you provide is confidential and anonymous as the consent form outlines. At the bottom of the consent form please indicate a pseudonym you would like to be identified by if you choose. Please know that at any point you may feel free to withdraw from this study without consequence and if our discussions cause any emotional difficulties I can provide you with referrals to someone to talk to. If you disclose to me any unethical behaviours that are occurring in supervision, we will briefly discuss options you have for reporting this if you wish.

(Once participant has consented): Please take a moment to fill out the demographic questionnaire and Supervision demographic questionnaire and then we will start the interview process. This is a semi-structured interview, so I will have some questions I'm following, but a lot of it will be lead by what you wish to share. Any questions so far?

Demographics(To be filled out on paper prior to the start of the first interview.)

Age:

Gender:

Race:

Nationality:

Level of education:

Years of counseling experience:

First or second career or more:

Was the supervisor you're paired with chosen by you or matched by another individual?

Is this your first time being supervised as a provisional psychologist?

What type of location are you working at? Not-for-profit, hospital, school, community, outpatient?

Supervision Demographics (To be filled out at each interview)

Approximately how many supervision sessions have you had to date? If not applicable please mark N/A.

Individual:_____

Group: _____

Live (where group observes you conducting a session):_____

Other (Please indicate what type): _____

Please indicate what methods of supervision you have experienced to date? If not applicable please mark N/A

Audio review of session:_____

Video tape review of session: _____

Co-supervision with supervisor: _____

Case consultation: _____

Other (please indicate what):_____

Interview Questions

1. To start, I would like to get an understanding of what your sense is as to why we have supervision? What does it mean to be receiving supervision?

Possible Prompts:

a. *What is the goal of supervision?*
b. *How do you understand and make sense of supervision?*
c. *What past experience might play into this understanding of what supervision is?*
d. *What are your expectations or hopes of supervision?*
e. *What is your sense of your supervisor in all of this?*
    a. *How would you define the role of a supervisor? (Mentor, Teacher, etc.)*

2. What has been your experience of supervision with your current supervisor to date?

Possible Prompts:

b. *What stands out as good or bad?*
c. *Were expectations about supervision discussed?*
d. *Was a contract discussed?*
e. *Was there a discussion about evaluation and responsibilities?*

3. Have there been impactful moments in supervision to date?

Possible Prompts:

a. *Can you describe a good day of supervision?*
b. *Can you describe a bad day of supervision?*

a. *The relationship (working alliance)?*
b. *Personality?*
c. *Style?*
d. *Feedback?*

4. Can you speak to if or how your current supervision informs your work as a provisional psychologist?

Possible Prompts:

a. *Has there been a time that supervision changed your approach or understanding of your work?*
b. *Does it impact your development? How?*
c. *Does it influence your work with your clients? How? Can you provide an example?*
d. *Have you learned anything?*

5. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about supervision and your experience?

"We've come to the end of the interview, and I would again like to thank you for taking the time to participate. Do you have any questions now that we've finished the interview? [Respond to any questions].

Additional Questions for Interview 2 and 3

Interview 2 additional question:

I have a summary of my preliminary understandings of our last interview and possible ways to define and understand the experiences you shared with me. I want to make sure I understand your experience as best I can. Could you take a moment to look over what I have written and let me know if this fits with your past experience?

a. Has your experience changed?

b. Am I missing any main ideas?

c. What might you want to add, or take away from this so far?

Interview 3 additional questions:

1. Now that supervision is coming to an end, what has your overall experience been like?

2. What would you tell a new provisional psychologist entering into supervision about the supervision process?

Before we finish, I have a summary of my preliminary understandings of our last interview and possible ways to define and understand the experiences you shared with me. I want to make sure I understand your experience as best I can. Could you take a moment to look over what I have written and let me know if this fits with your past experience?

a. Has your experience changed?

b. Am I missing any main ideas?

c. What might you want to add, or take away from this so far?

Additional end for interview 3: "I would also like to remind you that at the end of my study I will be sending you an e-mail that contains the themes that I've created from pooling all the interviews I have together. You will be asked if the themes fit your experience, and if you would like to write any feedback about the themes if you wish. You will have two weeks after I have sent the e-mail to respond via email or in person. I thank you for your participation and sharing your experience as it developed with me.

Appendix F

Reflection Journal E-mail

Thank you for your continued engagement with this study. This is an e-mail prompt to remind you to engage in reflexive thinking about your supervision experiences. Please take a couple of minutes to think about your supervision in the last two weeks, and write about your experience as it comes to mind. The main question to answer is "what has your experience of supervision been like in the last two weeks?"

Please e-mail your response to pott@ualberta.ca for record keeping until the interview. These journals may be used during the interview process to help prompt recall of supervision experiences.

Thank you,

Terilyn Pott.

Appendix G

Ethics Approval

Ethics Application has been Approved

ID:	Pro00060822
Title:	Supervisee's Experience of Engaging with Master Supervisors
Study Investigator:	Terilyn Pott
Description:	This is to inform you that the above study has been approved. Click on the link(s) above to navigate to the HERO workspace. **Note**: Please be reminded that the REMO system works best with Internet Explorer or Firefox. Please do not reply to this message. This is a system-generated email that cannot receive replies.

University of Alberta

Edmonton Alberta

Canada T6G 2E1

Appendix I

Researcher Journal Reflection Samples

Reflection November 15-2016 (After second interview with East Coast Girl)

One idea that stood out to me from this interview is when East Coast Girl reflected that after the formal aspect of supervision is completed, an informal chit-chat occurs. She stated that this helps her see her supervisor as more of a person, and that they connect on a personal level. Items discussed often include aspects of the supervisor's life and plans for the day. It made me reflect back to my past experiences – specifically if my supervisors did this or not.

Comfortable disclosure: One question that arose from this is what is appropriate disclosure? I recall having one supervisor that disclosed aspects of their day, events they planned to do and a bit about their personal life. For example I knew they had kids, were married, and that she liked cooking. I found this often helped me feel connected to her, and felt I could share similar information about myself to her.

Another form of comfortable disclosure occurred with my academic supervisor. At first I did not know a lot about him, and often felt he did not want to know anything about me. This lasted for about two months (two meetings) until I started to pick up that he would disclose pieces of himself within his stories, or metaphors, that he used as teaching methods. Once I noticed his style and got comfortable with it I was able to start to mimic it. Knowing he was comfortable disclosing in this way also allowed me to start to feel comfortable in disclosing information to him about myself.

Uncomfortable disclosure: However, I also had a supervisor who shared too much about her personal life with me. I knew about her marriage problems and struggles, and this often made me feel extremely uncomfortable. During supervision she would complain about the latest legal issues she had which often left me feeling uncomfortable. I think this crossed a boundary that I felt was inappropriate for supervision. Not that I was counselling her, but that I was more of a "friend" than a colleague or student.

Where disclosure may have been helpful: On the other hand, one of my supervisors I perceived as very difficult to connect to because I knew little about him. The first session of our supervision he provided me with his C.V., which to this date I have not read, as I felt this was an extremely impersonal and perhaps pompous? I already knew he had good credentials and did not feel the need to read them from a paper. I think I would have appreciated more if we discussed this in person versus leaving it up to me to look through and make interpretations of his work based on his C.V. I did find that I was not very open with him at first either unless asked a question – though part of this might have been the fact that he was the first male supervisor I had and I was uncertain on how to navigate this difference. I felt at times it was easier for me to be open with a woman supervisor than a male supervisor, in relation to stereotypes I may have projected onto him. For example feeling like I couldn't talk about feelings as readily with him compared to a woman.