

'Behind the Back' Supervision

A simple method to generate new insights and thinking for the supervisee is to use the technique, Behind the Back.



As supervisor, you need to explain what is involved, so the supervisee can give informed consent, or decline the opportunity!

This technique is best used after some information about the client and their circumstances have been discussed. The group needs to have a 'real feel' for the situation being brought.

As supervisor, ask the supervisee to sit with their back to the rest of the group and listen whilst group members talk over what they have heard. **(In virtual groups, the supervisee should turn off camera and mute so they don't speak)**. If the supervisee prefers, they can stand to one side of the group but their face should not be in view of the group. The group members make no eye contact with the supervisee. As far as they can, they are 'pretending' that the supervisee isn't there. (Some tact is demanded. Respect combined with honesty is key)

Explain to the supervisee that the group members are thinking out loud. They may be wrong because they are in many ways speculating, but they are sharing their thinking at that point.

As supervisor, you can shape this discussion by asking the supervisee;

What would you like to hear discussed?

Possible replies might be:

- I'd like to hear what people think is going on for this client
- I'd like to hear what people think is not being said by me/the client
- I'd like to hear what picture people have of this coaching relationship
- I'd like to hear what I have done well so far/could do next



When the discussion has finished, after a few moments, ask the supervisee to rejoin the group. It is helpful to ask the supervisee; *how that was for you?* to gauge their experience before launching into the reflection.

Ask: what new thoughts or ideas have you had as you stepped outside of the group?

What you definitely don't want is for the supervisee to defend or disagree with every statement, one by one. The supervisee should think about what they have heard that has stimulated their thinking and what is helpful to them in the light of their goal for the session.

Thank the supervisee, and reflect with the rest of the group about what they have learnt about themselves or their coaching from supporting this supervisee