

SUPERVISION AS A FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND SUPPORT FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS AND LOGOTHERAPISTS IN WARTIME

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Abstract

The article presents the results of theoretical analysis and practical experience in organizing professional growth and support for psychologists and logotherapists during supervision. An analysis of scientific literature on the definition of the concept of "supervision" was carried out. It was established that supervision in Ukraine is at the stage of formation and development, but is a necessary condition for professional support of specialists. There is a lack of scientific research on the integration of logotherapy and existential analysis into the supervision process and no consensus on a comprehensive definition of supervision models and practical experience of supervision in the logotherapeutic approach. The main models of supervision that can be integrated into logotherapeutic practice are analyzed. The need to organize supervision for logotherapists as an integral part of their professional development and support for the quality of psychotherapeutic practice has been established. It has been determined that the supervision process provides space for reflection on professional experience, understanding of complex clinical cases, and analysis of therapeutic interventions.

The advantages of supervision in logotherapy in conditions of war and uncertainty are revealed.

Keywords: supervision, supervision models, logotherapy, logotherapists, professional growth.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The modern sociocultural environment is characterized by an increase in the number of traumatic events, both individual and collective in nature. War, forced displacement, loss, ongoing danger, professional burnout, and long-term stress really affect people's mental and existential well-being, highlighting the need for psychological support

that can deal not only with symptoms but also with the deeper, life-changing effects of traumatic experiences.

That is why the issue of professional support for specialists working with traumatic experiences is so important. Working with deep suffering, existential loss of meaning, guilt, grief, and post-traumatic reactions significantly increases the risk of vicarious traumatization, emotional exhaustion, and professional burnout among psychologists. Under such conditions, supervision ceases to be an optional element of professional training and acquires the status of a necessary condition for ethical and effective practice.

The world in which modern professionals work is unstable, traumatic, and oversaturated with demands that go beyond standard approaches. In these conditions, supervision serves as a professional support system that helps professionals cope with the complexity of reality without losing their ethical and human guidelines.

Analysis of research. Analysis of scientific literature has revealed the diversity of definitions of “supervision.” Supervision is defined as: professional support for mental health specialists aimed at overcoming professional difficulties, analyzing and eliminating weaknesses in work, improving its organization, motivating professional development, ensuring compliance with ethical norms and standards for the providing of mental health services, preventing professional burnout, and providing emotional support [2]; intense interpersonal interaction aimed at bringing together two people, the supervisor and the therapist, where the first person tries to make the second more effective in helping others [7]; “signature pedagogy” of psychotherapy, necessary for the professional development of the supervisee and ensuring the well-being of clients [6]; as a special type of psychological practice that focuses on the professional thinking of a specialist, on their methods of conceptualization and assimilation of professional experience [4]; as a way of developing specific psychotherapeutic competencies in specialists, in particular knowledge, skills, and professional values [3] etc.

Psychological practice abounds with a considerable number of scientific developments in the context of supervision, but so far supervision in logotherapy (psychotherapeutic method developed by V. Frankl in 1930th) has not been the subject of separate studies.

The purpose of this article is to analyze theoretical sources for determining the potential of supervision as a systematic factor in professional growth and support for psychologists and logotherapists in wartime conditions.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study uses a set of complementary methods: theoretical methods (analysis, synthesis, generalization, systematization of scientific sources); methods of scientific modeling and conceptualization of the supervisory space. The methodological basis of the study consists of the principles of logotherapy and existential analysis, as well as modern approaches to supervision in psychological practice.

OUTLINE OF THE MAIN CONTENT

In conditions of global instability, social transformations, and prolonged crises, the development of logotherapy and existential analysis is becoming particularly relevant in Ukraine, where society is experiencing large-scale traumatic events, existential challenges, and a rethinking of value orientations. The search for meaning, the restoration of inner stability, and the formation of a responsible attitude towards one's own life are becoming not only individual tasks but also a social necessity.

In this regard, the formation of a systematic supervisory space is becoming particularly relevant. The intensive growth of the practice requires professional support of specialists, maintenance of the quality of therapeutic work, and development of a reflective culture and ethical standards. Supervision becomes a necessary condition for the professional development of logotherapists, ensuring their professional maturity, preventing professional burnout, and maintaining high standards of psychological care.

Today, Ukraine is witnessing the active development of logotherapy practice both in the professional psychotherapeutic environment and in educational and scientific spheres. Professional communities, educational programs, and scientific events are being formed, the circle of specialists working in the logotherapeutic approach is expanding, and there is a growing public demand for assistance focused on the search for meaning in life and existential support for individuals.

Therefore, the question of professional support for high-quality logotherapy practice naturally arises. The growing interest in this field requires the creation of an appropriate supervisory space that would provide professional support to specialists, preserve ethical standards, and deepen the existential competence of therapists. The development of supervision in the field of logotherapy in Ukraine is becoming a strategically important step in strengthening the professional community and improving the quality of psychological care.

In Ukrainian reality, the demands on psychologists are growing exponentially. Psychologists today must be prepared to work with war trauma, loss, forced displacement, veteran adaptation, support for military families, and other specific challenges facing Ukrainian society [1].

Supervision, in addition to theoretical and practical knowledge and personal psychotherapy, is part of the professional training of psychologists, psychotherapists, and logotherapists.

It should be emphasized that, in connection with the adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On the Mental Health Care System," supervision as a mechanism for professional support of specialists has been regulated. According to paragraph 3 of Article 38 of this law, supervision is carried out for specialists in the field of mental health in order to ensure the quality of services, overcome professional difficulties, analyzing and eliminating shortcomings in work, improving its organization, motivating professional development, complying with ethical norms and standards of service provision, preventing professional burnout, and providing emotional support [2].

J. Bernard and *R. Goodyear* emphasize the necessity of supervision as a mandatory component of the professional practice of psychologists and psychotherapists. The researchers emphasize that psychological practitioners need an external professional perspective on their own activities, as relationships with clients can affect the objectivity

of perception and the effectiveness of assistance. They also note that professional development involves a stage of training under the guidance of an experienced mentor who helps to improve working techniques.

The specific nature of psychotherapy, which is associated with confidentiality, complicates the possibility of direct observation of the process of assistance, so supervision compensates for this limitation through professional case analysis. In addition, reflection on interactions with clients in the supervision process helps psychologists become aware of their own personal difficulties that may affect their work and encourages them to seek personal therapy as part of their professional development [5].

The European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP), based on the “Strasbourg Declaration on Psychotherapy,” represents and supports the highest professional standards for the free and independent practice of psychotherapy, adheres to strict standards of competence and professionalism, and defines supervision as a mandatory and essential component of a complete education in any psychotherapeutic discipline. The main functions of supervision include: professional oversight and control; a special method of reflection on psychotherapeutic practice in the educational process; working through aspirations, problems, and conflicts that arise in the context of professional activity and can significantly affect it; mastering psychotherapeutic techniques. Supervision aims to support the reflective processes of professionals in order to develop more effective strategies for solving work tasks that they must perform as part of their professional activities [9].

One of the areas of psychotherapy defined by the European Association for Psychotherapy is logotherapy. According to the association, logotherapy and existential analysis are two sides of the same coin in psychotherapy. Logotherapy and existential analysis helps to find possible personal meaning in a situation or condition, among other things. It is integrative because it is based on holistic reality and is relevant – psychotherapy focused on the individual. The search for meaning that logotherapy initiates is a search for the ultimate means of personal freedom to exist and live for a loved one and/or for a humane cause. This can be a very close and practical goal that can be achieved or lived for, but it can also be an existential and ethical source of strength that helps a person face fate, physical and mental illness, deprivation, loss, and ultimately death. Existential analysis is a two-way process of exploring the client's past and present actions, experiences, and attitudes toward the question of being or responsibility as a person, on the one hand, and the search for internal, unconsciously operating values related to dignity, on the other. The other side of existential analysis is a phenomenological scientific approach to issues related to the human condition, the so-called metaclinical problems.

Logotherapy has developed into a powerful separate approach with its own specific terminology, analysis, diagnostics, range, interventions, and treatment.

In Europe, the European Association of Psychotherapy in Vienna has confirmed the scientific and therapeutic validity of logotherapy and existential analysis [10].

In the context of our study, the experience of C. Nassif, S. Schulenberg, R. Hutzell, and J. Rogina, who reveal the essence of clinical supervision and logotherapy through the prism of the search for meaning in the supervisory process, seems valuable. The authors emphasize that logotherapy is a meaning-oriented approach that can enrich existing styles and models of supervision, especially given their tendency to downplay the importance of the supervisor-supervisee relationship and the internal experience of what happens during the supervisory process [12].

Of particular scientific and practical interest to us is the authors' experience of integrating logotherapeutic techniques with the roles of supervisor and the content of supervision (Table 1).

Table 1
Integration of logotherapy techniques into the supervision process [12].

Focus on the supervisee	Proposed logotherapeutic techniques
<i>Role of the supervisor</i>	
Mentor Facilitating the personal growth of the supervisee and developing the ability to overcome difficulties	Supervisor self-disclosure; assistance in setting goals while maintaining a focus on the future
Teacher Developing knowledge and skills, increasing autonomy	Socratic dialogue for actualizing Free Will
Evaluator Balancing strengths and challenges; encouraging self-assessment; addressing gaps in professional skill	Focus on actualizing the values of the supervised person; activation of attitude values
<i>The content of supervision</i>	
Knowledge Acquiring competencies in various content areas	Balance of psychological, physical, and noetic aspects of personality with an emphasis on responsible decision-making
Skills Competency development in various practices	Socratic dialogue for actualizing creative values
Attitudes Activation of attitude values	Strengthening the Will to Meaning; modification of attitude; dereflection; clarification of the values of the supervisee
Interpersonal ability Developing relationship skills in supervision and therapeutic alliance	Activation of experiential values

Defining the training of supervisors within the framework of LTEA as a new field, M. Marshall and E. Marshall emphasize that, in line with developments in psychotherapy practice, supervision in logotherapy and existential analysis (LTEA) should be carried out using a well-developed and well-thought-out structure. The current challenge in training logotherapists and supervisors is to offer high-quality training programs that comply with a consistent, structured protocol with clearly defined goals and objectives that correspond to the development of therapists' competencies; developing programs that incorporate current research findings and reflect an understanding of the ethical issues and principles that govern clinical practice and decision-making [11].

Psychological counselors need to keep one of their main tools intact, their personality, which gets harder when there's a lot of uncertainty, unpredictability, and complexity in the modern world, since the whole idea of uncertainty goes against how people usually see reality. Thus, supervision helps the counselor understand themselves, become aware of the counseling process, improve the knowledge and skills necessary for their work, and integrate personal responses, objective knowledge, subjective experience, and specific situations that arise in their work, which ultimately significantly improves the

quality of their work and contributes to professional growth. In our opinion, supervision should be considered on two interrelated levels: 1) at the professional level, it combines the methods of interaction between the subjects of supervision, resulting in the discovery of a new vision of the case and the acquisition of new resources for working with it; 2) at the personal level, supervision helps to reveal personal barriers to building contacts with the world and other people, to determine one's place in these contacts, and to find ways of interacting with them.

Since logotherapy supervision is still developing, the choice of model is an important issue. An analysis of scientific research on this issue reveals the existence of a significant number of supervision models. Given the specifics of our study, we considered models of clinical supervision that can be integrated into a logotherapy context. Let us consider some of them.

B. Proctor's *three-function model* [14]. This model is generally compatible with logotherapy, but it needs existential content and certain adjustments so as not to contradict the basic principles of logotherapy. It is quite integrative and flexible, but it does not make sense as a core and is characterized by insufficient attention to the “existential dimension” of the therapist.

The developmental model [15] naturally aligns with logotherapy, as both view the professional path as a dynamic process of personal development. The main focus in this model is on the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee. When using this model, both the supervisee and the supervisor develop general and specialized knowledge. The supervisor observes the supervisee from a holistic perspective, i.e., sees them as a whole personality in a multidimensional context. The supervisee is considered simultaneously on several levels: professional, personal, existential, systemic, and physical-emotional. Using this model, the logotherapist supports a gradual transition from external support to internal responsibility, recognizing crisis stages as points of possible meaning discovery. This model makes it possible to take into account what is important not only for professional development but also for personal development, which is why it is significant in the logotherapeutic context.

A supervision model focused on a specific type of psychotherapy is an approach in which the supervision process is structured in accordance with the theoretical and methodological principles of a particular psychotherapeutic school, to which we can add other methods, but the main one should be existential-humanistic.

Integrative models play an important role in supervisory practice. J. Bernard's *model of discrimination* [6] appeals to us in supervision in the sense that it has a clear structure, with the supervisor acting on an equal footing. Practical experience shows that it is often important for the supervisee to bring their own reactions that arose while working with the client. In our opinion, these are extremely important, because in logotherapy we focus not only on tools, but also on the personality of the supervisee. Every person wants to be supported. And this applies not only to professional advice, but first and foremost to support for the personality itself. Therefore, in our opinion, it is appropriate to ask the supervisee: “What were your own reactions in this case?” Countertransference can also occur in this situation, as it sometimes allows the supervisor to feel the client's own experiences.

The Systemic Approach to Supervision (SAS) by E. Holloway [8], where the supervisory relationship is at the core of the model, provides structured, comprehensive

supervision that takes into account all influencing factors and allows for the combination of technical and meaningful levels of work: skills + values + meaning. This approach supports the development of the supervisee as a whole person, not just as a competent professional. However, in our opinion, this approach requires the supervisor to have a high capacity for metareflection and a parallel view of several levels of the system. Sometimes, focusing on the system can reduce the depth of work with the supervisee's meaning if the logotherapeutic component is not integrated.

Existential-humanistic models (including logotherapy) are focused on establishing an alliance. Logotherapy in this case acts as the art of understanding the supervisee.

Unlike more structural or technically oriented models (such as those of B. Proctor or J. Bernard), existential-humanistic models focus not so much on technical competence as on developing the supervisee's inner integrity. Strong trust and cooperation provide a safe space for exploring one's own professional and personal experiences. The supervisor encourages the supervisee to be fully present in the process: with the client, with their own emotions, and with the supervisor. This includes attention to nonverbal, emotional, and bodily aspects. When supervisors explore their own values, biases, and emotional reactions, they develop the ability to distinguish their own experiences from those of their clients, which has critical importance for working with trauma and vicarious trauma. The main advantages of this model include the following: in-depth work with the therapist's personality, which helps to form an authentic professional identity; prevention of burnout and restoration of contact with one's own values and the meaning of one's work; increased resilience and development of the ability to endure the client's suffering without losing oneself; a strong supervisory alliance that creates space for open reflection and meaningful learning. If we talk about the shortcomings of this model, it may be insufficient structure for assessing specific technical competencies; the risk of transitioning to therapy when the supervisor works more with the supervisee's personality than with the client's tasks, so it requires a clear definition of the boundaries between supervision and personal therapy.

The use of logotherapy and existential analysis in treating post-traumatic stress disorder associated with combat operations constitutes a separate clinical niche. Working with survivors' feelings of guilt, loss of life orientation, and experiences of existential vacuum is of particular importance. Interventions based on logotherapy have been shown to be effective in reducing PTSD symptoms, particularly emotional arousal and avoidance behavior, as evidenced by a number of scientific papers and studies describing the use of logotherapy in working with traumatic experiences. In this context, logotherapy is not an alternative to trauma-focused methods, but rather an existential complement that allows one to work with aspects of trauma that are not exhausted at the symptomatic level.

Therefore, supervision should be planned specifically with the acquisition of such experience by participants in mind. This could be thematic supervision, where logotherapy is used as an auxiliary method for working with trauma and post-traumatic growth, especially when it comes to the tragic triad that can be observed in military personnel (suffering, guilt, death). Another significant problem is professional burnout among specialists, which can be remedied by logotherapy, as it offers a broader arsenal than other methods. Logotherapy looks at a person from a holistic perspective, which is its advantage over other methods.

When working with trauma, the supervisee inevitably becomes involved in intense emotional and existential experiences, which increases the risk of vicarious traumatization,

professional burnout, and loss of inner orientation. Under such conditions, supervision cannot perform an exclusively educational or evaluative function: it must become a space for recovery, containment, and reflection on the specialist's internal experience.

The supervision process should be viewed as supportive. It is about creating a safe professional environment in which the supervisee has the opportunity to reflect on their own reactions, boundaries, values, and the meaning of their work without violating the ethical boundaries of the supervisory relationship.

Within the scope of our research, we find valuable the conceptual framework of the trauma-informed practitioner model developed by M. Paige, a clinician who is competent in working with trauma. This is a model of a clinician's professional readiness for trauma-informed practice. According to this model, the competence of a specialist in working with trauma consists of four interrelated components:

- Presence – an individual quality of a specialist: the ability to be grounded, calm, authentic, and accepting;
- Attitude – a professional stance (a value-based attitude toward the client: respect, trust, acceptance of the uniqueness of experience);
- Knowledge (theoretical basis: understanding of the neurobiology of trauma, PTSD, the impact of trauma on functioning);
- Skills (specific clinical tools: psychoeducation, emotion regulation, cognitive restructuring, three-phase model, etc.) [13].

CONCLUSIONS

Consequently, no single model is universal. The most effective approach involves mixing models, where elements of different structures and theories are selected according to the needs of the supervisee and the context of supervision. In a logotherapeutic context, the key is to strike a balance between technical competence and meaningful development, where supervision not only supports professional effectiveness but also supports the supervisee's ability to find meaning in their work while remaining authentic in their profession. This allows the supervisor to be flexible, sensitive, and at the same time professionally competent, creating an environment where the supervisee's development takes place in the context of professional, ethical, and meaningful maturity.

Logotherapy is a meaning-centered and value-oriented concept developed by Viktor Frankl. Its fundamental thesis is that despite the inevitability of suffering, people retain the ability to choose how to respond to it, giving this experience personal meaning. Moreover, the ability to find meaning enables self-realization and increases effectiveness in overcoming life's challenges. Logotherapy and existential analysis also postulates that every person has a healthy inner core that contains the most pronounced human and adaptive qualities. These qualities include a sense of humor, the ability to transcend oneself through love for others, and the ability to devote oneself to a cause.

The strength of this approach is its recognition of the uniqueness of individual experience, which determines its effectiveness in working with a variety of client problems and representatives of different population groups.

The introduction of a supervision support system for psychologists and logotherapists in Ukraine creates conditions for increasing stress resistance and

professional growth. Supervision allows for the timely detection of signs of emotional burnout and psychological stress, which makes it possible to reflectively choose actions to preserve inner integrity and resilience.

In addition, supervisory support stimulates professional and personal development, helping psychologists to gain a deeper understanding of their own values, the meaning of their professional activity, and their role in supporting others. It creates space for self-reflection and improvement of skills and knowledge, which, in light of the logotherapeutic approach, allows psychologists to find meaning in their professional activities even in difficult and extreme conditions.

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