SECOND EDITION

Clinical Supervision in the Helping Professions

A Practical Guide

Gerald Corey
California State University, Fullerton

Robert Haynes
Borderline Productions

Patrice Moulton
Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana

Michelle Muratori
Johns Hopkins University

AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION
5999 Stevenson Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22304
www.counseling.org
DEDICATION

To our supervisees and students,
who have taught us many lessons about how to supervise
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The field of supervision is a rapidly emerging specialty area in the helping professions. In the past, supervisors often learned how to supervise based on their own, and often limited, experiences when they were supervisees. Until recently few professional standards specifically addressed supervision practices, and separate courses in supervision were rare. Today, the trend is toward including a course in supervision in graduate programs in the helping professions, especially in doctoral programs. If there is not a separate course, topics of supervision are frequently incorporated into one or more courses. In addition, state licensing and certification boards are increasingly requiring formal training in the area of supervision as a part of the licensing and certification process. The result of these trends is that in order to practice as a supervisor it is mandatory to complete course work or take continuing education workshops in supervision and to show evidence of competence not only in skills and techniques but in supervisory processes and procedures.

This book provides a practical guide to becoming a supervisor. We aimed to make it reader-friendly, informative, interesting, practical, personal, and challenging. We address topics essential to becoming an effective supervisor, with emphasis on helping new supervisors acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to supervise others in a variety of settings. We believe one of the best ways to learn how to supervise is for new supervisors to reflect on what they have learned from their own supervision. Readers are encouraged to conceptualize and personalize the dynamics of supervision.

The information provided and our suggestions for becoming a supervisor are based on both the supervision literature and our collective professional experience in supervision. Throughout this book we discuss the ethics and professional codes and the relevant literature, but we also state our own position on these topics and offer commentary on how we might approach various cases. We try to balance theory with personal beliefs, attitudes, and relevant experiences regarding supervision. A unique feature of this book, Voices From the Field, provides a glimpse of what other practicing supervisors have to say about key issues in the practice of supervision.

We do not present a single best approach to supervisory practice. Instead, we encourage reflective practice and ask supervisors and supervisees to integrate their own thoughts and experiences with the material they are reading. Most of all, we recommend that readers continually reflect on what supervision has been like for them at various stages of their professional development. It is important to have both a solid foundation of the theories...
and methods of supervision and an understanding of what has been learned from their own experiences as a supervisee and as a supervisor.

This book has a practical emphasis, which can be seen throughout the text in tips for practical application, case examples, sample forms, interactive questions, and activities that can be done in small groups. It is designed as a practical guide for new and practicing supervisors but can also be utilized as a primary or supplementary text in a variety of doctoral-level and master’s-level courses.

*Clinical Supervision in the Helping Professions: A Practical Guide* (Second Edition) is appropriate for use in disciplines including counseling psychology, counselor education, clinical psychology, marriage and family therapy, human services, social work, school counseling, mental health counseling, rehabilitation counseling, psychiatric nursing, and other mental health specializations. It is an ideal resource for practicum, fieldwork, and internship seminars in these disciplines and for advanced undergraduate courses in human services and social work programs. In addition, this book can be used as a resource for both prelicensed professionals and practicing supervisors.

**How to Get the Most From This Book**

This book is different from traditional textbooks in supervision. As much as possible our expectation is that this book will provide an interactive tool that will assist you in formulating your perspective on supervisory practice. The many questions and exercises interspersed throughout the text are intended to stimulate you to become an active learner. If you take the time to think about the chapter focus questions and do the suggested activities at the end of each chapter, your learning will be more meaningful and personal. Supervision is not a topic that can be mastered solely by reading about theory and research. Supervision is best learned by integrating the theoretical material with your own supervision experiences.

Several terms are used throughout the book to describe supervisors, supervisees, counselors, and the counseling process. For example, *supervisees, trainees, and prelicensed counselors* are all types of supervisees; *counseling, therapy, and psychotherapy* are various forms of the therapeutic process. Different disciplines in the helping professions use slightly different terms to describe the various roles and processes. Typically we use *client* to refer to those individuals receiving services provided by the supervisee. We use many of these terms interchangeably because we are writing to several disciplines such as counseling, psychology, social work, counselor education, and school counseling. Keep in mind that you will see these terms used interchangeably throughout the book.

**Overview of the Book**

Each chapter focuses on a specific aspect or dimension of supervision that we believe is vital to understand. Here is what you can expect in each chapter:

- Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for the book by defining supervision and discussing the goals and objectives of supervision. In line with the personal focus of the book, each author offers her or his unique perspective on supervision and highlights some of the experiences that have shaped the author’s views about the subject.
- Describing the multiplicity of roles that supervisors may need to adopt, ranging from teacher and coach to administrator and empowerer, Chapter 2 focuses on the supervisor’s roles and responsibilities. A portion of the chapter is devoted to exploring how supervisees can get the most from their supervision and fieldwork experiences.
The quality of the supervisory relationship is of paramount importance, and Chapter 3 focuses exclusively on factors and issues that are likely to affect this relationship and on the supervisor’s and supervisee’s characteristics that facilitate and hinder the supervision process. Conflict in the relationship and other challenging situations are addressed as well.

Chapter 4 provides a description of the current models of supervision. These include models based on therapeutic approaches such as the person-centered and family therapy perspectives as well as models that were developed specifically for clinical supervision such as developmental and integrative approaches.

Chapter 5 focuses on the practical methods used in supervision and explains how various methods can be implemented in an integrated supervision model.

Chapter 6 addresses the importance of developing multicultural competence as a supervisor as well as preparing trainees to be competent in serving diverse client populations. Supervisors have a responsibility to model social advocacy for their trainees and to encourage trainees to carry out this important function in their work with clients.

Ethical issues and multiple relationships are the focus of Chapter 7. This discussion addresses what every supervisor needs to know about ethical supervisory practice and teaching supervisees to practice ethically. It also ventures into topics such as dealing with impairment and incompetence and recognizing ethical violations.

Chapter 8 is devoted to legal and risk management issues. Given today’s litigious climate, supervisors need to have a basic understanding of the legal issues they might encounter; thus, a legal primer is presented. An extensive list of risk management strategies is also included in the chapter.

Most trainees feel ill equipped to handle crisis incidents. Chapter 9 provides supervisors with information to help them manage crisis situations effectively and to prepare their supervisees to competently navigate through client crises and deal with the aftermath of crises.

Chapter 10 explores evaluation, a topic that tends to cause supervisors a great deal of anxiety. Evaluation is a critical component of ethical supervision and is the element that sets supervision apart from counseling and psychotherapy. In this chapter, the process and methods of evaluation are described so that supervisors can approach this task with a clearly defined plan and, consequently, with less anxiety.

The final chapter examines what is required to become an effective supervisor. We hope that Chapter 11 inspires you to find your own style and empowers you to find your own voice as a supervisor.

As noted, we have made a concerted effort to make the material come to life by sharing our personal perspectives and the viewpoints of practicing supervisors. In Voices From the Field, supervisors from different professional backgrounds and with varying levels of experience candidly describe some of the challenges they have faced as well as the joys of supervising.

The Suggested Activities section at the end of each chapter is designed to augment your professional development. These activities will aid you in thinking about and reflecting on what you have just read. For students and supervisees, this can be a way to bring more thought to your supervision sessions. For supervisors, this may give you some ideas for topics to discuss with supervisees. These activities can be adapted for individual work or group discussion.
We would like to thank the following people who generously gave of their time to review the manuscript and made valuable suggestions: Carolyn Baker, Director of Publications at ACA; Lupe Alle-Corliss and Randy Alle-Corliss, both clinical social workers at Kaiser-Permanente, Department of Psychiatry; Jeffrey Barnett, independent practice as a psychologist, and Loyola University in Maryland; Marianne Schneider Corey, consultant; Kellie Kirksey, Malone University; Benjamin Noah, Capella University; Mary Kate Reese, Argosy University, Atlanta; Phyllis Robertson, Western Carolina University; and Janna Scarborough, East Tennessee State University. In addition, we would like to acknowledge Cynthia Lindsey, associate professor of psychology from Northwestern State University, for codeveloping forms presented in the text, and Kathryn Heidke, a graduate student from Northwestern State University, for her assistance with references.

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GERALD COREY, EdD, is professor emeritus of human services and counseling at California State University, Fullerton. He received his doctorate in counseling from the University of Southern California. He is a Diplomate in Counseling Psychology, American Board of Professional Psychology; a licensed psychologist; a National Certified Counselor; a Fellow of the American Counseling Association; a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (Counseling Psychology); and a Fellow of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW). Jerry received the Eminent Career Award from ASGW in 2001 and the Outstanding Professor of the Year Award from California State University, Fullerton in 1991. He regularly teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses in theory and practice of group counseling and professional ethics in counseling. He is the author or coauthor of 16 textbooks in counseling currently in print, along with numerous journal articles. His book, Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy, has been translated into Arabic, Indonesian, Portuguese, Turkish, Korean, and Chinese. Theory and Practice of Group Counseling has been translated into Korean, Chinese, Spanish, and Russian. Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions has been translated into Korean, Japanese, and Chinese.

Along with his wife, Marianne Schneider Corey, Jerry often presents workshops in group counseling. In the past 30 years the Coreys have conducted group counseling training workshops for mental health professionals at many universities in the United States as well as in Canada, Mexico, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Germany, Belgium, Scotland, England, and Ireland. In his leisure time, Jerry likes to travel, hike and bicycle in the mountains, and drive his 1931 Model A Ford. The Coreys have been married for 45 years; they have two adult daughters and three grandchildren.

Jerry Corey is coauthor (with Barbara Herlihy) of Boundary Issues in Counseling: Multiple Roles and Responsibilities, second edition (2006) and ACA Ethical Standards Casebook, sixth edition (2006), and is author of Creating Your Professional Path: Lessons From My Journey (2010); all three books are published by the American Counseling Association. Other books that Jerry has authored or coauthored, all with Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning, include:

- Becoming a Helper, sixth edition (2011), with Marianne Schneider Corey
- Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions, eighth edition (2011), with Marianne Schneider Corey and Patrick Callanan
• *Groups: Process and Practice*, eighth edition (2010), with Marianne Schneider Corey and Cindy Corey
• *I Never Knew I Had a Choice*, ninth edition (2010), with Marianne Schneider Corey
• *Case Approach to Counseling and Psychotherapy*, seventh edition (2009)
• *The Art of Integrative Counseling*, second edition (2009)
• *Group Techniques*, third edition (2004), with Marianne Schneider Corey, Patrick Callanan, and J. Michael Russell


**ROBERT HAYNES, PhD**, is a clinical psychologist and producer of psychology video programs for Borderline Productions. Bob received his doctorate in clinical psychology from Fuller Graduate School of Psychology in Pasadena, California, and is a member of the American Counseling Association and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision. He has been actively involved in professional psychology through clinical practice as well as consulting, leading workshops, and writing on a variety of topics. In addition, Bob taught psychology, criminology, and management courses at the University of California at Santa Barbara, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and California State University, Sacramento. He also served as Chair of Site Visiting Teams for the Committee on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. Bob retired after 25 years as training director of the accredited clinical psychology internship program at Atascadero State Hospital in California.

Bob has provided consultation and training in clinical supervision, criminology, disaster mental health, psychotherapy methods, stress management and burnout, suicide assessment and intervention, and theoretical approaches in counseling. His expertise also extends into the areas of conflict resolution, leadership training, management supervision, and team building. In his leisure time, Bob likes to fish, bicycle, travel, and spend time with his grandchildren. He is married to Cheryl, who is a registered nurse, and he is also a proud grandparent. They have two adult daughters, Crissa and Errin.

Publications by Bob Haynes with Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning include the following titles:

• *Student Workbook for the Art of Integrative Counseling* (2001, with Gerald Corey)
• *Student Workbook and Facilitator’s Resource Manual for Ethics in Action* (1998, with Gerald Corey and Marianne Schneider Corey)
ABOUT THE AUTHORS


In addition, he has published the following shorter works:


PATRICE MOULTON, PhD, is a professor and graduate faculty member in the Department of Psychology at Northwestern State University (NSU) in Natchitoches, Louisiana, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Approved LPC Supervisor, a Licensed Substance Abuse Counselor, a National Board Certified Counselor, a Clinical Member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, and Licensed Psychologist in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Patrice is a member of the American Counseling Association, Louisiana Counseling Association, and American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. She has been actively involved in clinical practice through private practice, directing clinical programs through the Department of Health and Hospitals, supervising a college counseling center, teaching, conducting professional workshops, and publishing.

Patrice is married to Michael, who is a faculty member at NSU, and together they are raising Bryce, their 9-year-old son. In their leisure time, they like to travel, train for marathons, write, and play with Bryce.

Patrice has published in many professional journals, completed numerous professional book reviews, and has coauthored the following books:

MICHELLE MURATORI, PhD, is a senior counselor and researcher at the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University, in Baltimore, Maryland, where she works with highly gifted middle school and high school students, who participate in the Study of Exceptional Talent, and their families. After earning her MA in counseling psychology from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, Michelle received her PhD in counselor education from the University of Iowa, where she developed her research and clinical interests in gifted education. Her graduate research on the academic, social, and emotional adjustment of young college entrants earned her recognition from the Iowa Talented and Gifted Association, the National Association for Gifted Children, and the Mensa Education and Research Foundation and Mensa International, Ltd. At the University of Iowa, Michelle also earned the Howard R. Jones Achievement Award, the Albert Hood Promising Scholar Award, and the First in the Nation in Education (FINE) Scholar Award.

Since 2005, Michelle has been a faculty associate in the Counseling and Human Services Department in the Johns Hopkins School of Education and teaches courses in theories of counseling and group counseling. Michelle regularly presents at national conferences in counseling and gifted education and is a member of the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the Maryland Association for Counseling and Development (MACD), and the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). When she is not engaged in these professional activities, Michelle enjoys writing, attending concerts, and spending time with her family and friends.

In 2007, Michelle developed a practical guide for early college entrance that guides all of the stakeholders through the difficult decision-making process. This book, *Early Entrance to College: A Guide to Success,* was published by Prufrock Press. She contributes regularly to *Imagine: Big Ideas for Bright Minds,* published by the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth. Other selected publications include the following:


Michelle has also written content for a number of textbook instructor’s manuals and online programs for Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning over the past few years.
We are especially indebted to the students and practicing supervisors who gave generously of their time to share their thoughts and experiences with supervision. You will find their thoughts in their own words in the *Voices From the Field* feature throughout the book.

**Randy Alle-Corliss, MSW, LCSW,** is a clinical social worker in the Department of Psychiatry at Kaiser-Permanente, and part-time instructor of human services at California State University, Fullerton; he received his master’s degree in social work from the University of Southern California.

**Steve Arkowitz, PsyD,** is clinical director for the Liberty California Conditional Release Program; he received his doctorate in clinical psychology from Wright State University in Ohio.

**Wade Arnold, PhD,** is a graduate faculty member at Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; he received his doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Florida.

**Elie Axelroth, PsyD,** is Interim Head of Counseling Services at the Health and Counseling Services, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California; she received her doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Denver Graduate School of Professional Psychology.

**Jamie Bludworth, PhD,** is a licensed psychologist at the student counseling center at Arizona State University. He received his doctorate in counseling psychology at Arizona State University.

**Marianne Schneider Corey, MA,** is a licensed marriage and family therapist; she received her master’s degree in marriage, family, and child counseling from Chapman College.

**Malik Henfield, PhD,** is an assistant professor of counseling in the Department of Counseling, Rehabilitation, and Student Development at The University of Iowa; he received his doctorate in counselor education from The Ohio State University.

**Kellie Kirksey, PhD,** is associate professor of counselor education at Malone University, as well as a clinician in private practice; she earned her doctorate at The Ohio State University in counselor education and psychology.

**Wendy Logan, MA Ed,** is a school counselor at North Windy Ridge school. She is an on-site clinical supervisor for Western Carolina University and EastTennessee State University; she graduated from Western Carolina University.
Crissa Markow, MSW, LSW, is a family consultant with the Davidson Institute for Talent Development in Reno, Nevada; she received her master’s degree in social work from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Rick Myer, PhD, is professor of psychology at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he also serves as director for the Center of Crisis Intervention and Prevention; he received his doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Memphis.

Tory Nersasian, PsyD, is a licensed clinical psychologist in San Luis Obispo County, California; she received her doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Denver Graduate School of Professional Psychology.

Benjamin Noah, PhD, is lead core faculty in counselor education at Capella University; he received his doctorate in human services from Walden University.

Tarrell Awe Agahe Portman, PhD, is an associate professor and coordinator of the School Counseling Program in the Department of Counseling, Rehabilitation, and Student Development at The University of Iowa; she earned her doctorate at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

Phyllis Robertson, PhD, is an assistant professor of counselor education in the Department of Human Services at Western Carolina University; she earned her doctorate at the University of South Carolina.

Valerie Russell, PhD, is a licensed psychologist who facilitates groups and supervises interns in a community mental health agency in Southern California; she received her doctorate in clinical psychology at the California School of Professional Psychology, Los Angeles.

Bill Safarjan, PhD, is a licensed psychologist and an independent contractor; he is past president of the California Psychological Association; he received his doctorate from Rutgers University.

Heriberto Sánchez, PhD, is chief psychologist at the California Men’s Colony Mental Health Services, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; he received his doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Janna Scarborough, PhD, is an associate professor of counseling and the counseling program coordinator of the Department of Human Development and Learning at East Tennessee State University; she earned her doctorate in counselor education at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

David Shepard, PhD, is an associate professor of counseling at California State University, Fullerton, and private practitioner; he received his doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Southern California.

Stacy Thacker, PhD, is a psychologist with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Board of Parole Hearings, Forensic Assessment Division; she received her doctorate in counseling psychology from Colorado State University.

Todd Thies, PhD, is a licensed psychologist in California; he received his doctorate in clinical psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology, Fresno.

Judy Van Der Wende, PhD, is a licensed psychologist who has a private practice in Southern California; she earned her doctorate at Pacific Graduate School in Palo Alto, California, and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center in Baltimore, Maryland.

Judith Walters, MS, MFT, is a marriage and family therapist and an instructor at California Polytechnic State University and Cuesta Community College, both in San Luis Obispo, California; she received her master’s degree in psychology from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Robert Wubbolding, EdD, is professor emeritus of counseling at Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio; he is the director of the Center for Reality Therapy in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the director of training for the William Glasser Institute in Los Angeles; he received his doctorate from the University of Cincinnati.

Muriel Yáñez, PsyD, is a licensed psychologist and forensic consultant in California; she received her doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Denver Graduate School of Professional Psychology.