

HENLEY BUSINESS SCHOOL  
AND THE ASSOCIATION FOR COACHING

# The Manifesto for Supervision

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 Association  
for Coaching

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## Executive summary

Supervision has a key role to play in coach development – for novice coaches during their first stages of training and for experienced coaches engaging in continuing professional and personal development. Supervision links theory and practice through the whole action learning cycle and through quality reflective practice.

This manifesto is a call to arms. It provides an overview of why supervision is needed and examines its functions. The Manifesto summarises the main models, research and latest thinking on supervision, including that of the professional bodies, and it also considers ethics in supervision. Finally, it calls for collaboration between industry stakeholders to take forward supervision to its next stage of development.

Citation: Hawkins, P, Turner, E & Passmore, J (2019) *The Manifesto for Supervision*. Henley-on-Thames: Association for Coaching, and Henley Business School. ISBN: 978-1-912473-24-3

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## Henley Centre for Coaching

The Henley Centre for Coaching is a global leader in coaching research and coach training. We are the only triple-accredited coaching provider in the world offering both postgraduate university qualifications in coaching and accreditation from the Association for Coaching (AC), the International Coach Federation (ICF) and the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC).

The Centre provides formal accredited coach training through our *Professional Certificate in Coaching* and *MSc in Coaching and Behavioural Change*, and accredited supervision training through our *Professional Certificate in Supervision*. These programmes are delivered in the UK at our Greenlands campus, and at venues across the world.

The Centre provides continuous professional development for coaching professionals through masterclasses, webinars,

conferences, and via online access to journals, ebooks and coaching research. These are all delivered through our online learning platform, meaning coaches can connect from anywhere in the world to engage in professional development.

The Henley coaching team consists of leading practitioners and academics who have shaped the coaching profession since the late 1990s. They have written many of the most popular coaching books and they continue to publish in leading management journals and to contribute at conferences worldwide. Their writing, thinking and research informs our teaching and ensures our programmes are at the cutting edge of coaching practice.

The Centre offers annual membership to all professional coaches, providing a virtual-learning environment where the members shape research and practice in coaching. Check out our website for details on how we can help you and your business come to life.

# Contents

Foreword.....	4
Acknowledgements .....	4
Introduction .....	5
What is coaching supervision? .....	5
Why supervision is essential for quality coaching.....	5
Defining supervision and its multiple functions .....	6
The research story so far.....	8
Guidance for supervision .....	12
Ethics and supervision .....	14
The Manifesto .....	16
Twelve points for action .....	17
References .....	18
Further reading .....	19

**Foreword**

As coaching, in its many forms, continues to have rippling effects within individuals, businesses and, in turn, society, there is an ever-greater need for us to take the responsibility of honing our craft within the systems we operate.

.....  
**The art and science of supervision is, from the broadest perspective, a reflective practice to be done individually and in partnership**  
 .....

That is why this compact yet insightful Manifesto, meant to inspire, educate and inform our evolving profession, is timely.

Like coaching, the art and science of supervision is, from the broadest perspective, a reflective practice; it is to be done individually and in partnership. The intent is to demystify and to put the spotlight of its greater importance within our work.



We would like to thank the authors for the contribution they have made, with the hopes that this, too, will build and deepen the awareness of what coaches do and of our collective impact.

**Katherine Tulpa**  
 CEO, Association for Coaching

**Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Dr Michel Moral for his help in providing information on examples of global coaching supervision research, including providing a list of doctoral publications in the field. We would also like to thank Julie Freeborn, who gave useful feedback on earlier drafts and showed how coaching supervision can best be developed to work with supervision in psychology.

The views in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy or views of the Association for Coaching or University of Reading.



## Introduction

*The hardest thing to attend to is that which is closest to ourselves, that which is most constant and familiar. And this closest "something" is, precisely, ourselves, our own habits and ways of doing things.*

*John Dewey*

At the core of continuing professional development (CPD) is continuing *personal* development, where our own development is weaved through every aspect of our practice. When this happens, every coachee becomes a teacher, every piece of feedback an opportunity for new learning, for producing practices that support the balanced cycle of action, reflection, new understanding and new practice.

The authors of this manifesto believe that having supervision is a fundamental part of continuing personal and professional development for coaches, mentors, consultants and psychologists. It provides a disciplined space in which the supervisee can reflect on particular work and client situations and relationships, and on the reactivity and patterns they evoke in the mind. The process of transforming these in supervision can profoundly benefit the client, their organisation and their own professional practice.

## What is coaching supervision?

As with most areas of practice, debate continues over the precise form and nature of supervision.

One widely used definition of coaching supervision is: 'a formal and protected time for facilitating a coach's in-depth reflection on their practice with a trained Coaching Supervisor' (Association for Coaching, 2019a).

There is continuing debate as to whether the term should be spelt 'super-vision' or 'supervision'. The authors have agreed to use the term supervision, while acknowledging that this does not imply a hierarchical relationship between the supervisor and supervisee, and that its purpose is to enhance insight and to deepen the understanding of the coach, with a view towards enhancing the coach's practice.

There is also considerable discussion about the use of the term 'coaching supervisor' and who can be a supervisor. For the authors, the term implies both a level of experience that the supervisor is able to bring to the relationship and a level of formal training in self-awareness, ethical practice and supervisor processes. Through this combination of experience and training, our belief is that supervisors are best placed to enhance insight and deepen understanding.

## Why supervision is essential for quality coaching

When we train as practitioners, we learn many tools, techniques, practical methodologies, ways of understanding clients, ways of building working alliances and of contracting. All of this is necessary and useful. But no matter how good or extensive the training is, we cannot be taught to be great practitioners by books, trainers or even solely through multiple hours of practice. This is because our most important tool or instrument that we bring to our coach, to our consulting and our leadership is our selves, and this instrument of the self needs constant attention and development and, at times, a service and repair. Alison Hardingham, talks about the critical role of the self:

*In developing as a coach, we need to develop a deep understanding of ourselves. Who are we; our histories, our narratives and our bias and prejudices. What are our strengths, our limitations, our blind spots. Only through reflective practice can we fully become.*

Doug Silsbee notes: 'we do the work on our "self" in order that we might be granted the privilege of working with our clients' (Silsbee, 2008). In this he mirrors Sir John Whitmore who told coaches, 'if you only have time for one piece of development, do it on yourself' (see Turner & Palmer, 2019: xxviii). One cannot become a great coach through training alone, for it is a lifetime's journey and the major teachers are not those we meet on our training, but are the so-called difficult clients and situations that life provides us with throughout our coaching career.

This learning from and in the midst of the heat of experience is almost impossible to do by oneself.

*Neither coach nor client can change until we are able to step onto the balcony and gain new views of ourselves – our habits, stories and beliefs; nor can we as coaches change without these new views.*

McLean, 2019

It is high-on impossible to see the blind spots, biases and prejudices that limit our perceptions, or to see the limiting mind-sets and assumptions that interrupt us from being fully present to the client, to what emerges and needs attention – present with what Otto Scharmer describes as the 'opening of the mind, the heart, and the will' (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013: 23). For this, we need the skilled help of a coaching supervisor who can help us to learn from our clients – from the worlds in which they are living and working, and from the reactions and judgements that they invoke in us – and to learn and unlearn from being at the uncomfortable edge of our development.

Supervision is a key element in the action learning cycle that connects the competencies we learn on coach training, with the practice of working with a great variety of clients and client organisations. Through reflection on this practice, we learn, unlearn and relearn new ways of being a coach and new ways of partnering challenging and changing clients.



Hawkins has written extensively (Hawkins, 2017, 2018; Hawkins & Smith, 2013) about how the challenges in the world require all organisations to step-up to learning how to do more, at a higher quality and with less resource. Hawkins considers how we live in times of quantum, rather than incremental change. In helping leaders respond fully to the challenges of our times and the often-conflicting needs of their many stakeholders, coaches also need to grow their own capacity. This does not mean their capacity to work harder or longer hours, but instead to connect more deeply, with a wider range of people and situations, to embrace complexity and to be present and non-reactive in the midst of pain, grief and anger. Coaches need to create great partnership with their clients in which both parties can discover the path together, through co-creative dialogue and through ways of thinking and 'being' that neither of them had been aware of previously.

Coaching is increasingly focusing not only on helping leaders and managers with horizontal development, learning how to handle their current situations better, but on vertical development as well (Kegan, 1982; Petrie, 2014a, 2014b; Torbert, 2004), helping leaders shift their ways of thinking and being in the world and to unlearn their conceptual frames, action logics and emotional patterns. In doing so, coaching can help leaders to increase their human capacity to embrace greater complexity and achieve greater ethical maturity. Otto Laske (2006) hypothesises that a coach is incapable of effectively coaching a leader who exceeds the coach's own level of development.

[A] coach who is at the same developmental stage as their coachee will not be able to help them get to the next stage, and a coach at a lower stage of development than their coachee may actually impair progress.

Laske, 2006

This is supported by the work of Chandler and Kram (2005). To enable vertical development in others requires that we are constantly attending to our own vertical development and expanding our own ethical maturity.

Increasingly, many of the issues that are brought to supervision have an ethical dilemma embedded in the situation, and the ability to attend to this ethical moment in a way that does not just solve the problem but also develops the ethical maturity of the client, coach, supervisor and the wider systems, is a core requisite to good coaching and supervision.

We also need to grow our capacity to work systemically (Hawkins & Turner, in print) in ways that deliver value, not only for the individual or team client, but for all our client's stakeholders. To help coaching to evolve beyond what one young black manager in Cape Town, South Africa described as: 'Highly expensive personal development for the already highly privileged.'

Supervision is not just a process for the learning and development of the individual coach/supervisee. It is also 'the learning lungs of the profession' (Hawkins & Shoheit, 2012), where the craft of coaching is constantly refreshing itself. What has made coaching very successful in the last 30 years is not what will be needed from coaching in the next 30 years; supervision needs to avoid being the place where senior practitioners develop supervisees to be more like themselves, enculturating them in yesterday's way of coaching. Instead it needs to be a place where we all discover how to be 'future-fit' coaches, at the forefront of shifting human consciousness – our own and that of our clients, their organisations, their stakeholders and ultimately our human species itself. The purpose of all this is that we might learn how to be fit for this one earth we share with each other and with 'the more than human world'. We share this wider purpose with all those in the fields of people development, whether they be coaches, counsellors, leaders, HR practitioners, psychologists, educators, facilitators, consultants, mentors, spiritual teachers or others.

## Defining supervision and its multiple functions

Supervision has been widely defined. The Association for Coaching (AC) do so as follows:

Coaching Supervision is a formal and protected time for facilitating a coach's in-depth reflection on their practice with a Coaching Supervisor. Supervision offers a confidential framework within a collaborative working relationship in which the practice, tasks, process and challenges of the coaching work can be explored.

The primary aim of Supervision is to enable the coach to gain in ethical competency, confidence and creativity so as to ensure best possible service to the coaching clients, both coachees and coaching sponsors. Supervision is not a 'policing' role, but rather a trusting and collegial professional relationship

AC, 2019a

Hawkins and Smith have offered the following definition:

The process by which a coach/mentor/consultant with the help of a supervisor, who is not working directly with the client, can attend to understanding better both the client and the client system and themselves as part of the client-coach system, and by so doing transform their work and develop their craft. Supervision also does this by attending to the transformation of the relationship between the supervisor and coach and to the wider contexts in which the work is happening.

Hawkins & Smith, 2013: 169

In their definition, Hawkins and Smith make it clear that supervision is not a process done by the supervisor as the supplier, with the supervisee as the customer. Rather it is a process that is collaboratively co-created between the supervisee, the supervisor and the emerging work of the supervisee. It is the work, and the challenges and learning that it is posing, that sets the agenda and curriculum for the supervision, not the supervisor or the supervisee, although the two of them need to jointly discover what this agenda is.

We also indicate in this definition how supervision needs to be systemic, attending to the coach, their clients, the client's organisations, the organisation's stakeholders, the systemic contexts of the clients, coach and supervisor, and the connections between all these levels. David Clutterbuck, Visiting Professor at Henley Centre for Coaching, believes that over 90% of what is brought to supervision is not solely about the coach and clients but involves the complex interfaces with the sponsoring client organisation. This seems to be borne out by current research by David Clutterbuck and Eve Turner with 100 supervisors globally; it suggests that supervisors believe half of the issues brought to them by executive/business coaches are related in some way to the original contracting between clients and their organisations (Turner & Clutterbuck, 2019).

We believe that coaching supervision has three elements:

1. The **Qualitative** function focuses on increasing the quality of the work that is being done by the coach/supervisee with their clients, and the client's organisation.
2. The **Developmental** function focuses on helping the continuing personal and professional development of the coach, to grow their capacity and continually harvest their learning from the challenges their practice presents them with.
3. The **Resourcing** function focuses on the coach increasing their capability to work from 'source' rather than from effort, and on how they sustain themselves and their practice and increase their resourcefulness and resilience (see Hawkins, 2019).

This three-function model parallels the three functions that Kadushin put forward for social work supervision in the 1970s and that Proctor espoused for counselling supervision in the 1980s. Kadushin (1992) talked of the 'managerial, educative and supportive' aspects of supervision and Proctor (1988) of supervision being 'normative, formative and restorative'. Peter Hawkins worked with these two models for many years and found both to be rather confined to their own fields. This led him to develop his own model, which defines the three main functions presented above (qualitative, developmental and resourcing). While Kadushin focuses on the role of the supervisor, and Proctor on the supervisee benefit, the new distinctions focus on the process in which both supervisor and supervisee are collaboratively engaged.

The three functions are interconnected and work together, for as a coach develops, they grow their capacity to resource themselves and this in turn increases the quality of the work. Hawkins and Smith have provided a model to understand the different places/ perspectives on which supervision can focus; the seven-eyed model of supervision (Hawkins & Smith, 2013) is widely used throughout the world. We believe that coaching supervisors need

not only be capable of using all seven approaches but also need to be skilled in knowing when and how to move from one mode to another, and to do this in collaboration with the supervisee.

Hawkins and Smith (2013) have also provided the CLEAR process model. The model maps the various stages necessary in each supervision meeting. CLEAR stands for: contract, listen, explore, action and review. Behind this model are the following beliefs:

- Every supervision meeting needs to start by discovering the work that needs to be done in that session and contracting together how this will be done.
- There is a phase of generative dialogue involving listening and exploring the issue that needs to be learnt from.
- It is important to not stop at having generated new insight and thinking, but to move into an action phase – moving from cognitive to embodied learning by engaging in 'fast forward rehearsals', trying out the new ways of being.
- The final review stage is not about the supervisee telling the supervisor what has been helpful and what could be more helpful next time; this would imply that it is the supervisor doing the supervision. Rather this stage involves exploration of what the stakeholders of the supervisee (current and future clients, their organisations, their colleagues and employers etc) would value about the joint work that has just happened in the supervision and what challenges this would pose for the supervisee-supervisor relationship.

There are other helpful models in use, including:

- Full spectrum coaching supervision model (Murdoch & Arnold, 2013)
- Three worlds/four territories model of supervision (Munro-Turner, 2011)
- Seven conversations in supervision (Clutterbuck, 2011)
- Three pillars model (Hodge, 2016)
- Hawkins model of team coaching supervision (Hawkins, 2017)

Henley's contribution has been to integrate reflection into its programmes, making self development an essential ingredient of its coach training. One way that Henley brings this alive in its Professional Certificate of Coaching is through the Henley Eight. This is a series of questions to guide self-reflection, enhance situation awareness and support personal development.

## The Henley Eight

1. What did I notice?
2. How did I respond – behaviourally, emotionally, physiologically and cognitively?
3. What does this tell me about myself as a person?
4. What does this tell me about myself as a coach?
5. What strengths does that offer?
6. What pitfalls should I watch out for?
7. What did I learn from this observation/reflection?
8. What might I do differently next time?



## The research story so far

Research has not kept up with coaching supervision practice, as Turner and Palmer (2019) note. This is paralleled in therapy too, with Beinart and Clohessy (2017) observing that ‘supervision research has lagged behind therapy research despite almost all therapy trials requiring supervision’ (2017: 6). Both Lane, Watts and Corrie (2016) and Passmore (2011) share the view that the enthusiasm for supervision currently outstrips the evidence base, including the evidence that attests to its impact on practice Corrie et al also suggest that relatively little attention has been paid to the development of supervisors, as opposed to supervisees. Others have made similar points. Reviewing coaching supervision, Tkach and DiGirolamo, from the International Coaching Federation (ICF) Research Team, note that there are currently ‘no universally accepted guide-lines or best practices’ (2017: 56).

They advocate the ‘development and agreement amongst researchers of standardised measures’ to move the industry forward in its understanding of what takes place in coaching supervision (2017: 59).

We do know that coaching and mentoring have been areas of enormous growth since 2000. The ICF’s Global Coaching Study (2016) estimated that the coaching industry had 53,300 professionally accredited coaches worldwide who generated revenue of US\$2.356 billion in 2015, representing a 19% increase over the 2011 estimate. These figures are based on ICF’s own survey and do not include unregistered coaches, so the market is probably much larger than they indicate. Coaching has become a significant and regular part of most leadership development activities, and approximately 70% of companies surveyed in the UK and North America are investing in coaching (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2011; Hawkins, 2012).

Despite this, coaching supervision was noticeable by its absence in the first 20 years of the growth of this new profession; at the turn of the century it began to be advocated by several key writers (see Downey, 1999; Flaherty, 1999).

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In the early part of the twenty-first century, very few coaches were receiving supervision and those who did were approaching supervisors trained in psychotherapy or counselling. While there is much we can learn from these and other people professions in which quality supervision has been practised for longer than coaching, there are also dangers.

It was not until 2003 that the first specific training was offered for coaching supervisors and 2006 that the first book on coaching supervision was published (Hawkins & Smith, 2006). Since the first edition of this book, there has been a significant growth in coaching supervision, particularly in the UK, where it has been endorsed by most of the major professional coaching bodies and where there has been a number of new significant publications (such as Bachkirova, Jackson & Clutterbuck, 2011; De Haan, 2012; Hawkins & Smith, 2013; Passmore, 2011; Turner & Palmer, 2019).

In 2006, Hawkins and Schwenk carried out research for the UK’s Chartered Institute of People Development on the state of Coaching Supervision in the UK and internationally. This research focused on a number of key questions, as follows:

- What is coaching supervision?
- Why should HR professionals be interested in it?
- What do HR professionals need to know about coaching supervision?
- What does good practice look like?
- How can supervision help coaching to be more effective?



Various methods were used: a web survey, with responses from over 500 individual coaches and over 120 organisations; four focus groups across the UK, which included both buyers of coaching and experienced providers; and six best-practice case studies of organisations that had committed to incorporating supervision into both their internal and external coaching provision.

The research discovered the following:

- Coaching supervision was much advocated but poorly practised.
- Eighty-eight per cent of organisers of coaching and 86% of coaches believed that coaches should have regular ongoing supervision of their coaching.
- Only 44% of coaches receive regular ongoing supervision and only 23% of organisations provided regular ongoing coaching supervision.
- Of the coaches receiving supervision, 58% had started within the last two years.
- Many of those who were receiving supervision were consulting with supervisors of counselling or psychotherapy, and some with peers without supervision training.
- There was a shortage of training courses in coaching supervision.
- There was a shortage of research in the field.
- There was an absence of specific models and methodologies for coaching supervision.

(Hawkins & Schwenk, 2006)

This research also explored the reasons for the lack of development of coaching supervision. In both interviews and focus groups with experienced coaches, a number of different explanations emerged:

- Lack of clarity about what supervision involves.
- Lack of well-trained supervisors.
- Lack of commitment to personal development as it provokes a sense of vulnerability.
- Lack of discipline among coaches.
- Addiction to being in the role of the person enabling others, rather than receiving enablement.

In 2014, Hawkins and Turner carried out follow-up research to the 2006 survey on coaching supervision (Hawkins & Turner, 2017). This was part of a larger research project that studied multi-stakeholder contracting in coaching (Turner & Hawkins, 2016). Four hundred and sixty-eight coaches completed the supervision elements of the survey, of which 54.7% were in the UK, 21.7% in Europe and 9.8% in North America. The results showed that there had been a significant increase in the number of coaches reporting that they received regular supervision compared to the 2006 percentages.

- Given that the majority of respondents in 2006 were UK-based, we can see a massive increase in the UK, from 44% to 92.31% of UK coaches having supervision.

- Supervision spread widely across different regions of the world, with 83.18% of respondents globally reporting that they had supervision.
- North America had the lowest number of coaches reporting having supervision (43.64%), although this is still slightly ahead of where the UK was in 2006.
- The reasons that coaches gave for having supervision had also shifted, with the top two areas being: 'it is part of my personal commitment to good practice' and 'it contributes to my continuous professional development'.
- Less positive was that the majority of coaches only had supervision every 2–3 months, and that although most organisations say they think it is important that all coaches have supervision, very few insist on it.

(Hawkins & Turner, 2017)

Another recent, larger study with 2,791 participants from a total of 45 European countries, of which nearly one thousand were from the UK, found lower levels of engagement with supervision (Passmore, Brown & Csigas, 2017). One thousand and sixty-one said they had formal supervision with a qualified supervisor (2017: 15). Thirty-four per cent said they did not engage in supervision, and of more than 2,000 responses, 35.3% said they expected to get reflective practice free, with a further 17.5% expecting it to cost less than 50 Euros per hour. It is possible that these figures may even be an over-report: firstly, supervision may be seen as a socially desirable activity. Secondly, those responding to coaching surveys have tended to belong to professional bodies who are more likely to engage in such activity (although the Passmore et al [2017] research did use social media interest groups extensively).

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**Research has found that coaching supervision is much advocated but poorly practised. Most organisations think it's important, but few insist on it.**  
 .....

This variety in practice and training is borne out by other research. Grant (2012) found that only half of Australian coaches who provided formal supervision had received supervision training themselves. Participants reported as a major issue 'the difficulty of finding training in coach supervision and being assured of the quality of any such training' (Grant, 2012: 28). While 82.7% of 179 experienced coaches completing the online survey were having some form of supervision (peer, formal, informal), only 25.7% were having formal supervision and 30% reported having had a negative experience (2012: 17) in the form of poor supervision skills and problems with peer group supervision, such as individuals dominating (2012: 26). Perceived barriers were seen to be the cost of supervision and finding a supervisor.

In a smaller-scale study of 33 coaches and 29 purchasers, Lawrence and Whyte (2014), researching in Australia and New Zealand, found that while coaches said they'd use supervision if they needed emotional support, in reality few had felt that need



Day and colleagues (2008) interviewed 28 experienced coaches to study critical moments in coaching relationships and noted that 'Coaches reported using supervision to help them to make sense of critical moments, to gain reassurance that they responded appropriately and to learn from these moments' (Day et al, 2008: 207).

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**Mutual trust, safety and respect develop over time and are key ingredients to creating a safe place for coaches to explore their practice and clarify dilemmas and doubts**

.....

often, and only just over a third (36%) referred to supervision as part of their ongoing learning. In contrast, purchasing clients saw the purpose as quality control and yet 'only 21% of purchasing clients insist on supervision as part of a quality assurance process' (Lawrence & Whyte, 2014: 39).

Hodge's (2016) doctoral research on the value of coaching supervision as a development process was carried out with six executive coaches and five coach supervisors, who 'acknowledged that what occurs in the coaching space is unpredictable and challenging' and were 'clear about the need to support themselves' (2016: 95). In contrast to Lawrence and Whyte's research, the participants were all in regular supervision and Hodge found that mutual trust, safety and respect developed over time and were key ingredients to creating a safe place for coaches to explore their practice and clarify dilemmas and doubts in working with their clients. By doing this, coaches 'are able to engage effectively and consistently with their clients thus avoiding "burnout" or "compassion fatigue"' (2016: 98).

A survey on the state of supervision in France found that those describing themselves as supervisors were highly experienced and nearly all received supervision (94%). However, 80% had not received training and only just over a third (36%) planned to get training (Professional Supervisors Federation, 2014: 22-5). The main fears around supervision were seen as dependence and amateurism for both supervisors and coaches, and the key benefits were sharing methods and standing back (2014: 35). Interestingly, 40% of respondents were unaware whether their supervisors were supervised, and this mirrors a finding by Turner and Hawkins (2016) where almost half of coachees (48.3%) did not know if their coaches were supervised (2016: 34).

Bachkirova (2011, 2015) conducted interviews with six very experienced coaching supervisors on self-deception in coaching. Various manifestations emerged, from not noticing their own good work to not noticing ethical dilemmas or boundaries with psychotherapy, forgetting the organisational client, 'pretending to be non-directive with no agenda' and extending coaching unnecessarily (Bachkirova, 2011: 96).

Critical moments are considered to be unforeseen emotional episodes that can create tension and stress in the client-coach relationship, leading to anxiety and self-doubt in coaches. Outcomes could include a learning opportunity for the client and/or coach if the coach can 'contain heightened emotions and stay with the client's experience', thereby providing an opportunity for self-learning; alternatively, it could lead to a break in the relationship (2008: 216). As with Bachkirova, anxieties included boundary issues (contracting, triangulations) and issues around being more or less directive. There were also issues around satisfying outcomes (expectations from stakeholders) and advice.

Lamy and Moral (2015), based in France, have been at the forefront of research into supervision. Moral has uniquely examined whether there is a 'specific personality profile of supervisors, or of coaches who want to become supervisors' (2015: 126). He explored whether they have a specific defensive style, concluding that little difference has been noted between coaches and supervisors and the general population. Moral argues that 'a better understanding of the defence profiles of coaches and supervisors will help to design new supervision techniques' (2015: 131).

Moral and Lamy (2016: 168) have started to consider what group supervision process would 'best serve the system formed by the group, the supervisor, the supervisees and the context of the client', and they assess there are currently around 100 processes in use. They state, 'Our objective is to open new areas of investigation that could be studied with quantitative methodologies' (2016: 169) and, as yet, they have not tested a hypothesis.

In 2019, Turner and Palmer noted there were several publications relating to supervision 'and, in particular, the relationship between supervisor and supervisee' (2019: 8). This is mirrored in the therapy world with Beinart and Clohessy (2017) describing a range of models with some empirical underpinning which shows that 'by far the strongest and growing evidence base lies with the importance of the SR [supervisory relationship] itself' (2017: 29).

De Haan considered trust and safety in supervision and concluded that levels of trust are high. The research, with 518 coach respondents from 32 countries, shows that the vast majority (85%) had explored in supervision ‘...the most concerning, worrying and/or shameful episode in the coach’s practice over the last few years’ and found supervision helpful (De Haan, 2017: 42). Of those who hadn’t used supervision, nearly half (7%) felt they could have brought the incident to supervision but didn’t, 1% felt it was ‘too shameful’ and 2% ‘did not trust their supervisor’. Five per cent had found supervision unhelpful (De Haan, 2017: 42–44).

Sheppard’s (2017) research looked at what enabled and inhibited supervision and focused on supervisees. Her aim was to support supervisees to get more from their coaching supervision and identified four distinct themes on how supervisees get in their own way during supervision: ‘anxiety, fear of judgment and shame, I’m blocking myself, lack of agency and not seeing myself as an equal partner’ (2017: 115). Sheppard noted four ways in which supervisees had learned to enhance their supervision: ‘...adopting a positive mindset, co-creating the relationship, participating actively in the process and undertaking supervisor training’ (2017: 117).

Palmer (2017) used an online survey to investigate the supervisor–supervisee relationship, with two-thirds of the 112 respondents, based in 22 countries, who had been in practice for six or more years.

Ninety per cent rated ‘trust’ within a coaching supervision relationship as ‘very important’ and 88% reported that their current supervisor was ‘very trustworthy’.

Palmer, 2017

Palmer notes that:

Supervision Enhancing Thoughts (SETs), attitudes or beliefs held by respondents included:

It’s challenging but required for growth personally and professionally.

This is a space where I can be vulnerable and feel safe and supported.

Supervision is a quality guarantee for my clients, and a protection for myself.

In contrast, Supervision Interfering Thoughts (SITs), attitudes or beliefs included:

I may be judged as a coach.

Imposter syndrome is my main interfering thought.

I would hate my supervisor to think I was a rubbish coach!

Respondents also reported that supervision enhanced coaching performance and their well-being, the latter being an under-researched area of the benefits of supervision.

Palmer, 2017



## Less than half of organisations are confident that all their coaches are in supervision

The sixth Ridler Report, which is 74% UK-based and draws on 105 completed surveys and 28 phone interviews among organisations, demonstrates a clear commitment to coaching supervision (Ridler Report, 2017: 67). Eighty-eight per cent of organisations believed that coaching supervision ‘is a fundamental requirement for any professional executive coach.’ Despite this, ‘less than half of organisations are confident that all their coaches are in supervision (47%)’ (2017: 50).

A substantial, global piece of research on coaching supervision was conducted in 2018 with 1,280 respondents from 72 countries (McAnally et al, 2019).

McAnally et al’s research had two objectives:

1. To learn about the current state of coaching supervision around the world.
2. To better understand what coaches perceive as the value of supervision to themselves and their practice, as well as supervision practice characteristics and possible opportunities.

Key findings include:

- geographical differences
- individual versus group supervision
- types of challenges brought to coach supervision
- the benefits of coach supervision as reported by supervisees
- what coach supervisors did that was seen as most helpful for supervisees
- supervisee’ wishes for more or less from their coach supervisors
- earnings for coach supervisors

McAnally et al observed that while coaching supervision is a well accepted practice for executive and leadership coaches in Europe, and especially in the UK, globally, it is not as common a practice elsewhere. This has meant relatively little data for some countries or regions, such as the Americas.

**Table 1: Top three 'good practice' themes in contracting**

Coaches (when contracting with a client, n = 142)	Supervisors (when contracting with a supervisee, n = 99)
Shared understanding of the coaching assignment between the coach and coachee (57.7%)	Shared understanding of supervision (67.7%)
Clarity of contracting (55.6%)	Supervisor-supervisee relationship (63.6%)
Relationship between coach and coachee (42.3%)	Clarity of contracting (54.5%)

**(Turner & Clutterbuck, 2019)**

Research by David Clutterbuck and Eve Turner (mentioned above), with 100 supervisors and 149 coaches globally, suggests that supervisors believe that half of the issues brought to them by executive coaches (51%) were related in some way to the original contracting with their clients (Turner & Clutterbuck, 2019). Interestingly, executive and business coaches believe the figure to be lower, with just over a third of issues relating to contracting (34%). This disparity may indicate that contracting could be given more emphasis – for example, in coach training, to improve practice and confidence in this area. In the same research, the same three themes emerge as most important in contracting with a client or supervisee. However, there is a gap of 21.3% between the number of coaches and supervisors, with more of the former believing the relationship is one of the most important areas (see Table 1, above).

Finally, as supervision becomes more engrained in practice, so does the need for those who can help supervisors reflect on their work. To date the area of supervision of supervision has been little researched or written about. Hawkins and Smith (2013: 183) do talk of supervision of supervision for new supervisors, helping them 'to become effective and proactive supervisees' and the need for ongoing supervision of supervision to provide 'the essential connectivity that links learning about supervision on courses with learning from the practice of supervising'. Little attention to date has been paid to any other ongoing CPD for supervisors of supervisors (or even for just supervisors). Several conferences on supervision of supervision were held in Austria, Switzerland, Germany and The Netherlands in 2008 and 2009 and a number of publications resulted around that time, mainly in German (Moral & Turner, 2019). But generally, references in the English-speaking literature have been minimal.

coaches and mentors to aid understanding of the field, to consider how supervision of supervision differed from supervision and to look at the support and learning that current supervisors sought (Moral & Turner, 2019; Moral, Turner & Goldvarg, 2017). Of 119 respondents, 54 (46%) practised as supervisors of supervisors. The findings showed that limited training is available and 'access to experienced and trained practitioners is at best patchy globally.' Respondents '...highlighted the importance of supervision on supervision for example in developing their professional identity and growing in the role of supervisor' (Moral & Turner, 2019).

Professional development in this field emerges as a need, with the training that exists tending to be a one-to-one discussion with an experienced supervisor of supervisors, or done through peer reflection, with few examples of specific group training.

### Guidance for supervision

In Hawkins and Schwenk's (2006) pioneering research on supervision, they quoted the Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring's recommendation for trainees to have one hour of supervision for every 20 coaching hours and for fully trained coaches to have one hour for 35 coaching hours (2006: 6). In the years since, the coaching professional bodies have provided some guidance, both for membership and accreditation – this can be found on their respective websites (AC, 2019a; Association for



.....  
**Findings show that limited training is available and 'access to experienced and trained practitioners is at best patchy globally.'**  
 .....

In 2017 a unique global study was done by The Global Supervisors' Network (published 2019) on supervision of supervision for



Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision, 2019; European Mentoring and Coaching Council, 2019; ICF, 2019). For example, the AC uses the Global Code of Ethics supervision requirements (see Ethics and Supervision, below) for members to join, and for those seeking accreditation there are specific guidelines to:

Ensure that you can fulfil the following requirements for supervision by participating in one or more of the following:

- One-to-one coaching supervisor to coach
- One-to-one peer coaching supervision
- Group coaching supervision
- Peer group coaching supervision

AC, 2019b: 23

For accreditation, the AC recommends supervision in the following ratios, depending on the level a coach is seeking (Table 2, below).

The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) also gives specific guidance and 'believes that coaches/mentors should undertake no less than 1 hour of supervision per 35 hours of practice, ensuring a minimum of 4 hours per year, evenly distributed if possible' (EMCC, 2019). Another of the professional bodies, the Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS), does not stipulate an amount, but does require accredited members to provide an annual supervision

report from their supervisor alongside a continuous personal and professional development plan. They suggest that 'Each Executive Coach will choose a form of supervision and a supervisor that best fits their learning needs' (APECS, 2019).

The largest coaching professional body, the ICF, requires coach mentor support for those seeking a credential but does not require supervision.

ICF recommends coaching supervision for full-time professional coach practitioners as part of their portfolio of continuing professional development (CPD) activities designed to keep them fit for purpose. ICF does not require coaching supervision.

Their belief is that:

[b]ased upon the fact that no robust studies exist identifying the efficacy of coaching supervision, one would be hard-pressed to defend a position mandating coaching supervision on an ongoing basis

ICF, 2019

The APECS, AC and EMCC bodies all provide lists of accredited supervisors on their websites, many of whom work virtually, providing access to supervision globally, one-to-one and in groups. Where this is impossible, then peer supervision with

**Table 2: AC recommended supervision ratios**

Level of coach	Coaching hours per 1-hour supervision
Foundation Coach	15 hours
Coach/Executive Coach	15 hours
Professional/Executive Coach	30 hours
Master/Executive Coach	40 hours

(AC, 2019b: 25)



an experienced coach, is another possibility. Henley's position on supervision is that where possible, coaches will work with a qualified supervisor, because this means the person providing supervision will have undergone specific study, including dealing with ethical challenges and underlying dynamics. As with Matile, Gilbert and Turner's (2019) recommendations for peer supervision, Henley appreciates that 'peer supervision is a valuable part of a practitioner's portfolio of reflective practice activities, and groups or chains without qualified supervisors are encouraged, supporting deeper exploration and additional perspective. However, ideally some supervision will be delivered by a qualified supervisor' (Matile et al, 2019: 175). Further guidance on being a supervisee and on peer supervision can be found in the literature (Carroll & Gilbert, 2011; Clutterbuck, Whitaker & Lucas, 2016; Turner, Lucas & Whitaker, 2018).

## Ethics and supervision

As has been alluded to, one of the roles of supervision is to help raise standards. The Global Code of Ethics (GCE) (2019) has six professional body signatories including the AC and EMCC, who created the code in 2016, and more recent joiners like APECS and the International Mentoring Association. Their collective position on supervision makes clear the link to ethics:

4.3 Members will engage in supervision with a suitably qualified supervisor or peer supervision group with a level of frequency that is appropriate to their coaching, mentoring or supervision practice, the requirements of their professional body and the level of their accreditation, or evidence engagement in reflective practice, ideally with peers and/or more experienced colleagues.

4.4 Members need to ensure that any other existing relationship with the supervisor does not interfere with the quality of the supervision provided.

4.5 Members will discuss any ethical dilemmas and potential, or actual, breaches of this Code with their supervisor or peer supervision group for support and guidance.

GCE, 2019: 6

Ethics in coaching, mentoring, organisational practice and supervision is not a simple case of 'right or wrong' (Turner & Passmore, 2019: 26). Malik writes of the responsibility we each have to make our own 'moral map' (2014: 344). Meanwhile, Carroll and Shaw (2013) reflect that it is not easy to practise ethically:

*My mind is a moral maze where I end up continually facing yet another dead end. I long for the easy answer that removes any responsibility for having to go on an ethical journey where the destination is unclear.*

Carroll & Shaw, 2013: 19

.....  
**Despite a decade of encouragement from professional bodies, and even in the UK, many accredited coaches are still not making use of supervision.**  
 .....

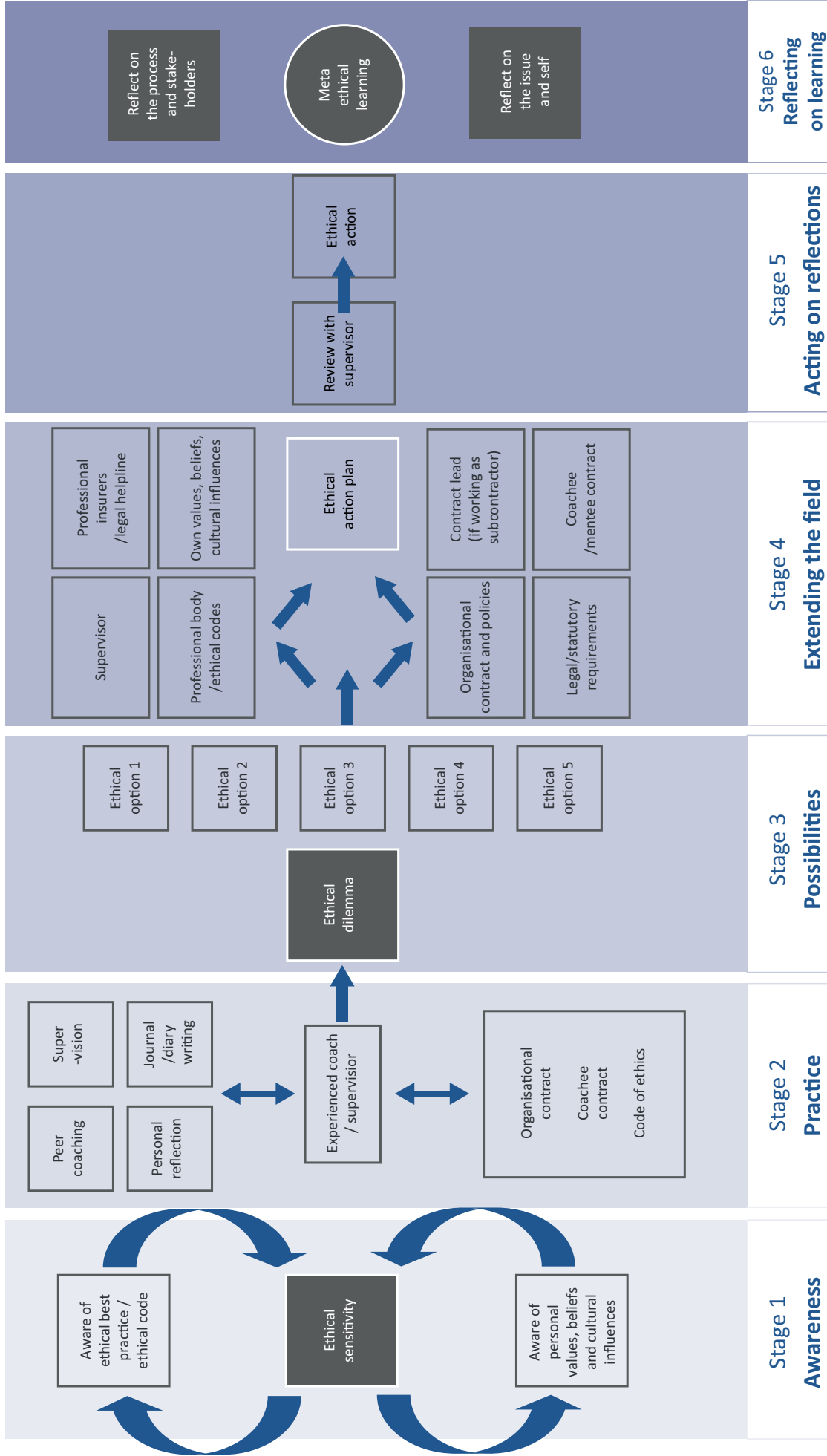
Supervision and other reflective practices are an important part of the journey. Turner and Passmore have been actively engaged in research in this field, particularly related to supervision (Passmore, Brown & Csigas, 2017; Passmore & Turner, 2018; Passmore, Turner & Filipiak, 2018, 2019; Turner & Passmore, 2017, 2018). This has involved exploring coach, coachee, supervisor, professional body and stakeholder attitudes towards ethics, and has involved surveys and interviews. As Turner and Passmore noted: 'This collection of studies has highlighted significant inconsistencies in how coaching practitioners deal with ethical concerns' (2019: 29). In the last couple of years, activity by the professional bodies has increased.


A group consisting of the Association of Coaching Supervisors, AC and representatives from the EMCC and ICF has been exploring the role of ethical guidelines in coaching supervision since 2017 (as yet unpublished), while the EMCC launched its own survey into ethics for the EMCC International Provocations Report (EMCC, 2017) and has sought volunteers for what it describes as ground-breaking research into ethical dilemmas in 2019.

Ethical decision-making models can help. For example, the APPEAR model (Passmore & Turner, 2018) is shown in Figure 1. But it can only ever be a guide to aid consideration of the key questions, as opposed to a statement of the specific right or wrong answers. (There is no way one model could hope to encompass the full complexity of the situations that coaches, mentors, supervisors and other organisational practitioners face, nor could it capture the full spread of cultural and social diversity.)

Passmore, Brown and Csigas (2017) have also shown that the European coaching market is widely diverse in its use of supervision across the fifty nations they surveyed. Countries like the UK (Passmore, Brown, Wall et al, 2018) and Germany (Passmore, Brown, Greif et al, 2018) have a relatively high rate of supervisor use, while countries like Bulgaria (Passmore, Brown & Georgieva, 2018) and Ukraine (Passmore, Brown & Timonkina, 2018) have relatively low rates. There was, however, consistent evidence that despite a decade of encouragement from

**Figure 1: Six stage APPEAR ethical decision-making model**



A photograph of a tiger and its cub. The tiger is on the right, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The cub is on the left, also looking at the camera. The background is a textured, blue-toned surface, possibly a wall or a backdrop. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the tiger's stripes and the cub's spots.

.....  
This Manifesto is a call to arms. We invite  
you to commit to the Manifesto in your  
practice and be part of the change.  
.....

## Manifesto

Given the progress over the past decade, this manifesto is meant as a call to arms, to provoke the coaching industry – its coaches, professional bodies, commissioners, universities and commercial training providers – to reflect on their activities and take the next steps in the development of the coaching profession.

We recognise there is already good work being done throughout these bodies at business schools and universities like Henley Business School, Oxford Brookes University and

Ashridge Executive Education, in professional bodies like the AC and EMCC, as well as across the thousands of consulting firms and by individual coaches.

This Manifesto commits to 12 points for action to help us to move our industry forward together. It is time for coaching supervision to come of age. We invite you to commit to the Manifesto in your practice and be part of the change.



## Twelve points for action

### Universities

1. Advocate the importance of evidenced-based practice.
2. Undertake research to explore the impact of supervision, using both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide more evidenced-based data.
3. Collaborate across institutions and professional bodies in research.

### Coach and supervision training providers

4. Teach reflective practice as an integral part of all coach training.
5. Include formal supervision within all coaching and supervision training programmes, and advise how the coach and supervisor can best use supervision to enhance their practice.
6. Support supervision research through collaborative research projects with professional bodies and universities.

### Professional bodies

7. Develop a shared view of supervision, which includes:
  - A shared industry definition, drawing together supervision and mentor coaching into an integrated approach for reflecting the different needs of novice and master coaches.
  - A shared view on competences, capabilities and capacities required to be a coach supervisor.
8. Actively encourage, support and sponsor research into supervision to better understand its benefits and its contribution to practice.

### Professional coaches

9. Engage in supervision as a coach and supervisor, and communicate in the contract with clients the supervision arrangements
10. Participate in research to explore the benefits and contribution of supervision.

### Organisations/coaching commissioners

11. Require coaches working in their organisations to participate in supervision and ask in their selection processes questions such as:
  - What supervision do you have, from whom and at what frequency?
  - Describe a difficult coaching situation that you took to supervision and how it changed what you did subsequently.
  - How does your supervision improve the quality of your practice?
12. Support research into supervision to better understand its benefits and its contribution to practice.



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## Research on the supervisory relationship

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Note: Special thanks to Michel Moral for sharing details of doctoral research in this section.

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