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## Narrating Supervision to Track Counselor Development: A Qualitative Content Analysis

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The authors analyzed the narrative writings of four counselors-in-training in practicum using directed content analysis. Developmental themes corresponded to current theories of counselor development. Narratives and supervisor responses are sequentially provided to aid new counselors and supervisors in understanding the complexities of counselor developmental and counselor supervision.

## KEYWORDS: Supervision, Counselor Development, Narrative Writing

Supervision has been described as the signature pedagogy of the counseling profession and is a critical component of effective and ethical clinical services (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Supervisors provide oversight to safeguard clients and ensure that supervisees are providing effective services. In addition, supervisors must attend to supervisees' professional development and certify that they are ready for clinical practice (Barnett & Molzon, 2014). Bernard and Goodyear (2019) describe the supervisory relationship required for effective supervision as "multilayered and complex" (p. 64).

The complexities of supervision are found in the processes of balancing multiple stories, identities, and meaning-making schemas (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Whiting, 2007). These complexities easily lend themselves to misunderstandings and negative experiences for all parties involved (Nelson & Friedlander, 2001). To avoid, or at the very least minimize the risk of misunderstandings, the supervisor works within a theoretical orientation. Theory provides an organized method of structuring and creating meaning of the complexities in supervision. The supervisor in this study utilized a theoretical approach grounded in developmental and social constructivistic models.

Social constructivism is a learning theory that posits that all learning is constructed through language and culture (Vygotsky, 1986). In counseling supervision, this means that students learn to become counselors through the language and culture(s) in supervision. In this study, the supervisor utilized narrative storytelling between student and supervisor to enhance the social environment of supervision. The storytelling began with a prompt from the supervisor, to which each student responded with the beginning of her story, the supervisor then responded to the stories. Student stories continued to develop throughout the supervisory relationship. After the supervisory relationship ended, the stories were analyzed as a means to track supervisee development.

Under the 2016 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) *Standards* (CACREP, 2015) counselor educators are responsible for tracking the development of their students. This tracking is especially important in counseling supervision under the best practices guidelines from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) which call upon counselor supervisors to intentionally address and evaluate the development of students in supervision (ACES, Task Force on Best Practices in Clinical Supervision, 2011). Tracking supervision can be done using various methods, however, the authors could not find research which delineates the different approaches a supervisor may use to track supervise development in supervision. There are articles that highlight specific methods of developmental evaluation. An example is Stark and Frels' (2014) use of stand tray to track and evaluate supervisee development. Sand tray provided an artifact for development (which can be kept with a picture), in the study they found that sand tray promoted reflexivity. Additionally, because sand tray is grounded in storytelling the authors found this practice to be culturally responsive. There are however limitations of using sand tray to track supervision; it requires appropriate training and experience and can be time-intensive in supervision.

The authors propose the use of narrating supervision as a method of tracking counselor development. Narration as a method of tracking counselor development does not have the same limitations as sand tray, as it does not require the same materials or training. Additionally, because the stories are written and exchanged outside of scheduled supervision it does not require the same time allocation during scheduled supervision.

#### **Literature Review**

## **Narrating Supervision Overview**

Supervision is the place where students begin to develop a counselor identity which is inpart founded on the humanistic drive to know thyself (Hulnick, 1977). Developing greater self-awareness requires the use of language (Neuman & Nave, 2010). Language within the context of both counseling and supervision is invented anew to address the unique view of a student and is used to create a shared reality between supervisor and student (Timm, 2015).

Narrative storytelling allows for students to be both active and reflective in shaping their counselor identities. As students enter supervision, they enter a liminal space where they are not fully counselors nor are they any longer non-counselors. Students in practicum and internship fall somewhere in between. Developmental theories on counselor development capture the transitory and conflictual nature of this space (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Stoltenberg & McNeil, 2010). In a new environment, students look for some force to provide them with their bearing and guidance. Once students locate their bearings and begin to find their way, they push their guides away. Finally, as identity emerges students leave their liminal space and enter into the counselor space.

## **Counselor Development**

Stoltenberg and McNeill's (2010) integrated developmental model (IDM) is an ideal fit for a narrative understanding of counselor development. Developmental models move beyond skills and focus on higher-order development which includes cognitive processes, self and other awareness, motivation, and autonomy. Developmental progression in the IDM is similar to Bloom's taxonomy, in that it is hierarchical and developmental gains are based on increasing levels

of complexity across domains. Stoltenberg & McNeill (2010) provides four different levels at which a student may be operating.

#### level 1.

This is the typical starting place for counseling students. They have low levels of awareness and autonomy and high levels of motivation. At this stage supervisors can expect their students to have a reliant relational style, looking for their supervisor to tell them how to work with clients. Students at this stage of development operate simplistically, wanting to do what is right and avoid doing those things that are wrong. Relatedly, they often believe there is one correct way of working with clients.

## level 2.

Similar to adolescents who begin to break away from their caregiver(s), level two students develop greater awareness and confidence in their counseling abilities. With these greater skills and abilities, students begin to push away from their supervisor and desire greater autonomy. This change is evident as students no longer wish to have their supervisors tell them what to do, and can often disregard their supervisor's thoughts, conceptualizations, and feedback. Correspondingly, students begin to strongly identify with their clients, thinking that they alone know what their client is going through. Again, a supportive supervisor who can provide appropriate challenge helps this student develop.

#### level 3.

As level two is analogous to adolescents, level three is analogous to early adulthood. Here students develop sufficient awareness and efficacy to be able to form a complex relationship with their supervisor. They understand the utility of having a second person with whom to share their work and receive feedback. There may be times when the student agrees with the supervisor and times when they do not. Unlike levels one and two the student does not operate from a simplistic understanding of self as being unable to help clients (level one) or the only one able to help (level two). Now the student operates with their supervisor in the here-and-now, about how the supervisor can help the student with their client(s). While this is an admirable developmental leap the student is not finished.

#### level 4.

At the final level of development (as if development stops) students begin to integrate multiple perspectives of their skills and efficacy with clients. Students begin to see that there are many different ways to work with clients and are willing to develop multiple theories, techniques, and ways of being with their clients. Students also begin to understand the theories, techniques, and ways of being allowing them to be responsive to client needs. The supervisory relationship appears similar to that of level three students, with an increased focus on being exposed to different approaches of working with clients.

## narrating development.

Counselor development is easily understood as a narrative, in their explanation of the different stages of counselor development Stoltenberg & McNeill (2010) used the metaphor of a rock climber to describe level one students and built upon that narrative using a mountain climber to describe levels two, three, and three-integrated counselors. Narratives allow supervisors and students to track development due to their progressive nature. A difficulty in assessing counselor development in supervision is that supervisors must analyze a narrative within a narrative. The first narrative takes place in session between the student and their client. As the student engages with the client in counseling they develop a narrative of the self as a counselor. This narrative is rarely shared in session with the client, as the focus of the session is on the client. It is in

supervision when the student shares their developmental narrative. Thus, leaving the supervisor with the complex task of unpacking a narrative (student with client) within a narrative (student with supervisor). The use of narrative storytelling outside of supervision allows supervisors to at least partially peel back the supervision narrative to better understand their student's developmental narrative.

## Methodology

This is an exploratory case study designed to explore the utility of narrating supervision as a method of understanding student counselor development. Four cases were analyzed. The exploratory nature of the case studies follows Yin's (2014) description of case studies where an exploratory case study is analogous to a pilot study. Case studies also provide in-depth, holistic knowledge of broad and complex phenomena (Carcary, 2009). To gather this data purposeful sampling was used and data was collected across the participants' experience in practicum.

## **Data Analysis**

Data for this study needed to be vivid, dense, and full descriptions of the reflective process in supervision to engage in meaningful exploration. For this study, students wrote a total of 19 times and the supervisor responded a total of 22 times for a grand total of 41 narrative writings and responses. Data were analyzed using directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005) directed content analysis is used to describe a phenomenon through the methodical and systematic subjective interpretation of the context of the text by classifying, coding, and identifying themes or patterns within an existing theory. The research was guided by Stoltenberg and McNeill's (2010) IDM. As such, codes for this data followed the elements of the IDM cognitive process (simple to complex), self-awareness (high to low), other awareness (low to high), motivation (high, to unstable, to stable), and autonomy (low to high). In addition, the researchers found an additional code in the data supervisory alliance (weak to strong). The current study was designed to explore a new teaching/supervising approach to track counselor development. To demonstrate developmental growth and to better serve as pedagogical/supervisory tool data will be presented at three different times: (a) start of the term, (b) middle of the term, and (c) end of the term.

Coding began after all the data were collected. The first two authors of this study coded the data. Each coded the data individually and then met to review and discuss their coding. The first two authors had an initial agreement of 88% on the coding categories. The authors reviewed the data and discussed until they reached 100% consensus on all 113 codes. This required the first author to decrease his coding from an initial 125 codes to 113 codes and the second author to increase her coding from 110 codes to 113.

Directed content analysis presents challenges to the naturalistic paradigm of qualitative research as researchers analyze the data with a preconceived theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). To address this limitation and promote greater trustworthiness the third author served as an auditor of the data. The third author was given the narratives and responses before receiving the coded data from either author. The third author then read through the narratives and provided holistic feedback to the first two authors individually. The third author then joined the first two authors when they met to discuss their individual coding and served as the deciding voice if an agreement could not be met.

#### Research Team

The research team consisted of three members. The first and second authors served as coders while the third author served as a peer reviewer. The first and second authors, at the time of this study, were counselor educators at the same university located in the Pacific Northwest. The third author is a counselor educator at a different university (located in the Midwest). All authors have experience as counselors, supervisors, and supervises; hence, we have all experienced counselor development from multiple positions. Due to the close relationships, the first two authors had with the subjects in this study (supervisor-supervisee; teacher-student) the authors employed multiple practices to process through the authors' reactions to supervisees including reflective journaling, weekly supervision of supervision meetings, triangulation (e.g., multiple coders), and an outside peer reviewer (Creswell, 2013). Even with these efforts, the authors were still subject to bias in understanding the results of the data. The first author's biases include a developmental understanding of counselor growth and supervision based on a western-individualistic worldview. In other words, the first author believes that counselors develop as they become more autonomous and less reliant on their supervisor.

The second author's biases include a belief in the importance of the supervisory relationship to facilitate counselor development and the use of a relational-cultural lens through which she attempts to conceptualize the supervisor/supervisee developmental process. She believes that for students to develop a counselor identity and become more autonomous the supervisor must model congruence and engage authentically with each supervisee.

## **Participants**

Four participants were recruited using purposeful sampling, participants needed to be enrolled in a graduate-level counseling practicum where supervisors used a combination of both group and triadic supervision. All four participants identified as female. Three of the four identify as white with one identifying with multiple racial/ethnic identities. The average age of the participants at the time of the study was 26. This was the first practicum experience for all the participants. For the results section, each student was given a name based on components of their narrative, which reflects how their identities were created and solidified through the narrative process. The participants' narrative names are Brave Soldier, Right Place, Not Good Enough, and Fairy Tale.

#### **Results**

Table 1: Code Frequency Per Narrative and Cumulative Totals

Code	Narrative 1	Narrative 2	Narrative 3	Narrative 4	Running total (all narratives)
Cognitive process-Simple	3 (9%)	5 (23%)	2 (8%)	2 (7%)	12 (11%)
Cognitive process- Complex	1 (3%)	1 (5%)	3 (12%)	4 (13%)	9 (8%)

Self- awareness-	15 (43%)	8 (36%)	7 (27%)	9 (30%)	39 (34%)
High Self- awareness-	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
low	0 (00/)	<i>(</i> (270/ )	0 (00/)	0 (00/)	C (50/)
Other- awareness-	0 (0%)	6 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (5%)
Low					
Other-	3 (9%)	1 (5%)	7 (27%)	5 (17%)	16 (14%)
awareness-					
High Motivation-	5 (14%)	0 (0%)	4 (15%)	5 (17%)	14 (12%)
High	3 (11/0)	0 (070)	1 (1370)	3 (1770)	11(12/0)
Motivation-	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)
Low					
Autonomy-	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)
Low	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	1 (104)
Autonomy- High	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	1 (1%)
Supervisory	3 (9%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	6 (5%)
distance-High	` ,	,	, ,	, ,	,
Supervisory	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	3 (12%)	2 (7%)	6 (5%)
distance-Low					
Total	35 (102%)*	22 (101%)*	26 (101%)*	30 (101%)*	113 (99%)**

<sup>\*</sup>Percentages over 100% due to rounding

#### **Start of Term**

Once practicum began the counselors-in-training were given the following prompt to help them engage with narrative storytelling.

While there are many benefits to triadic and group supervision, one deficit is it does not allow sufficient time for the personal development of the supervisee. In an attempt to overcome this deficit, we are going to engage in a personal narrative of supervision. What we will be doing is writing and responding to stories about your experience in point A (the colloquial name of the first practicum). Ideally, what I would like to see is you writing a story about you. Imagine this is a fairy tale and you are the center point of the story (either protagonist or antagonist), you will write about how you see yourself in this story. I will read your story and respond to the best of my ability. You are welcome to include group members in the story including me (Dr. Washburn), the TA, and even Dr. Nolte (the other practicum instructor). However, you are not welcome to include any client information this is not a secure enough format to do that.

Students then began to write their stories of practicum. After the initial story, the supervisor and student engaged in a weekly response to the story (supervisor) and the continuation of the story (student). This patterned continued for eight weeks of the ten-week quarter. All four students began and finished their stories within the allotted time.

Narrating supervision provided unique strengths and weaknesses within the themes of the data analysis. The first strength of this approach is the ability that narrating provides distance to

<sup>\*\*</sup>Percentages under 100% due to rounding

the supervisees. Expressive techniques, such as storytelling, allow a supervisee to connect with their supervisor, and themselves symbolically (Purswell & Stulmaker, 2015). The use of metaphors, which are often present in stories, creates psychological distance for the supervisee, making communication safer and more comfortable with the supervisor (Pursewell & Stulmaker, 2015). Supervisees are not required to communicate directly about conflicts or problems that they may struggle to communicate through words. Narrative storytelling, in particular, provides the opportunity for a safe psychological distance whereby supervisees can increase their self-awareness and self-reflection skills through the creation of a story with characters representing the conflicts that the supervisee faces him or herself. An example of this safe distance is found in the story of 'Brave Soldier.'

Brave Solider, speaks to her worry about entering practicum. Brave soldier is in an interesting position as she had two friends die in a car accident a few weeks before the start of the term. Brave Soldier writes:

Once upon a time, there was a soldier. The soldier was called upon to complete a quest by their overlord. The soldier was reluctant to complete this quest, it was unlike any quest she had been on before. The soldier was known for being an excellent soldier but she was unsure if she would live up to her reputation given the unique nature of this quest.

The soldier had recently lost a couple of comrades and felt like her armor had been shot through. She knew for her quest she would need to repair her armor and find a way to fill herself back up. She was determined to make it through her quest with a brave face and valiant effort, willing to fake it until she really believed her armor was fully whole again.

Brave Soldier shared her anxiety with practicum on at least three levels in this text. The first is her anxiety around the unique challenge of practicum, "unlike any quest she had been on before." The second is her ability to cope with the recent death of her friends, "felt like her armor had been shot through." Finally, Brave Soldier wonders when she will be "fully whole again." The nature of this narrative story is very personal, yet the student is also provided distance from her supervisor due to its formatting.

Brave soldier is at an interesting place in her counselor development. She has not fully entered into the first stage of the IDM. There are elements of the right/wrong dichotomy in her story (e.g. referring to her supervisor as an overlord, wanting to maintain her reputation as a strong student) there are also elements of independence (e.g. referring to herself as a soldier and wanting to hide her true inner experience). This narrative provides important information for the supervisor to know where the student is in her development and how to balance the amount of support and challenge given.

To remain consistent with her approach the supervisor responds in the role of the Overlord.

Memo

To: Brave Soldier

From: Overlord

Soldier I understand the difficulties of the quest you are about to partake. I well remember, when I too, embarked on my own quest. Doubts, fear, diffidence, are all too common in a novel quest. Please remember that fear and bravery are not mutually exclusive, but inseparably linked. There is no bravery without fear and no fear without bravery. I ask you also to remember that while you are an army-of-one you are not alone. Finally, soldier the bravest and strongest do not hide our wounds, or holes in our armor, rather we understand how to incorporate them in meaningful and powerful ways. There is no need

to fake, but there is work to process and incorporate. I believe you in soldier, you will be very powerful.

Brave soldier was not alone in her unique developmental starting place in practicum. A student referred to as 'right place' came into practicum as she was exiting level one of the IDM. Right place first narrative is as follows:

This will be a challenge. I do not like writing about myself, and I do not like starting a story without knowing the ending. In saying this, I do not mean that I feel uncertain about whether I will successfully make it through Point A. What I mean to say is that I conceptualize the ending of this story as involving some kind of growth, and even though I have made goals for this quarter, growth often occurs in unexpected ways. In other words, I know that in two months I will be different than I am now, but I have no way of predicting that version of myself. At the same time, I am eager to see how this experience changes me.

The student concluded their narrative with a parenthetical disclaimer and request.

Dr. Washburn, for now, I just used the approach in writing that was most natural and useful to me. If you were anticipating something wildly different, I expect you'll let me know! The student 'Right Place' begins by pulling away from the supervisor's request for a narrative. This is seen in both the nature and content of her narrative. The nature of the narrative is that it is not a narrative at all and instead choosing to engage in the assignment in a manner that is most "natural and useful" to the student. This style of writing is more direct and shows that this student

does not need to engage in a metaphor for self-discovery. Rather she knows herself well enough

to directly engage and communicate her needs.

The content of the narrative also points to higher developmental levels. The student is aware that she is going to change, but does not place that change directly on the supervisor nor does she show any expectation that the supervisor assumes responsibility for her change. Rather she conceptualizes change as a natural part of the supervisory experience. With all of her self-awareness and willingness, this student is still experiencing high levels of anxiety. The start of her narrative provides insight into her anxiety, she begins with the challenge of starting a task without knowing the ending. A unique element of this narrative process is that it allowed the supervisor to gain a more holistic understanding of this student. A student who is pulling away and anxious encompassing elements of both level 1 and level 2 development. This knowledge allows the supervisor to better meet the student where they are at and provide the needed support and challenge.

#### Middle of Term

This narrative comes from the middle point of the 10-week term. Five weeks into the term and three weeks into narrating supervision. This student referred to here as 'Not good enough' highlights the struggle of a new counselor-in-training who is caught between understanding that there is no right way to counsel and wanting to do everything perfectly.

Although Not Good Enough is beginning to see that being perfect is not beneficial and she wishes to completely understand her client and create a strong therapeutic relationship, she is struggling to create deep connections. Not Good Enough wants her clients to feel comfortable in the relationship to share deep feelings and thoughts but will not meet the clients at that same level. In a sense, it seems safer to observe and understand than reflect and share personal feelings. She is aware that sharing feelings with the client will

strengthen the relationship but is unsure of how to share those feelings naturally. There is a natural apprehension for Not Good Enough to share her feelings, she is struggling to find a way to share them that is authentic for herself and the client.

The student 'Not Good Enough' is caught in wanting to establish strong counseling relationships via vulnerability with clients and being too anxious to share of herself with her clients. This student has a cognitive understanding of the importance of relational connection and meeting with clients yet remains distant wanting to fully know her clients first and then connect with them once it is safe. This narrative highlights the subtle nature of development, an understanding of the counseling process does not necessarily equate to the practice of that understanding. It takes both the cognitive understanding and practical experience for development to occur. The supervisor responds to the student by downplaying cognitive understanding and highlighting a need to experience relational connection.

Supervisor's response

Not Good Enough this is a common feeling, I appreciate your desire to meet and connect and understand the struggle of being vulnerable 1st. I wish I had some great wisdom or trick to help you get there, but I do not. This takes time and effort. I am wondering if you could write to me from a different perspective. What would you say to Not Good Enough if you were her client? Please write to me from that perspective for the next few narratives.

#### **End of Term**

Supervisors can then use storying as a method of tracking student growth. As students engaged with storying overtime, their stories represented their development as counselors, to that point in their education. Here is a student's final story, which was a letter to herself from the start of the quarter.

Dear Fairy Tale,

The journey you are about to embark on may seem incredibly overwhelming and I know that you are scared and wondering if you can do it. I promise you that you can. However, it won't be an easy journey and it will require you to let your guards down, face your emotions, and trust yourself. You have to be open to change, and I know that change is scary but sometimes it can be good. Change leads to growth and by opening yourself up to change, you are going to learn so much about yourself. This journey will help you grow as a person. You will start looking at your relationships differently, you will start to realize that you do not have to 'fix things" and that will be a freeing feeling. You'll even cry in public a couple of times. Sometimes you will doubt yourself on this journey, but I promise you won't regret it, any of it.

-Fairy Tale

It is clear from this example that the student not only developed as a counselor but also, they were able to note their development over time. Another strength of narrating is that it allows students something concrete to track their development in practicum. Both student and supervisor can see how the student grew over time and track the critical incidents of that growth.

#### Discussion

## **Tracking Supervisee Development Through Narrative**

This content analysis provides some evidence that supervisors can track and respond to the development of supervisoresses. With Brave Soldier, especially early in the term, she wrote about her fears and resistance from a safe distance, referring to her supervisor as an overlord. This is congruent with IDM Level 1 (Stoltenberg & McNeill 2010), where supervisees place a great deal of power and have a high reliance on their supervisors. We see in Right Place's narrative, even at the beginning of the quarter a high level of insight and motivation. In some ways, despite being early in the quarter Right Place provides her supervisor evidence that she is already operating from a higher level of development (moving past the right wrong dichotomy).

In Not Good Enough's narrative from the middle of the term, the supervisor was provided evidence that she was moving into Level 2 with higher levels of self-awareness (knowing she should be vulnerable in the counseling relationship), although she still relied heavily on her supervisor. The supervisor specifically requested in his response to her, that she write from the perspective of a counselor working with a client that was dealing with similar cognitive dissonance. Finally, by the end of the term, in her letter to her past self, Fairy Tale indicates that she has moved solidly into Level 2 and is approaching Level 3, she has increased insight, has allowed herself to be vulnerable, has learned to trust her supervisor without relying on him, and recognizes that 'fix[ing]things' is not necessarily the most desirable outcome in her role as a counselor.

## Narrative Story Telling as a Tool to Teach Supervision

Outside of its utility as a supervision tool, the authors found this approach to be useful in helping new supervisors learn about supervision. The narrative stories and responses were sent to a third party who examined them as a method to help the supervisor improve. This third party was able to provide the supervisor with both strengths (summarizing growth throughout, using questions opposed to statements, and allowing for self-discovery) and weaknesses (insufficient responses both quantity and quality and lacking in empathy with the responses).

The first author was the supervisor who engaged with the storying telling and receiving feedback, he notes the feeling of safety the narratives provided him when compared to safer with watching a tape of my supervision and providing feedback. He was able to share with his students, though it was after the fact, in the safety distance provides while being evaluated. Also, having a letter from a more experienced and respected supervisor allowed him to review both his strengths and weaknesses as needed, he does not need to remember what was said in the session, as feedback was written out.

The results of this study revealed that several things need to be accounted for when a supervisor uses narratives to supplement triadic supervision. First, supervisee development seemed to play a role in how engaged they were in the narrative process. The multifaceted nature of the IDM combined with the active and reflective processes of narrating the supervisor was able to gain a more holistic understanding of the student. In addition, the distance narratives provide allowed for both student and supervisor to challenge one another more directly. A deficit of this approach is that it is more time-intensive than not using narratives, however, the supervisor who used the narratives did not experience the time constraints to be overwhelming. Finally, narratives provided concrete examples of student development and supervisory interactions which can be

used to help students see their growth and provide supervisors with reflective material for improving their craft.

#### Limitations

As an exploratory case study, the generalizability of this study is necessarily limited. We analyzed the content of student narratives and supervisor responses. It is clear with this particular group of students and this supervisor that narratives supported the development of a safe supervisory relationship where both parties could experience feedback (giving and receiving) from a safe distance. Additionally, this particular counseling program is at a small university with small class sizes and high levels of student-faculty interaction. It may be that part of the need for safety, and the benefits of narrative distance are tied to the closeness with which faculty and students exist in such a small program.

#### **Directions for Future Research**

Despite the possible limitations a next step for this approach would be to track a single student or group of students across practica and internship to gain a better understanding of development over time. Tracking students' stories over a longer period of time may provide additional insight into how narratives exist within the greater context of counselor development. Additionally, interviewing students, supervisors, or both about their experiences using narratives might provide additional insight into the ways that narratives influence the counselor and supervisor development, and how narratives play a role in the development of supervisory relationships across all four levels of IDM.

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