

***Using the Enneagram to Facilitate the
Supervision Relationship:
A Qualitative Study***

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Kristi Perryman

Erin Popejoy

University of Arkansas

Anthony Suarez

Valparaiso University

Abstract

A phenomenological study was conducted to gain knowledge of the lived experience of three master's level counseling supervisees, with a doctoral student supervisor, utilizing the Enneagram, an ancient personality classification system of nine core personality types, throughout 15 weeks of supervision. This study explored the use of the Enneagram and its impact on the supervisory relationship. Emergent themes included: (a) self-awareness; (b) other awareness; (c) relationship and rapport; and (d) professional identity and role induction. The use of the Enneagram within supervision during early stages of counselor development appeared to be helpful to these students in fostering growth and learning.

**Using the Enneagram to Facilitate the
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Study**

Numerous books and articles have been written on the topic of counseling supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Campbell, 2000). Counselors, however, are increasingly looking for more creative ways to facilitate self- and other-awareness and interpersonal processes in supervision as a way of building and maintain the working alliance. This study examines one such example of an innovative tool in clinical supervision – the Enneagram – and explores its impact on the relationship between supervisor and supervisee through the lens of the lived experiences of both supervisor and supervisees.

Clinical Supervision

Formal supervision is a key aspect of the counselor training process, ensuring that counselors-in-training are adhering to the ACA Code of Ethics and practicing with intention and purpose (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). The quality of this supervisory relationship is paramount, as both the supervisor and supervisee are required to place trust in the other and communicate openly and honestly about any challenges that arise (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Thus, the supervisory relationship is the foundation of effective supervision. While the focus of supervision is different from counseling, effective supervisors draw upon many of the same relationship enhancing techniques used by counselors: empathy, reflection of meaning and feeling, appropriate self-disclosure, attention to the here-and-now, and challenging or confrontation. This parallel between

counseling and supervision allows for skills to be modeled and practiced within the supervision setting (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

By definition, supervision is “a power disproportionate relationship that includes both evaluative and therapeutic components” (Nelson, Barnes, Evans, & Triggiano, 2008, p. 172). As such, constructive supervision requires providing feedback regarding knowledge and skills, and enhancing reflective practice (Hatcher & Lassiter, 2007), thereby, encouraging the supervisee to take risks toward personal and professional growth. These role expectations can create tension and anxiety for both the supervisor and supervisee (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Nelson et al., 2008), requiring a degree of vulnerability from both, as well as expertise on behalf of the supervisor. Power dynamics are further exacerbated by ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability status, gender, and other majority or minority identities that the supervisor and supervisee hold. Open discussions of power and privilege within the relationship are necessary to have an understanding of both the supervisor and supervisee perspectives and needs, and to work collaboratively to manage power dynamics (Murphy & Wright, 2005).

The phenomenon of parallel process in supervision occurs when the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee parallels the relationship between counselor and client (Campbell, 2000). Similar to transference and countertransference, common issues that appear in parallel process include dependency, helplessness, anger, and control (Campbell, 2000). Therefore, if the

supervisory relationship is stable, safe, and genuine, it is likely that this is mirrored in the counseling relationship. Similarly, if the counseling relationship feels unstable, it is likely that these feelings will be reflected in the supervisory relationship. Thus, it is important that the supervisory relationship is one of trust and positivity (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

Personality Characteristics

Researchers have suggested that implementing a means of assessing personality during the training and supervision process would be beneficial (Bernard, Clingerman, & Gilbride, 2011; Hatcher & Lassiter, 2007). As part of their Practicum Competencies Outline, Hatcher and Lassiter (2007) identified that appropriate personality characteristics were among the core competencies imperative that clinicians in training possess. The authors recommended assessing for these personality characteristics throughout the training process as a method of addressing supervisee deficiencies that may manifest as part of their training. Bernard et al. (2011) argued that using specific interventions during clinical supervision based on personality types would enrich the supervision process.

Several researchers have explored the effects on personality types in clinical supervision by using the Myers-Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI; I. B. Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998; P. B. Myers & Myers, 1998) to determine whether personality types have an effect on the supervisory relationship (Lochner & Melchert, 1997; Swanson & O’Saben, 1993). Bernard et al. (2011) used the revised NEO (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to New Experiences)

Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992b) to measure personality in combination with the MBTI. More recently, Rieck and Callahan (2013) used a condensed version of the NEO-PI-R, the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI), to measure the relationship between supervisee personality traits and emotional intelligence (EI). They found that positive client change is correlated to supervisees who possess high EI and high neuroticism, whereas high neuroticism with low EI predicted less favorable client outcomes. Thus, using a personality inventory as a tool during supervision can not only serve as a means for the supervisor and supervisee to better understand one another and work through potential conflict between them, it can also be useful in anticipating supervisees' quality of work with their clients.

The Enneagram

The Enneagram Personality Typology, thought to be from ancient Sufi tradition, is a geometric figure that classifies nine basic personality types and their various interrelationships (see Figure 1; Matise, 2007; Palmer, 1988; Riso & Hudson, 2003). This classification system facilitates recognition and understanding of broad patterns within human behavior, allowing greater awareness of self and others. Each of the nine basic Types has its own way of communicating with others, its own values and beliefs, its own motivations and fears, and its own perceptions and concerns (Riso & Hudson, 2003). The combination of intra- and interpersonal insight creates the potential for greater understanding and compassion, ideally resulting in improved relationships and respect for diversity. Space constraints and the scope of this article prevents an in-depth look at the Enneagram Types. However, a brief

outline of basic motivations and characteristics for each of the nine Types are included within Table 1. For further in-depth discussion of the Enneagram, including detailed Type descriptions, see Riso and Hudson (2003), Baron and Wagele (1994), or Palmer (1988).

Most research regarding the Enneagram has focused on its usefulness in human development, rather than attempting to apply the model across a variety of settings (Sutton, 2012). Bland (2010) wondered if the Enneagram was perhaps “just too grand a vision for the scientific method to capture” (p. 25) but, despite his reservations, the author pointed to two recent studies (Matise, 2007; Tolk, 2006) that helped legitimize the use of the Enneagram in the clinical setting. Tolk (2006) compared the qualities of the Enneagram to elements of schema therapy, while Matise (2007) suggested specific therapeutic modalities based on Enneagram typology.

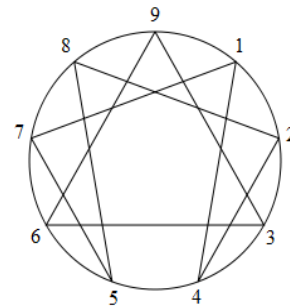


Figure 1. The Enneagram

The Enneagram in Supervision

A strong working alliance is crucial to effective supervision and this cannot be achieved without a relationship in which there is room for rupture and repair. The ability of the brain to grow and change continues throughout our

lifetime, offering opportunities to repair attachments that are not beneficial to healthy relationships. Killen, Daniels, and Arthur (2011) stated that "...deep Enneagram work is about developing heightened awareness of the arousal of these emotions that kick start the habitual patterns of thinking and acting of our particular Type, and then choosing to act

differently" (p. 11). While changing these ingrained reactions is difficult, the insight offered by the Enneagram allows for a deeper understanding, and a different paradigm for understanding characteristics related to one's Type (Kern Popejoy, Perryman, & Suarez, 2017). This new understanding leads to self-acceptance which, according to Rogers (1961), results in change.

Due to the attachment, and thus, relational implications, the Enneagram, has been used to enhance the counselor-client relationship in facilitating insight and change (Tapp & Engebretson, 2010). In such cases, the counselor can utilize the Enneagram to create connection with clients and help them "gain empathy into their experiences and the experiences of others" (Tapp & Engebretson, 2010, pp. 65-66). Similarly, the supervisor can bring the Enneagram into the supervision relationship for the same purposes. Recent research has found that supervision conducted from a developmental-relational model – which is founded in part on the Enneagram Personality Typology – with a focus on connection and a clear and balanced perspective, produces a healthy and productive supervisory relationship (Duffey, Haberstroh, Ciepcielski, & Gonzales, 2016). This existing information around supervision and the Enneagram led the researchers to a

Type	Core Motivation	Calm/Integrated	Stressed/Disintegrated
One	Living the "right way;" Improving life for everyone	Organized, idealistic, ethical, reliable, self-disciplined	Perfectionistic, judgmental, dogmatic, controlling, jealous
Two	Being loved and valued; ability to express feelings to others	Loving, caring, adaptable, generous, insightful	Possessive, martyr-like, manipulative, overly accommodating
Three	Achieving success and avoiding failure	Self-motivated, confident, pragmatic, industrious	Narcissistic, superficial, materialistic, overly competitive
Four	Feeling understood and unique	Compassionate, creative, intuitive, introspective	Withdrawn, moody, self-absorbed
Five	Knowing everything, avoiding looking foolish	Objective, analytical, perceptive, persevering	Overly critical, arrogant, stubborn, elitist
Six	Feeling secure (may avoid or confront fears to achieve security)	Loyal, caring, helpful, responsible	Controlling, rigid, self-denigrating, judgmental
Seven	Feeling happy and fun, and avoiding suffering or pain	Spontaneous, enthusiastic, charming, curious, imaginative	Impulsive, flaky, narcissistic, undisciplined, possessive
Eight	Independence and strength	Assertive, direct, protective, energetic, confident	Domineering, controlling, aggressive, insensitive, self-centered
Nine	Keeping the peace and avoiding conflict	Peaceful, generous, patient, open-minded, empathic	Forgetful, passive-aggressive, unassertive, apathetic, stubborn
Riso & Hudson, 2003; Baron & Wagele, 1994			

primary research question: How do counselors-in-training and their

supervisors experience the use of the Enneagram in supervision?

Methodology

A phenomenological framework was utilized for the data collection and analysis of this research. Phenomenological research “describes the common meaning of experiences of a phenomenon (or topic or concept) for several individuals. In this type of qualitative study, researchers reduce the participants’ experiences to a central meaning or the ‘essence’ of the experience” (Creswell, 2013, p. 285). The purpose of a phenomenological qualitative research, “...is to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional research methods” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), thus, the researcher seeks to understand the participants lived experience of this phenomena. The phenomenon of interest is the use of the Enneagram and its impact on the supervisory relationship in supervision. All participants kept weekly journals where they were asked to describe their individual experiences with using the Enneagram as a tool in supervision. The subjective nature of each supervisee’s experience is considered a valuable source of information.

Participants

Purposeful selection was used in this study to choose participants. This involved choosing individuals who were considered “information rich” and that offered “useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2002, p. 40).

An approved IRB review was obtained to conduct this research before participants were contacted or any data was collected. Participants included one male doctoral level supervisor, who had completed a doctoral level supervision class and had a year of prior supervision of master’s level students. He was also a Licensed Professional Counselor and was an investigator in this research. The supervisor’s stated counseling theoretical orientation was cognitive-behavioral, and he described himself as working from the discrimination model of supervision (Bernard, 1979). The supervisor scored as a Type 2 on the Enneagram.

His supervisees were given the option of participating in this study, with the understanding that they could opt out without consequence. The only incentive was the opportunity for more self-awareness and to learn about the Enneagram. Three of his supervisees, who were female master’s students, chose to participate. All the supervisees were in their practicum semester, working with clients for the first time. One supervisee was assigned to an elementary school where she engaged in school-based counseling. The second supervisee worked with victims of sexual assault at a trauma center. The third supervisee worked with an inpatient adolescent population who had exhibited sexually maladaptive behaviors. The first two supervisees scored as a Type 2 on the Enneagram and the third scored as a Type 7. The third supervisee was undecided on her theoretical orientation of choice, while the first two supervisees identified with a person-centered approach.

Bracketing

Subjectivity is part of the qualitative research process, and the

researcher must be self-reflective and acknowledge these influences (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). The investigators must position themselves in context to the phenomenon being researched, while bracketing (or setting aside) information or beliefs that may impose bias on the findings. There were three researchers on this research project: two counselor educators and one doctoral level counseling student. The three of us have experience using the Enneagram and conducting qualitative research. Additionally, we all have experience supervising counselors-in-training. The three of us have seen the power of strong supervisory relationships and the quality of work that can be done with high levels of trust and understanding. Conversely, we are also aware of the quality of work that is done when that trust and understanding is lacking. The experiences that we have with supervision and counselors-in-training may or may not be shared by others, and can certainly manifest as both positive and negative biases. As phenomenological researchers, our goal was to arrive at an accurate, detailed description of the participants' lived experience, not our own personal interpretation. Therefore, we used caution and methods of trustworthiness to bracket out personal assumptions and opinions, thereby reducing the risk of imposing these assumptions into the data collection process and in the interpretation of participant experiences. Additionally, despite being familiar with the Enneagram, we had no expectations as to its functionality within the supervisory relationship.

Data Collection

Prior to their first supervision session, supervisees were contacted and

the study was explained to them. Once they agreed to participate in the study, the supervisor and supervisees completed and scored the Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator (RHETI, or commonly referred to as the Enneagram). The Enneagram consists of a 144-question forced-choice assessment, asking the respondent to read two statements and to choose which one best reflects how they think, feel, or behave the majority of the time. These answers are coded into specific columns and each column is summed to end with a final score for each personality Type indicator. The highest score usually reflects the individual's dominant personality Type (Riso & Hudson, 2003).

Supervisees were required to meet with their supervisor, face to face, for one hour each week. During their weekly sessions, supervisees had the opportunity to discuss client cases, review taped session, and discuss theory. As practicum students, especially, there was an emphasis on preparation for work with clients, and the supervisor addressed any anxiety, fear, or excitement they may have experienced. Supervisees brought their completed Enneagram to their initial supervision session, and their results were reviewed and discussed with their supervisor. During this time, the supervisor also shared his Enneagram Type, as well as the implications for supervisory relationship, for both types. They discussed, for example, how they react to conflict and what this might look like in supervision. The Enneagram was used as a reference point in future sessions as applicable (e.g., when reactions occurred, when conflict arose, when supervisees' Types were influencing their work with clients, etc.). Therefore, no intervention looked exactly the same, as each supervisee had her own personal experiences that needed to be

addressed in slightly different ways. However, any intervention used by the supervisor was consistently related back to the Enneagram, and data was collected in the exact same way each week. Data was gathered from supervisees weekly, for 15 weeks, through the following open-ended journal prompts:

- How would you describe your experience of using the Enneagram in supervision today?
- What new awareness did you leave the session with?
- How has awareness of your and your supervisor's Enneagram Types influenced your supervision session?

Supervisees completed a journal at the end of each supervision session, using a unique identifier for anonymity. The journals were then submitted to the principle investigator and kept in a secure location, assuring safety and privacy of the data. Additionally, the supervisor completed a summary of his experience using the Enneagram in supervision once the semester was complete.

Data Analysis

There were three investigators in this research. They included two counselor educators who were faculty at the university where the study was conducted and the doctoral level supervisor who participated in this study. One of the faculty researchers was the supervisor of the doctoral level supervisor. She met with him weekly for one-hour sessions to discuss his work with the supervisees. The other faculty was the principle investigator who oversaw data collection. The doctoral supervisor did not have access to the supervisees' data as it was being collected, nor was he involved

in the data analysis. This helped to eliminate bias within coding and data analysis.

Two primary forms of data were collected in order for data triangulation to occur. The weekly journals from the supervisees and the doctoral supervisor's reflection summary were used in the coding process. Open, axial, and selective codes were used to analyze the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The two faculty researchers coded the data separately, using line-by-line analysis, in which data were analyzed using word-by-word and phrase-by-phrase microanalysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to create two sets of open codes, then met to synthesize the data together into axial codes, and lastly, selective themes. From an observer perspective, the doctoral supervisor provided feedback on the selective themes identified through data analysis.

Establishing Trustworthiness

Measures of trustworthiness were established using a variety of means. Credibility was ensured through thorough accounts and descriptions of the participants' experiences, clear documentation of the data collection and data analysis, and a clear framework of biases and position of the researchers (Kornbluh, 2015). Additionally, triangulation between the participants' descriptions of their experience and the supervisor's description of his experience strengthened credibility. Member checks, "the most crucial technique" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p .314) to ensure trustworthiness of a qualitative study, also took place through the doctoral supervisor reviewing the reflection summary and through weekly supervision-of-supervision. Peer debriefing also helped to maintain research credibility. Inclusion of participant quotes and descriptions

strengthened transferability, ensuring accurate interpretation and ability to compare to other experiences. Transparency of data collection and analysis ensured accurate conclusions, and exhibits dependability for this research study (Shenton, 2004).

Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the use of the Enneagram and its impact on the supervisory relationship. The following themes emerged from this study.

Themes

The themes that emerged from the coding of the supervisees' journals are (a) self-awareness; (b) other-awareness; (c) relationship and rapport; and (d) professional identity; and (e) role induction. The supervisor's reflection summary was also used to support emergent themes and as an artifact to triangulate the data.

Self-Awareness. The theme of self-awareness was apparent from the first session journal, in which supervisees discussed their awareness of strengths and challenges according to their personality Type. One supervisee referred to the Enneagram on her second meeting and stated, "Today we discussed my stressor and my areas of growth and conflict... This discussion cut really deep for me as some things about my past and parents arose. I found myself almost blaming my parents for my weakness." Another stated, in her second session, that the Enneagram helped "identify what type of supervision will be most helpful to my growth as a counselor," since she realized that she needed feedback and encouragement of self-expression.

As supervision continued over the following weeks, supervisees became more specific and direct about their self-awareness with statements such as, "I need to be more comfortable with silence," "When I feel stressed, I become more rigid... when I am feeling at ease, I approach situations from a place of curiosity and interest," and "...awareness of my tendency to be an enthusiast has helped me identify my tendency to avoid silence and constantly try to provide verbal encouragers." These statements reflect self-awareness as well as insight gained directly from the Enneagram.

The theme of self-awareness was also evident in the supervisor's reflection summary. He stated,

Some would reference their types weekly – even mentioning the specific characteristics of their types – when discussing the week's events at their practicum sites. This was helpful for them in making connections between how they were feeling and what they were doing, with the "why" behind it.

The supervisor also suggested that the supervisees who were most open and initiated conversations about their Enneagram Types, "... were generally more self-aware and were more successful in managing their own stress."

Finally, the supervisor commented on his own self-awareness, stating, "I also now take into account my own type (Type 2) and my behaviors during times of stress or security in maintaining my own wellness as a doctoral student, clinician, and supervisor." Overall, the Enneagram

appeared to assist both the supervisor and supervisees with being more self-aware.

Other-Awareness. The theme of other-awareness also emerged during the first session, in which supervisees noted appreciation of the supervisor sharing his own Type and strengths and challenges. Supervisees also noted the different motivating factors behind their Types and their supervisor's Type: "I have noticed that my supervisor and I may be motivated by slightly different things (as reflected in the Enneagram); however, we hope for the same outcomes." Midway through the semester journals, other-awareness was also evident as supervisees began to note their increased awareness of their interactions with clients due to their own self-awareness. One supervisee referred to her Enneagram Type,

I noticed while watching myself on tape [with a client] how much my nurturing, loving, and encouraging side shows in session...it is not necessarily bad, I just need to be more aware of my actions and role as a counselor.

Other comments included, discussion of "...how personal things in life can spill over into session without recognizing it," and "I like to be in control and I need to learn to be more comfortable with my clients having control..." Another said, "...Lots of new awareness came out during the session just by discussing my challenges with my practicum." These comments illustrate a greater self-awareness in terms of new insights but also ways in which their Enneagram Types may be impacting their clients.

The very nature of the supervisor role requires a focus on other: the supervisee. The majority of his comments

were directly related to the awareness he had of their awareness and growth, as illustrated throughout the discussion of all themes. The supervisor, however, also noted his own awareness of others, stating, "Personally, using the Enneagram reminded me to look beyond the surface when working with supervisees to gain a better understanding of their behaviors, regardless of whether they are thriving or struggling."

The use of the Enneagram seemed to increase overall awareness of others. For the supervisees, this awareness became increasingly apparent throughout the semester, as they gained self-awareness. The supervisor, though an experienced LPC and supervisor, also stated an increased awareness of his supervisees through understanding both his and their Enneagram Types: "Learning about the nine types, and how they interact with each other, opened my eyes to a new way to view human behavior, especially during times of stress or insecurity."

Relationship and Rapport. Each supervisee mentioned a strengthened sense of trust within the supervisory relationship, and a shared language due to the use of the Enneagram. This shared language was evident in quotes previously stated about the awareness and relief that their supervisor also had strengths and weaknesses. One supervisee stated, "I liked knowing my supervisor's type because it helped form a trusting relationship." Another said, "He continued to create a space for processing/growth and to build me up," reflecting on the rapport and the supervisory relationship.

One supervisee referred to her need for acceptance based on her Enneagram Type, stating, "Today we watched a

recording of myself with a client. When areas of growth were pointed out, or challenges, we tried to connect it to my Enneagram style (Type).” Another referred to her Enneagram Type during a session in which she was discussing her counseling skills and her supervisor reminded her that, “It’s more difficult for you because you compare yourself to other people.” This comment was based on her Enneagram Type, and she seemed relieved to have gained this awareness, again demonstrating a theme of rapport and relationship.

The strength of the relationship was also observable as the supervisees openly discussed their own areas for growth with the supervisor. One supervisee mentioned, “I brought up things about my personality today. It was helpful because I knew that [my supervisor] knew that about me and I could use that to explain.” Overall, these statements reflect a theme of a strong supervisory relationship with open rapport. The journals resonated with a willingness to be vulnerable by openly discussing not only their strength areas, but their areas for growth as well, which indicates a sense of safety and trust in the supervisory relationship. The supervisor’s reflection summary also demonstrated this theme, “Sometimes they would bring up their Enneagram Type before I even thought about tying in the Enneagram myself.” He also discussed how he utilized the Enneagram to build rapport and the supervisory relationship in times when the supervisees in this study did not address their Types: “In these cases, I looked for opportunities to discuss the Enneagram when I felt it would be beneficial in helping them make sense of their situation. I also discussed their hesitancy with bringing up their types.” These examples

convey his awareness of his supervisees and their use of the Enneagram as a shared language. He also shared how he utilized the Enneagram with resistant supervisees, as a rapport and relationship building tool. Both supervisees and supervisor data illustrated the theme of a strong working alliance through their willingness to be vulnerable and initiate conversations about their Types, including those about their weaker areas. Supervisees were also responsive to supervisor-initiated discussions, which indicated a strong rapport.

Professional Identity and Role Induction. Supervisees demonstrated an increased understanding of the counselor role and responsibility, and how their Enneagram Type influenced how they manifested in the counselor relationship. This was apparent as they reflected both on feedback from the supervisor, but also as they self-corrected as a result of the awareness gained from the Enneagram. “I need to be more comfortable with silence,” was one example of self-correction, as she observed her tendency to fill in empty space by talking. Another stated that when viewing a session with her supervisor she had become, “...especially aware of times that I behaved in a rigid manner.” Another journal entry resonated with the awareness of the counselor role as she discussed traits of her Enneagram Type stating, “...it is not necessarily bad, I just need to be more aware of my actions and role as a counselor (i.e., I am not these kids’ mom, teacher, etc.)” The understanding of personality type and its relationship to counselor identity manifested frequently. One supervisee stated,

Lots of awareness came out during the session just by

discussing my challenges with my [site]...being able to connect my personality with things that I struggle or succeed with during sessions at my [site] puts a whole new perspective on things.

Role induction became apparent as the supervisees developed an understanding of the impact of their traits on their self as counselor and thus on their clients. One supervisee stated,

My Enneagram style (Type) is The Helper...I find myself struggling to feel confident in my ability to help others as I feel others look to me as the expert and I don't feel like an expert...I want to help and cure everyone but that's not realistic or possible.

The same supervisee stated later in the semester, "I have to stop trying to fix my clients and finding solutions for them...I need to rely on the counseling skills to help the client." This statement reflects both an awareness of the counselor role as well as how characteristics from her Enneagram impacted her work as a counselor.

The supervisor's reflection summary also indicated an awareness of his own professional identity and role induction as a supervisor, "I was able to incorporate this new awareness with my supervisees, but I also benefited from it in terms of my own professional development as a supervisor." Though he did not specifically state an awareness of the professional development of his supervisees, this theme was apparent in the supervisee journals. Overall, the Enneagram appeared to assist with both

supervisee and supervisor professional identity and role development.

Research Implications

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the use of the Enneagram and its impact on the supervisory relationship. The findings from this study reflect the developmental nature of both counseling supervision and counselor identity formation. Throughout the course of the semester, the data illustrated the supervisees' ability to integrate the Enneagram language and their understanding into their statements. The concrete issues became implicit as their discussions became increasingly sophisticated around their own awareness and how it may affect their clients. Many of the themes were directly related and mutually fed into each other.

The importance of self- and other-awareness within supervision – and within clinicians – cannot be overlooked as a professional skill set. Relating to others and awareness of personal strengths and challenges is a central piece of the work done by counselors and counselor supervisors. Abernathy and Cook (2011) emphasized the supervisory relationship as one that promotes authenticity, empathy, and empowerment to nurture professional growth. Similarly, the identified themes of self-awareness and other-awareness appeared to serve each supervisee to further develop themselves as counselors. They were able to see their own challenge areas as well as identify their strengths, and were able to conceptualize how these personal attributes were influencing their counselor-client relationship. For example, the knowledge that they were being too rigid, needed to learn to sit with silence, or that they have to trust the process of counseling rather than trying to

“fix” the client, demonstrated comprehension and personal awareness that contributed to their counseling skill set and their identity as a counselor. While supervision, as a process, is meant to further the supervisee’s professional identity over time (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), it appeared that use of the Enneagram helped to integrate a more sophisticated understanding of personal attributes and professional skills needed, in a relatively short amount of time. Particularly for practicum level students who have not sat with clients previously, this is an invaluable piece of learning and a particularly important finding. Lenz (2014) stated that it is particularly important for “counseling supervisors to provide a developmental experience that supports growth for both supervisees and their clients” (p. 4). It appears that the use of the Enneagram within supervision during early stages of counselor development was not only helpful to these students in fostering growth and learning, but also supported a strong parallel process for the client.

The understanding of their supervisor’s Type appeared to also help the supervisees appreciate their supervisor’s perspective, even when they disagreed, and positively build the working alliance. One supervisee’s statement of, “I have noticed that my supervisor and I may be motivated by slightly different things (as reflected in the Enneagram); however, we hope for the same outcomes,” highlighted the awareness that even though motivating factors may be different, the supervisor and supervisee are working toward the same goals. This mutual understanding likely feeds directly into the theme of relationship and rapport, as the data implied. The comments that manifested

this theme illustrate the open rapport between supervisee and supervisor. The frequent use of “we” implies a collaborative and trusting relationship with a strong working alliance. When both supervisor and supervisee had a context for the other’s behaviors and attitudes, they were able to integrate this awareness into their relationship. Additionally, their understanding of each other allowed them to approach each other in ways that the other could openly receive, facilitating stronger trust and rapport between them. Using the foundational piece of the Enneagram from the beginning of supervision appeared to allow for genuine, authentic, and open communication about a multitude of issues that arose throughout the semester. This authenticity and safety within the relationship allowed for meaningful exploration and connection, and likely reflected a parallel process for the supervisees’ clients.

Limitations

It is important in any study to address limitations to the research. The largest limitation in this research was the depth of the descriptions gathered. Most participants provided moderately rich descriptions in their journal responses. However, some days the descriptions were thin and superficial, likely reflecting feeling rushed or distracted from the supervision process. This is a normal expectation of students on a day-to-day basis, but is a limitation to the research that needs to be acknowledged. Additional forms of data collections such as an end-of-semester interview may have helped to fill these gaps. Further, the participant selection for this project was smaller than anticipated, which may have limited findings. Still, the purpose of phenomenological research is not to create

generalizable results, but to provide the lived experience of a unique group of people. For these purposes, the selection was appropriate to this research, as the 15 weeks of journals from the supervisees allowed for prolonged engagement, and thus, saturation was achieved.

Research Recommendations

Qualitative research investigating the use of the Enneagram in supervision would be very helpful in better understanding the impact on the supervisory relationship for both the supervisee and supervisor. This could be done by measuring the supervisory working alliance when utilizing the Enneagram. This could be accomplished by conducting research comparing the working alliance of supervisors incorporating the Enneagram into their supervisory sessions with those who are not using the Enneagram.

Further qualitative inquiry would also be helpful in establishing variables for further quantitative research to determine generalizability to a variety of populations. Qualitative inquiry with other cultural and ethnic backgrounds that includes a weekly journal from the supervisor, as well as one from the professor offering supervision of supervision, would provide more data for further investigation. This would be especially beneficial if the professor supervising the supervisor, also utilized the Enneagram in their supervision, to model this process for the supervisor. Other data could also add to the triangulation, and therefore, a deeper knowledge of this phenomenon, such as weekly videotaped supervision sessions that could be transcribed and coded, and the inclusion of the supervisor case notes for coding. Lastly, research exploring the attachment, or relational implications, of

the Enneagram and its neurobiological influences may help to continue to legitimize the Enneagram as a useful tool in clinical applications, including supervision.

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