

Episode 5 - Dr. Lawrence Shulman: Models of Supervision: Parallel Processes and Honest Relationships

[00:00:08] Welcome to LIVING PROOF A podcast series of the University at Buffalo School of Social Work at www.socialwork.buffalo.edu. Celebrating 75 years of excellence in social work education. We're glad you could join us today. The series Living Proof examines social work research and practice that makes a difference in people's lives. I'm your host Adjoa Robinson. Today's podcast features a conversation between Peter Sobota kind of cool assistant professor at the UB School of Social Work and Dr. Lawrence Shulman professor and dean emeritus of the UB School of Social Work on models of supervision. Dr. Shulman is a training consultant in direct practice family work group work and supervision. He has published numerous articles and monographs on direct practice and is the author of 14 books including the skills of helping individuals families and groups. Dr. Shulman has also produced training videos on direct practice and field instruction and a series of videos titled The skills and dynamics of teaching addressing the hidden group in the classroom which is available for viewing on our Web site. Now let's join the conversation between Peter Sobota and Dr. Lawrence Shulman on models of supervision. I'm Peter Sobota and I'm here with Dr. Larry Shulman to talk about supervision. Hi Larry. Peter the first thing I wanted to to ask you about was to avoid confusion is what what is very basically what is supervision. In my experience supervision out there in the field usually falls into four major areas of content and we start with that direct practice helping people with supervision and their work with clients that could be clinical work it could be case management work.

[00:02:06] There's a range of direct practice but essentially working with people to make sure we help them figure out what to do with their clients. The second major areas job management we have to do that helping people figure out how to manage their workload how to fill out the papers that are necessary for reimbursement how to make appointments meet people on time or things of that sort. What's so interesting about that area is more and more when I do workshops around the country people are actually starting to complain a little bit about a stereotype I think of younger people who are coming out of college and don't have that job management skill or ethic and that they're really having to train them almost from the beginning to figure out how to be a responsible member of the team. You always have those people who are constantly saying the agency doesn't care about practice. They always care and only care about about paperwork. And sometimes that's true but that is part of what a supervisor has to help a staff member reconcile. The other area of supervision which I think is often ignored was my experience. I call professional impact. So many of the problems are now with clients but they're with other professionals. At least 50 percent of the frustration comes from battles such as who owns the client. Those are disappointed and have the answers as our agency know what's best for this quiet note as our they. That kind of battle. Who wants of course the quiet and the quiet. But that doesn't stop professionals from battling over them. And more recently that's changed.

[00:03:24] What with cutback it's no longer it's my client it's my client. What I'm hearing more and more is it's your client No it's your client and nobody wants to work with them. So I think supervision a big missing piece has to do with how to help your staff work with each other in the agency but also how to develop skill at working effectively with other agencies. The fourth area I'd call continued learning. I think supervisors often have to teach people how to use supervision. Many people have not had it especially new workers how to take some responsibility for their own learning. Yeah I think a lot of at least our graduates sorry to interrupt you please. I think a lot of our students have really their field placements as their as their kind of baseline for what is supervision. I'm not always sure that they can differentiate between what is good supervision and not so good supervision or they don't talk about it in the ways that you just spoke about it. I think that is a

problem. And even with very experienced supervisors I'm doing a work right now in the state of Connecticut under the Samsa Grant I've got some experience supervisors did good supervisors but they're not always able to conceptualize what it is they're doing that makes them a good supervisor. And so they don't teach it as well as they could teach it. Once they conceptualize it they can do it more consistently. So yeah you're absolutely right. Continue learning is a big area teaching people how to use the literature.

[00:04:43] Teaching them how to use the research how to use not just you the supervisor but colleagues peers and the way I'd like to put it. Encouraging people to learn from their mistakes to go out and do things more effectively and make more sophisticated mistakes. And that's the four major areas that within that educational work you teaching what you're teaching practice you also teach your management skills. So education cuts across to Dushan and others have talked about supportive work. I think that's crucial. The supervisor has to be extremely supportive of the of the worker or student if they expect that student to in turn be supportive of the clients that has come through every bit of research I've done on field structure and supervision. Doctor Patient relationship supervisor in many ways. Models for the supervisory. What good practice is all about. You know while you were talking we came to my mind is a value I think that I share. If I understood you correctly is that I think a lot of the elements of good supervision involve the effective use of relationship. However if I could get. We were talking about this earlier when I finished my graduate studies and took my entry level jobs. One of the things that I found very frustrating is that the supervisors that I had really made no differentiation between I guess clinical or educational supervision and administrative supervision. I never knew you just had finished talking about for example a kind of a relationship where there's an element of risk taking by the supervisory and that means you have to have a safe and well-defined relationship much like clinical practice.

[00:06:23] And so for example one of the things that I remember early on that really did not feel right to me in a supervisory or relationship is that if I fell behind on my paperwork or if I didn't carry out an agency policy to the letter of the law. We didn't have an administrative conversation about my compliance. We had a conversation that felt a lot like therapy when you resist. I say Okay well the visual divide. Peter kidding but I'm having a flashback here in front of us. I think that's a mistake to that not being clear about separating therapy from supervision. Let me just take a minute on I mean I can be helpful in that when people graduate me go to work I did and they become supervisors. They always consistently say they are prepared to make the transition. First of all they haven't gotten good training if they've gone to a workshop it's a functional task analysis management by exactly the right objective. But until it doesn't deal at all with what happens the first day they walk into the coffee room and they're now supervising five of their colleagues former colleagues. Two of them apply for the job and then get it and everybody goes quiet. Those are the kind of issues supervisors face when they're promoted from the inside. None of that has ever dealt with. So what happens is they think they don't know a lot about supervision and when they get into a supervisory stressful situation like dealing with you on your paperwork they flip into what they feel more comfortable which is clinical practice is totally inappropriate.

[00:07:53] One of the examples I use in my book which I'll mention now is that the actual supervision is an example of somebody who is having a personal problem because battering was a nurse sexually and it's a wonderful example that shows how the supervisor pays attention to the impact of his personal problem how it's affecting the nurses work which is putting actually patients at risk because the medication addresses it directly is still supportive. Tries to make a referral to the appropriate agency but then clearly gets back to working on how that personal problem affects the work that's clarity of role. She understands that she's not there to be a third it's all on the table on the table. It's affecting the work therefore you have to address it. But that's one of the slippery slopes that supervisors often get involved in. They are not clear about this supervisory role. They feel more

comfortable in a clinical role and they start practicing the opposite. I also found to be true in my experiences that I met colleagues I would see consultation from other supervisors and they would say well I don't go near that stuff I go only administrative well again in the surveys I've done say child welfare for example I've done many of them with thousands of workers and supervisors involved. When you ask a supervisor the worker what would you like to be in the content of supervision. Almost always say I want help with my cases. When you're supervisors the practice when you supervise what you spend most of your time doing. They talk about administrative work. When I dig deep we find that so often the case because the supervisor feels more comfortable about the administrative stuff less comfortable about how to supervise the practice and so that they can do.

[00:09:33] They also do all the time if they feel caught in the middle. The administration is putting pressure on them. The workers are putting pressure up on paperwork falling behind and they're not career supervisors that one of the major parts of the job is to be right there in the middle to work helping turn this staff towards the agency but also helping the agency be more responsive to staff. And so these kinds of issues come up over time especially if you're promoted from within. I don't know if you were I was made and it made it difficult. Your first question is which side are YOU on. Used to be with us now you would then they gave you a pill you became a management. You know this is and so many supervisors feel unclear about their role when they caught in the middle unclear what to do about personal issues. Let me just take it a step further if I could. To be precise about your question. Personal issues can get in the way of work. If you're talking about finely tuned psychoanalytic individual counseling clinical work or group work is countertransference that exists. Sometimes it's good countertransference. We've created a model where everyone thinks it's bad but if a supervisor is having trouble dealing with an alcoholic father as I had students for example and that comes out in my class or in supervision it's not the role of the supervisor to help that person resolve unresolved issues it is the world to help that person see where they can get some help. That is their job but it is their role to say how exactly has your personal life experience.

[00:10:59] How is that affecting you right now. In this interview with this client. So if you take even self disclosures and we get more and more of those I think as people are free to even take those those can be worked with but they worked within the context of supervision and in the role of a supervisor. I think role clarity is one of the major issues that confuses supervisors and many times I didn't have it as workers and they don't have it as supervisors yet though in much of the practice world the way you become a supervisor is by being a good clinician. What happens is and I try to encourage people in my training workshop in my book to think about it that way that there are skills and dynamics they've learned about. They don't see the application they have to take those skills now and attach them to their new function and their new purpose as a supervisor helping someone else do their job. That's what they're there for. So you take the same dynamics the same skills and you can apply them. For example you mentioned earlier trust. If I take a minute on I think I can explain exactly what I mean or at least illustrated in my research I looked at things called the working relationship the literature they talk about therapeutic alliance there's a lot of words for it. I'm talking about three elements that I work that rapport I get along with my client my worker social worker. This was a question on the questionnaire for work clients trust I can tell my work or anything on my mind.

[00:12:21] I can share my mistakes and failures as well as my successes caring my work who cares as much about me as he or she cares about the clients. My work is here to help me not just to investigate me. I put that together into a construct called working relationship which I believe was the medium by which we did effective work. Now at exactly the same time I was looking at the supervisor level only this time the question was I get along with my supervisor my supervisor cares as much about me as he she cares about my client. My supervisor I can tell my supervisor anything on my mind. It was exactly the same elements and what the study showed was the parallel process.

The way you are supervised often affected the way you in turn worked with your clients and the expression more is caught than taught. I think it's a very valid one. That so many of the skills that people have worked well for example someone or works up I just had said the whole workshop admitted they had trouble using authority. They wanted to be liked. That's what I was going to ask because you know hovering over everything you just talked about and it's probably not laid on the table. In most cases is the these whole issues of power and authority. So take risks be open be free to make mistakes. I'm also doing your performance evaluation the way. So if the performance evaluation highly values the fact that you are open risking making mistakes learning from the mistakes because you don't want to keep making mistakes over and over and over again it's a good mistake. And I like supervisors telling students and workers.

[00:13:49] That's a beautiful mistake and they didn't understand what that means at first. And yet educated to say it's a mistake you can learn from. You can grow from it so if you were open you honest if you were making some mistakes if you were bringing it to me I have to develop the kind of relationship with you. Well you know I'm going to value that and saw that that's not going to be a bad evaluation. That's going to be a positive evaluation. That's the kind of work in relation to the set up front right and saw those ads the structure is set up and you also have to show I mean people can say the words but in the end they're going to look to see what actually happens. And the first time someone bring something to a supervisor and that supervisor says I'm glad you were honest about the one it's better that you didn't hide it. Good for you. Now let's talk about what you did and how you can go back next week. That supervisor is demonstrating what we're talking about. The supervisor really means to give a negative evaluation later on whether that's reputable. It's not ethical has to be an honest relationship. So when workers supervisors tell me new supervisors tell me how to use authority I say well let's say you used to be a worker. Child welfare I say yeah. I said you had the authority didn't you. Oh yeah. But you could make a recommendation that would remove it. How did you feel the first time you had to deal with that. It was very difficult for me.

[00:15:02] But after a while I learned that the use of authority and confrontation was often one of the most helpful things I could do for clients. And then I said to them take that apply to your supervisory role. So they had learned at one point how to do that. Of course they always say where the client goes home after seeing the rest of the week. Right. Exactly. I got to see every day and my position as queer as I can be is you've just changed your role. Get ready. There will be times when your staff is going to be angry at you and never angry at you. You're probably not doing your job. And I think as a new supervisor you know you're also I think you have doubts about your own performance and your own capacity and what you know and I think what you just talked about was risk taking on the part of the supervisor as well and modeling. I also get supervisorial coming from the outside in another setting another agency another population and the problem. And the staff are more expert in a program in some ways than they are. And I try to help them say to staff look I have I have experience I'm confident as a supervisor. But you guys have been doing this program for a long period of time this stuff I can learn from you. Now that's not a weak supervisor. That's a strong supervisor and staff will see him or her that way because they're going to address it.

[00:16:19] The issue we haven't touched on and I don't want to let this conversation go without mentioning it and that has to do with interent intra ethnic supervision. The issue of working across I called ethnicity but I think of it broadly white supervisor with a staff member of color straight supervisor would someone who's gay young with old you know you could go on male with female etc. or interethnic issues and they're they're they're always there because it's so taboo and people have been so uncomfortable talking about it have gone think that things like and I'm sure you've seen them and oppression pressuring that's oppressive. It stays under the surface and it doesn't get dealt with but if you are a white supervisor and you have a frontline worker of color and he or she experiences racism in a comment from somebody in the field you want them to be able to bring that back to you. They're not going to bring that back to you if you haven't first address the fact that

there's a difference between you intra ethnic even more complicated. I have come to the conclusion that schools of social work do somewhat of a good job on entr but they ignore entra. So the first time a frontline Hispanic worker has a Hispanic client or a black worker has a black client and that client says I'm glad to see you as my worker brother and you know you're now being put in the position of having to have a special relationship. Those issues are very powerful. Supervisors need to be able to talk to their staff about them. The problem is often those supervisors have not had anyone to talk to about them themselves. It's a classic.

[00:17:50] Well not only from their history but often at least in my experience supervision was a classic middle management job. You didn't have a whole bunch of authority with the people under you. But you also did not have people who you could go to above you because for example the person I reported to was an executive director. They were busy doing other things. What's so interesting is that when I do when to have an opportunity like I am right now in Connecticut through this Yale Medical School Project SAMHSA project for workforce enhancement I'm able to work with every level. So I'm working with the frontline workers and working with their front line supervisors and their managers their managers and executives. I'll meet a group this Monday actually will bring the same issues but only different variations with CEOs and managers feel caught in the middle between the people on top and below. They describe supervisors who are difficult to supervise but one of the commonest things I hear always Peter is that the managerial level does not really see their job or understand their job of supervising supervisors and so supervisors often do not get help because they're paid to do that and they don't understand it. Nobody ever did it for them. And so I'm a supervisor and I come to you as my administrator. I've got a real problem with a staff person who will be helpful to me or on how to document it. What do we do about the union etc. You will not say to me Tell me a little bit about your last conversation with that staff member.

[00:19:10] Let me see if I can put my head together and between us we can figure out how you might be able to approach this differently. It's not done but that also parallels the problem with practice because very rarely will a supervisor or not enough well a supervisor say or front worker frontline worker told me a little bit about that conversation with the family because I'm going to be helpful to you if I understand what went on during your interview use memory work because when a fancy agency that we don't have one way mirrors we don't have all the tape recordings you know using memory work I'm going to help you with the details not just sit down and do an assessment and a treatment plan and that's most common to tell you even experienced supervisors when I confront them on us. They admit that they do not get into the detail of the practitioners work and I don't know how supervisors can help so it's no surprise that managers don't get into the detail of the supervision work. I call it going from a general to the specific it's a very important skill. We've learned to do it with clients. We ask clients to tell us the details of their life experiences a conflict with kids a husband wife argument we do that but we don't do it with us there. And yet that's where I think the help comes. You haven't explicitly said this but one of the approaches that you've been associated with is the interactional model. You've really been describing that yes in the last five or 10 minutes range and a very key element of it which I shall underline it irrational means there's two parts in this process. The supervisor and the worker both have a part to play.

[00:20:39] Just like we have clients who at some stages in their lives can't use the help we give them. The mom who has to deal with her crack cocaine before she's going to ever be able to deal with parenting. You know and she's ready to go to a recovery program and deal with it detox program. You can't help her. The 14 year old kid forced to care who doesn't think we have a thing to tell until he's 17 and he's getting ready to make a transition to independence. We have example after example where we could do a great job but at that point the person is able to either here or use our help. The same is true and supervision that part of the process is the supervisor's skill and understanding of his or her role. The other part is what the supervisor brings and there are some

supervises for one reason or another you can't reach him at that point in their life they have too much of a personal problem. They shouldn't be in the field. People like that. So what I tell supervisors is focus on your part of the process and you are part of this process is maximize the possibility that the worker can play their part. And that's what the international thing is all about and respond moment by moment. Don't respond to what you planned to do somewhere in a conference somewhere else. Listen to what that supervisor is saying at the moment. And the work will really be international with nature.

[00:21:51] And if you're doing that and particularly if you're honest well if you do the things with your staff member that you want your staff member to do your open your audits you're vulnerable you're risking. These are the kinds of things supervisors have to do. Peter I can't tell you how often a supervisor provides an example and says I don't know how to deal with this. I don't know how to raise it. I got a good working here. I like this work but there are some areas I want to raise but I don't want to make a field Defensor. And I said well that's a wonderful start. Why you say that the word is like their eyes glaze over me just say it to the worker. Sounds to me like a wonderful way of saying get supervisors have been trained not to trust their gut them and try to think too much. Workers have been trained to think too much. Become a technician before you become a human being and you're not really feeling it and people know it. When our supervisor turns to the sushi supervisor and sets up social working me in the worst sense of the word what they have experienced at that moment was lacking of genuineness in the comment. So when the person said I hear you say what they felt was a mechanic a mechanic response. So some of us have to work real hard to be able to get close to what's going on for their workers. That's where a worker will say my supervisor cares as much about me as he or she cares about my clients actually. This may be I wanted to ask you about something else you've been associated with and this might be a good time to do it.

[00:23:11] I wanted to see if I could actually talk a little bit about the parallel process model and what you know really what defines it and what are its key concepts and how does it most importantly how does it play out very practically. Give a very simple example. You know I gave this in some other context as well. Staff especially new workers students are very concerned about their competency and the authority theme which you pointed out are always very separate at the very beginning. So they may get kinds of questions from from their clients in the beginning. The classic being you know you married you have kids when you have a 30 year old 40 year old mother with six kids and a young student during work or without a wedding ring. They get very defensive of all kinds of defensive responses. I go to school social work. We have a course in child development theory and we had a talk about you not me they're actually trained to say that you know and what that does is it cuts off a very important question which is the quiet is really saying I need to know more about you. Can you help me. Can you understand that's the question. And so there were responses which go directly to that question which opened up a conversation which allows that thing called the working relationship to start to develop because you don't get report trust and caring if you say all quiet. We're here to talk about you now.

[00:24:31] Well there's a parallel with a supervisor with a new supervisor comes into a unit and someone says to them you know have you worked in child welfare Wong is protection your area. Do you know anything about drug abuse and all the rest. They get the same kinds of feeling I going to have to sit here and teach you how to be a supervisor. And I apply for a job and I get it you got it so all that stuff is going on. So the supervisor who responds directly to those indirect cues is modeling for the worker how to do exactly the same. The example I gave earlier in another context was way they talk about a wonderful supervisor is a staff meeting and all of a sudden someone reminisces about this great barbecue that they had the last supervisor has wonderful barbecue someone else had ever tasted so it's like you know they go on and on and the supervisor of the new supervisor from the outside is sitting there thinking I don't even cook you know how am I going to deal with it. And then on reflection realizes that they're missing their pass. It was her and a direct

response to that Steph says. It sounds like she was pretty special to all of you. You must miss her. What was it about it that may have special that response is opening up a conversation that will help the new supervisor because that's what they're talking about. But what does that model that models what happens when the social worker goes out and the family member says oh we really loved our social worker. She was so helpful. You want that social worker to say it sounds like you missed her. What was it about her that was so special.

[00:26:02] Well those two things are going to happen it happens here between the supervisor and the worker. It is more likely to model for the worker. The exact same skill with the client and in one workshop I did I'll just share this. There was this classic incident where a sister who had just taken over as Mother Superior Hospital just outside nursing ordered just outside of Boston. She sat and listened to one of these conversations at a workshop around the barbecue I think it was as you raised their hand she said. Now I know what's been going on. I said What do you mean. She says I've been the new supervisor the new Mother Superior replacing someone who's been there for 25 years. And I was there only two weeks when it became apparent to me I had replaced Mary Mother of God as she went on to describe how people. And then she said you know I was so anxious about making my own start. I didn't understand how much was there was after 25 years. I'm going to go back and reopen that conversation. Will you be modeling for them a way of going back and reopening conversations with others. It's an interesting process because as you're talking I'm thinking the new supervisor is anxious. The new supervisor then becomes scared. And then there's a safety in a role or everything that you've read about. And what is the right answer to seeing my book by the way. I know but it comes really through making mistakes that what you really learn is be authentic before you bring out all the fancy Saturday you need and connect on a human level with another human being.

[00:27:33] And in practice and supervision my studies when I look at different levels and management people who manage supervisor. The single most important skill consistently especially in the first three months in every study I've done was the capacity to share your own feelings but to do it appropriately and professionally. I'm not talking about acting out you know the student who responds to these young worker responses the question to have kids by saying you're absolutely right I don't have kids what's my supervisor doing sending me out to work with you. Those kinds of feelings ought to go to the supervisor not to the client but the person who says I was concerned about not having kids and being able to help you because I have to understand what it's like for you when you've got to have to tell me who has shared some feelings. Understand but has done it in a way that is appropriate single most important skill of all the skills I worked at in developing a positive working relationship. And if there was a barrier between people in the sense that there was a difference like gender race sexual orientation Native Client white worker etc. There was a barrier that was the biggest predictor of being able to overcome barriers. As one of the clients said in one of the studies I like my social worker she's not like a social worker. She's like a real person. And I had the same comment about supervisors I like my supervisor. He's not like my supervisor. This one is a real person. Exactly the same comment. How does that get through with trusting yourself.

[00:29:02] It's almost like in some ways in the real world what you have to do is unworthy of much of much of what passes for training and education. Put your finger right on it. Over and over again people say to me Geez I wish I had had this workshop when I started you know it would have been helpful or I've been trained to do things. I mean students will tell you all top young workers will tell you the time I was always told never disclose anything personal. So if someone said are you married you have kids you're supposed to say I can't talk about it when I think actually that might not be the kind of question you can't respond to if you continue by exploring why they're asking the question. Now there are questions I would respond to teenage kids have asked me questions that I'm not going to respond to. But I will say to them I don't feel comfortable responding to that question. I could still be on again. Authentic answer here but isn't not strange Peter that sounds like such a

strange idea. Now professionally it sounds simple. Yeah. C'mon we've been loaded in the field with models that teach us to be inauthentic to have a hidden agenda or up our sleeve to help tell people what was a paradoxical injunctions were a great example tell family members to do the opposite of what you want them to do. Then they'll do what you want them to do. If I'm in that family I can't figure out what is going on with this worker. That's where my energy is going.

[00:30:15] So yeah honesty is important to just back up with to the discussion about parallel process. How would you respond to a worker or supervisor who says to you you know this is starting to feel a little too much like therapy. What I say is that what this is all about I've got to tell him what I just said before because of your bed Pontic. Well in what way. Give me just a little bit more Peter than I can give you a response. What happened just before you were talking about we were talking about roles and we were talking about learning and education and and being clear through statements and your behavior how you intend to treat people right. So if I guess to stick with that. If a person would say that to you you would Ross respond authentically and say something like Well thank you for saying that to me. Let me tell what say to me I'm missing the piece they said. And the reason I'm pressing you on this is that you can't generalize without the specific comment like did I said I felt like you were sitting in judgment of me now. It's what I adjust. What did I what I what had I just said in response to you saying that made you feel was therapy for example if it was the example you gave earlier where somebody raised the problem and I said you know I think Peter this is actually a personality issue with you. I have noticed you are often very stubborn on things. I turned that into therapy. That person has every right to tell me it feels like therapy because I'm crossing a boundary at that point.

[00:31:51] If instead I say to you at that point Okay let's take a look at this whole business of managing your paperwork and managing your job. I want to find out from your perspective what makes it so hard. Why is it that at the end of each month the last day at best able to get the stuff in. What's going on with your caseload. Goodness knows what I'm doing now I'm supervising them. I'm not doing your personality and I often find out there are things like that feeling overwhelmed. They haven't learned how to do certain things and they need some support or some help. They feel the expectations of the agency are too large. So what am I going to say to say you know productivity is a pressure here. Let's take this issue back to a staff meeting and let's have some discussion about how do we meet the expectations of productivity growth. Yes. And so maybe that guy you who is always late sending me a signal of an issue that is systemic and not personal. When I turn it into personal I've stopped being a supervisor. I have a student in class raised the issue. She had a tape recording of FM. This is back in Boston years ago and there were all kinds of hints that the father in the family was was an alcoholic. Family secrets and I tell you about it. You're an expert in this area and one of the students asked this other student didn't she pick up the clues and the tape. All these clues that everyone else was sending about the father's drinking problem. Lumpur's the students said yes I did those things.

[00:33:14] Why didn't you raise it. She says because my father was an alcoholic and she starts to sob in class. That's a very crucial moment where my clarity of role is important. What I say to her is that obviously this is very painful. If you want to come and see me after class we can talk about it wouldn't be the first person to run into your own life problems affecting you. There are places where we might be able to get some help on that but then I say because I'm a teacher and there's an educational class you're going to have to see their family next Friday. Would it be helpful to you if we talked about having had the same life experience in this case a family with the father was or how that might affect you when you go to see disquiet next week she says absolutely. I asked the rest the class should we change the agenda for this class instead of what we said we talk about should we talk about how for all of us we end up meeting our own problems coming around a corner and they hit us right in the head and we try to figure out how to help people with our right hand. Well sometimes we're still struggling with the problems we have and of course the classes. Yes. So this is

no longer personal therapy which I've seen colleagues do will turn this into a nice Therapeutic Encounter. This is a very important issue transference issues countertransference issues. How do we help people and I stay focused on my educational role if I don't do that in the class.

[00:34:30] Peter if I allow this to become an encounter around her personal problems no one will feel safe in class raising things again because I've allowed the contract to be changed and that's not the contract to me that's clear as a bell. I'm clear about my role. I think I responded Yeah and you can. I think you know that to me was almost could be used as a group work example but it has direct application to supervision and all the other things that seem to helping people make connections. Supervisors at the guard. The contract. I mean it's very easy to get pulled in when somebody comes to a supervisor. Happens all the time and says PD are so easy to talk to. Can I tell you about a problem I had this weekend and Peter sitting there saying gee I like counseling a lot better than supervision and seduce you into doing the counseling. Meanwhile no one's doing unsupervised allusion job clarity. Put another way. When I graduated High School of Social Work my mother said Larry you are now an MSW a master of social work with a lot of years ago I said Yes you said what do you do. And I said to my mom I said I work with groups to enhance social functioning to facilitate individual growth and development to strengthen egos and to make the world safe for democracy. At the end of which he says Yeah but what do you do. And I couldn't answer her question. I thought everyone else in my class was clear except me.

[00:35:45] It was only after I graduated that I realized that social work nursing education psychology all of us had developed jargon ised ways of answering that question that were not specific in nature. I think that gets carried over now into supervision. So what's the job of a supervisor to help the worker do their job and provide emotional support. But how do you do that functionally. What is your role if you're not clear about you or are you going to have all the skills in the world you're not going to be an effective supervisor. That boundary issue we just talked about staying focused on the impact on work rather than getting involved in therapeutic encounter with a staff member. That's clarity overall even if a staff member tries to seduce you into becoming literally seduce you into becoming the therapist. You've got to keep that line clear. Just go back to your parallel process just like you want to make sure the worker understands they have to have boundaries in their work with clients and agencies service boundaries. What this work is all about that strengthens the working agreement in the contract allowing it to go off into things that are not relevant. Weakens it. So I want to model it as a supervisor and that's the perio process. You've been listening to a podcast featuring a conversation between Peter Sobota clinical assistant professor at the UB School of Social Work and Dr. Lawrence Shulman professor and dean emeritus of the Eubie School of Social Work discussing models of supervision. Perlow process is an honest relationship. Visit our website to hear more lectures and conversations about social work practice and research. Hi I'm Nancy Smith professor and dean at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work.

[00:37:36] Thanks for listening to our podcast. Our school is celebrating 75 years of research teaching and service to the community. More information about who we are our through our programs and what we do. We invite you to visit our Web site at www.socialwork.buffalo.edu. At UB we are living proof that social work pays the difference in people's lives.