



Do you receive the nourishment and support you need?

My experience of mentoring/supervision has built on much previous reflective self-development work. It is emphatically not about being told what to do, nor is it about being judged. It is rather about self-responsibility and self-empowerment.

Asking ourselves some questions can help us to find out if mentoring/supervision might be useful for us:

<input type="checkbox"/> Does the thought of listening to your patients make you feel tired?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do you enjoy having power over your patients?
<input type="checkbox"/> Do your patients get on your nerves?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do certain patients make you feel afraid?
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you tend to give patients more time than was planned?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does your therapy always fail with the same kind of patient?
<input type="checkbox"/> Is it difficult for you to keep the boundaries with your patients?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is it always the the same kind of patient who irritates you?
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you feel you don't get enough money for your work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have personal crises so that you can't look after your patients?
<input type="checkbox"/> Is it difficult for you to ask for more money?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have the feeling you are close to burn out?
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you lack in your own life the support and nourishment you give to others?	

Some of the things that mentoring/supervision has given me include

<input type="checkbox"/> Warmth and friendship in a supportive environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Getting a sudden new angle on a clinical issue that frees up the therapeutic relationship and helps me to progress with that patient
<input type="checkbox"/> Being listened to and given space, and being accepted without judgment	<input type="checkbox"/> Practical suggestions in areas where I feel stuck
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning how to give and receive honest peer feedback with kindness	<input type="checkbox"/> Challenges to my habitual ways of thinking
<input type="checkbox"/> Peer support for my new ventures - practitioners to bounce ideas around with, and professional input in areas I tend to shy away from (IT for example! Or producing good publicity!)	<input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions for ways to prevent the burn out that can so easily happen when we are on the front line dealing with difficult health or emotional issues on a daily basis over many years
<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional support for what is going on in my life, both professional and personal	

How does mentoring/supervision work?

Mentoring/supervision can be done individually or in groups. Frances offers two kinds of mentoring/supervision: Clinical supervision for practitioners of Chinese herbal medicine, and individual mentoring for practitioners.

Clinical supervision for herbalists

Frances offers herbal practitioners the chance to attend an open herb clinic at the College of Integrated Chinese Medicine in Reading, to observe experienced practitioners in action, and discuss the cases presenting. These open clinics run monthly on Fridays.

During the morning we see 3-5 patients and make up raw herb prescriptions for them, while the afternoon is given to discussion. The clinics attract a varied group of herbalists, as well as acupuncturists thinking of studying herbs, and lend themselves to lively discussion.

Individual mentoring sessions

An individual mentoring session normally lasts 1 hour and costs £35. Sessions are held at the Cholsey Complementary Health Centre in South Oxfordshire, and can be arranged to suit you. Please contact Frances to discuss what might be appropriate.

What Mentoring/Supervision can do

- Supervision offers us a regular space where we can reflect on our behaviour and working processes

- Supervision gives us the space to explore something new and speak about our concerns

- Supervision is an opportunity to learn more about our own abilities and understand them better

- Supervision helps us to access the resources we need to move forwards

- Supervision gives us both personal and professional support

- Supervision helps us to keep up the quality of our work

- Supervision breaks our isolation and contextualises our work

- Supervision increases our enjoyment of our work and helps us to live up to our potential

What Mentoring/Supervision cannot do

- Supervision is not a replacement for therapy. If we need therapeutic help, then supervision can support us to find a good therapist.

“Supervision is a place where people can literally draw breath and have unhurried time to focus on their personal and professional learning”.

Nicki Weld, A Practical Guide to Transformative Supervision in the Helping Professions, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2012.

“Passionate supervision is more than reflecting about yourself. It is where you can see, meet, and get to know new aspects of yourself.”

David Owen, in Shoheit, 2008