

ANSE®

A hand holding an open book with butterflies flying around it. The background is a soft, warm light with several butterflies of different sizes and colors (brown, orange, white) scattered across the scene. The book is open, showing its pages, and the hand is visible at the bottom, holding the book from underneath.

periodical for professional exchange and networking

**European Journal
for Supervision and Coaching**

Storytelling and narratives

- The power of storytelling in leadership and coaching
Mbithe Anzaya
- Mother Teresa of the North
Sveindis Anna Jóhannsdóttir
- What do collapsing systems mean to supervisors and their organisations?
Annette Mulkau & Robert Erlinghagen

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Editorial

■ Sijtze de Roos

Since time immemorial, people tell themselves and each other stories; orally, in writing or via radio, TV and social media. We're sharing tales and stories about who we are or what we strive to be, about our manifold roots or what we retrospectively would prefer those to have been, about our role, function and purpose on this earth, about how we try to understand the nature of existence, or about how to cope with the ominous silence of the universe. Nothing, it seems, hurts us more than indifferent silence, than not having listeners, than not being spoken to.

Over time all these - and innumerable other - tales converge, as it were, into more or less dominant narratives that provide us with at least some sort of oversight, support, direction, comfort and meaning. The narratives we exchange vary in scope and shape. They appear as legends and myths, as scientific, philosophical or religious discourses, sometimes as sermons and admonitions and also as would-be objective descriptions. We shape our stories as fairy tales, songs, poems, articles, travelogues, blogs, TV-commercials or graphic novels. With what we tell or write each other, we aspire to shape our world to fit our needs and longings, or to resolve the deep mystery of life and to get a grip on realities that continue to elude us. It is no exaggeration to say that narratives *make* people: *we do not tell stories, we are rather, so to speak, told by stories*. Storytelling and narratives are communicative and interactive phenomena between people, created by listeners just as well as by those who speak, shaping our common humanity for better or for worse, forging relations across great distances and between the present, the future and bygone ages.

All this, however, is not to suggest that what we relate to

each other is necessarily true. The relationship between tales and reality is indirect, complicated, ambiguous and highly insecure. We are trapped in the limitations of our mental faculties. We may well-meaningly think to speak truthfully, while we are actually led by fallacious storylines, or even deceiving ourselves and each other. And then, of course, there are always tricksters who purposely bend the truth: Reynard the Fox or Brer Rabbit or Old Man Coyote. Or evasive shapeshifters like Loki who lure us away from our own words to violate the order of our narratives. All cultures, past and present, know such archetypal figures by the tales they tell and by those that are told about them.

Tales and stories may be told and retold to define what we should believe to be true. Whoever claims the power of definition claims authority over truth. As many of us do so, we see storytellers competing with each other, often even aiming to cancel each other's story out. With our words we may express our dislike of the narratives of others, or dispute their claim to possible veracity. How truthful, for example, are the many culturally ingrained stories about lone, tough, masculine men, fearlessly walking the streets in the dark of the darkest night, or determined taxi-drivers, cruising mean streets, rooting out crime, shooting all the bad guys and purifying the world for us? Conversely, do tales of humanitarian progression and benign - more in particular female - wisdom and kindness correctly represent the human condition? Do such stories really deliver us from evil? On the other hand: could both narrative varieties not convey some form of truth? Do they compete and cancel each other out? Or could it be that both are symptomatic of ideological distortion and partisan wishful thinking? And why are tales like these so popular? What do they make of us? How does listening to them shape and reshape these stories?

Questions, questions. And doubts that invite us to ponder. Thinking about storytelling - and telling about stories and

narratives – activates thinking about who we are, what needs to be done and how we could putting that in words to relate this to others. And that's exactly what our authors set out to do.

As you will see, the content of this issue can very roughly be divided in four - admittedly overlapping - categories, three of which distinctively cover the theme of storytelling and narratives. We offer five articles and vignettes on the principles and general methodology of narrativity in our field (Mbithe Anzaya from Kenya, Riitta Malkamäki from Finland, Olivier Laval & Clément Jacquier from France, Elisabet Wollsen from Sweden and DeBorah 'Sunni' Smith from the US). Next to that, we have four stories about certain developments in our trade, such as the story of navigating social media in the ANSE Community or the ongoing development of creative techniques and ethics (Reijer Jan van't Hul from the ANSE Board, Helena Ehrenbusch from Estonia, Sunčana Kusturin from Croatia and Sijtze de Roos from the Netherlands). Then there are five 'real live stories' focusing on narrative applications such as interviews, descriptive reflections of practice or past history and its meaning for the present (Sveindis Anna Jóhannsdóttir from Iceland, Kristina Urbanc & Sandra Matijević from Croatia, Gerian Dijkhuizen from The Netherlands and - again - our Estonian colleague and editorial board member Helena Ehrenbusch).

Apart from these thematic contributions, this issue contains three other valuable texts. We have a vignette in which Manuela Wittig (Germany) draws our attention to the XI. ANSE International Summer University for Supervision and Coaching, to be staged by our DGSv colleagues in Munich from 18 August up to and including 22 August 2025. Under the title *An Ocean of Possibility* this ANSE event is dedicated to *supervision between thought and action*.

As usual, we close this issue with the section *Did you know* by Gerian Dijkhuizen. But not before we attend to a contri-

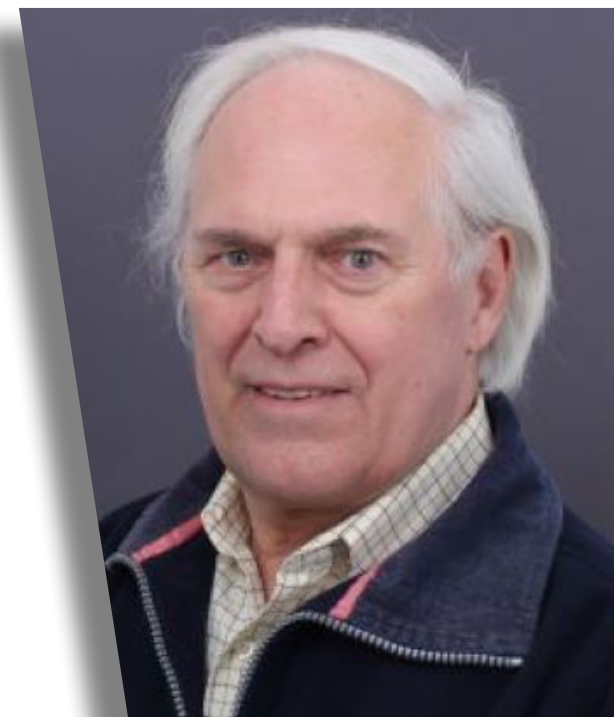
bution by DGSv-president Dr. Annette Mulkau and DGSv-board official Robert Erlinghagen (Germany). Looking at the natural disasters and systemic problems we need to address, they raise the pressing question *what our collapsing social systems will mean to supervisors and their organisations*. A very timely narrative, I would say, given the climatological dangers ahead, let alone the worldwide shift from liberal democratic values to more authoritarian, if not autocratic governance. Their call for rethinking the possible role and significance of our trade - and thus for reshaping our professional narrative - is as relevant as it is urgent.

Before I leave you to your Christmas dinner, I have two announcements to make. The first one is about the topic of our next issue: Artificial Intelligence and Supervision. You are heartily invited to contribute. Please check with 'your' national editor or 'your' Editorial Board Member. You may consult the colophon for more exact information.

Last but not least I gladly announce that my good colleague Kristina Urbanc will succeed me as Chief Editor. She has been a long-term and trusted member of the editorial board and enjoys our full support. During the transition period - beginning on 1 January 2025 - I will be happy to function as her helpdesk and assistant.

And now, with all this said and done, I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year. Let's keep it up. We are needed! ■

Sijtze de Roos



Sijtze de Roos (The Netherlands) served as ANSE vice president and ANSE president till 2018, and currently as Interim Chief Editor of ANSE Journal. Next to that he is active in private practice and on the editorial board of the Dutch Coaching Magazine.

The love for humanity – anywhere, anytime, anyone –



■ Sveindís Anna Jóhannsdóttir

When I think of professional role models in life, so many come to my mind. Ólafía Jóhannsdóttir, is one of them. For more about her, see my article about her life further on in this issue. Although she died 45 years before I was born, I admire her not only as a pioneer who was in many ways ahead of her time, but also for having humanitarian values that are timeless, regardless of time and space. Values that never go out of style. I have been blessed with

teachers and supervisors in my career. I have learned so much, about myself, my work, but not the least about professional boundaries and the value of life.

In 2006, I took a course with Michael K. White in London. He was one of the pioneers in the field of Narrative Therapy. I was excited to broaden my horizons, I had learned about narrative therapy and attended courses at home in Iceland and now I was on a course with one of the most well-known therapists in the field of narrative therapy.

The course was well structured and it was pure delight to see how effortlessly (in my experience) Michael elicited narratives and demonstrated how to work effectively with difficult emotions and experiences. All of us can look inside ourselves and find a memory of being afraid or insecure. I grew up in good circumstances.

But one night when I was about seven years old, I was walking home from my friend's house. It was getting dark and when I got to our house it was closed and locked, no lights on, no one home. I waited for a while but then I got cold and it was dark. There were neighbors who lived right next door. The next houses were more than a kilometer away. I went to the neighbors and knocked on the door. An elderly couple lived in the house with their grown up daughter who was special. The couple were not at home, but their daughter invited me in. I said that no one was at my house and I didn't know where my mom, dad or sisters were. Then I started

crying. The woman responded to the crying by taking me in her arms and comforted me. In my memory, she held me in her arms for a long time, until I stopped crying and was no longer afraid. Many years later, when the old couple had died and I became an adult, their daughter moved to a group home for disabled people. In my memory, she is the good woman who was there for me when I needed her, although the occasion seems very small in the eyes of most people. She possessed human love and gave herself to the child who needed to experience the environment safe and sound.

Michael White was a professional who worked systematically but also out of love for humanity. He made it a point to go



Michael White

over the story again and find the good in the people that surround us: did anyone help? Was anyone there for you at any time? Even when people think that everything is black in their lives, they can find a bright color if they look carefully. When an example of the good in the surrounding people had been found, the person who was involved was even invited to come along for an interview. We are all different, special and even disabled, but the love for humanity can appear anywhere and at any time, with anyone. ■



Sveindís Anna Jóhannsdóttir is director of Social Work in a rehabilitation center, has a private practice and teaches Social Work and Supervision at the University of Iceland. She is president of The Icelandic Association of Supervision and chairs the ethics committee.



Figure 1. **The Power of Storytelling**
Storytelling in a group context. From Smith, D. (2024).
Four Ways to Tell Stories in Group. North Point Ministries.
<https://groupleaders.org/blog-feed/four-ways-to-tell-stories-in-group>,
consulted September 29, 2022.

The Power of Storytelling in Leadership and Coaching

■ Dr. Mbithe Anzaya

Abstract

This article, *The Power of Storytelling in Leadership and Coaching*, explores the transformative role of storytelling within leadership and coaching, particularly in the context of executive coaching. Drawing on practical examples, scholarly research, and real-world scenarios, it illustrates how authentic, personal, vulnerable stories shared by leaders can inspire and encourage team members to persist despite difficul-

ties, and furthermore, foster trust within teams. Executive coaches who share their stories with coachees provide them with opportunities for self-awareness and inspiration, which are vital for personal and professional growth. The article concludes with practical tips for leaders and coaches on effective storytelling, emphasizing vulnerability and empathy as the foundational principles of effective storytelling.

The power of storytelling in leadership and coaching

Storytelling has been a powerful form of communication for millennia allowing for ancient traditions to be passed down through generations at fireside gatherings, and vision to be shared in corporate boardrooms. Stories can inspire, teach, challenge, write and shape perspectives. In leadership and coaching, narratives are powerful communication tools that can be transformational: A well-told story tells facts, builds connections, creates shared understanding, and influences movement or change. For leaders and coaches, storytelling is an essential tool that fosters trust, strengthens relationships, and guides teams toward shared objectives (Choy, 2023; Hellomonday, n.d.).

This article explores the significance of storytelling in leadership and coaching. Drawing on real-world examples, external research, and practical tips, we will examine how stories shape both leaders and their teams, and show you how to harness the power of storytelling in your professional journey.

The role of storytelling in leadership

Creating influence

Great leaders are great storytellers. Leadership isn't just about authority or expertise; it's about influence – and storytelling is one of the most effective ways to influence others. In their quest to inspire and guide, effective leaders rely on sharing personal narratives that resonate with their teams.

I started my C-suite career after leaving a professorial role at an American university, and had the uphill task of rapidly acclimatizing to a very different work culture and industry. Three years later, one of my senior C-suite leaders noted that I often expressed self-doubt. In subsequent meetings with me, he shared details about his own journey to his current position. He told me about how he also faced a steep learning curve when he joined the company, and in response, developed the ability to ask questions of particular people

so as to better navigate his way through seemingly impossible tasks and situations. He shared that he learned to trust himself by using his prior professional experience to guide his decision-making in his new role. Furthermore, he told me that he had learned to be vulnerable about and acknowledge his mistakes to his team, which caused him to gain credibility with and the respect of those he led.

His use of personal stories allowed me to see past his external appearance of smooth success and pointed me to resources I could use to achieve similar progress. It was comforting to know that I wasn't the first on this difficult journey, and I certainly would not be the last, but that it was possible to succeed at meeting and surpassing the expectations of my new role.

Storytelling is a powerful tool that can help leaders connect with their teams, build trust, and drive meaningful change.

From his example and as a member of his team, I learned that “storytelling is a powerful tool that can help leaders connect with their teams, build trust, and drive meaningful change.” (Hellomondays, n.d.). This leader, who was my first coach, taught me that I could use my personal stories to equip those I led with knowledge and resources that improved their outlook and overall trajectory.

Fostering team unity and alignment

Storytelling is a tool leaders can also use to create unity and alignment within their teams. A clear, strong and relatable

story helps teams see the bigger picture, understand their role in achieving organizational goals, and foster consistent drive and a sense of belonging. When leaders share stories of collective challenges and victories, they reinforce team values and encourage collaboration.

Take the example of a team member who is struggling to convince her senior executives that her project is worthwhile. This employee's proposal may indeed prove critical to advancing company growth; however, if her senior executives are not able to appreciate this fact, they will reject her proposal. Her supervisor or coach could help her use a narrative technique (also known as storytelling), to frame her desired action being as part of the larger organizational strategy, showcasing its potential impact not just on her individual department's profitability, but that of the entire organisation. A narrative of this nature provides insight of global benefit which, in turn, engenders feelings of eagerness and drives collaborative action.

Storytelling as a coaching tool

Coaching influence

Coaching is about guiding individuals to discover their potential and overcome current challenges. Storytelling is a powerful tool in this process because it provides a relatable and inspiring framework for coachees to draw from as they attempt to negotiate their own unique circumstances. Relatable stories from the coach's life can: a) provide coachees with opportunities for self-reflection; b) offer practical solutions for progress; and c) eliminate a debilitating sense of isolation, creating instead, a sense of shared experience. All these tools enable the coachee to overcome their situational challenges and chart a path for success.

Storytelling can also be used prospectively to help clients envision the achievement and impact of their anticipated success, including the significant potential impact of their successful leadership upon the lives of others. The process of

envisioning, which is in essence, creating a realistic story of what the future could be, creates a powerful internal sense of motivation.

Nurturing future leaders

Future leaders are shaped by the examples they see and the stories they hear. By sharing stories about their own leadership maturation process, coaches can help clients who may not see themselves as leaders, recognize their leadership potential and the leadership lessons they have already garnered thus far. A coach who shares about how they came to recognise, embrace and invest their leadership potential, can play a vital role in developing the next generation of leaders in those they coach. These stories encourage them to value who they are and what they offer, and hence take a particular stand and/or choose a path of unique contribution – which in fact is leadership.

Practical tips for leaders and coaches on effective storytelling

Crafting your story as a leader

To be an effective storyteller, leaders must be authentic and bear an understanding that the stories they tell can positively impact the future of their teams and organization, regardless of how dire their present circumstances may be. Many times, we seek to tell the successful side of our stories, opting to dismiss, downplay or hide our failures, because we want to depict our own aspirational picture of perfection and control. Yet very few people, if any at all, succeed without facing adversity and failures. A powerful story isn't about perfection and quick wins; it's about communicating an accurate view of disappointing realities and pragmatic aspirations, all while demonstrating vulnerability and relatability (Frei & Morris, 2023).

A good leadership story:

- Is focused on experiences that resonate with the audience and reinforce the intended message

- Communicates the failure aspects of a story with confidence and clarity
- Inspires others to action
- Provides a lasting blueprint that others can follow and share widely

Crafting your story as a coach

Effective storytelling starts with understanding your coachees' narrative, and understanding begins with listening. Drucker (n.d.) said, "The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said." A coach must listen carefully to their coachees' description of their circumstances so that they can discern the particulars of their coachees' struggles and the inconspicuous or covert factors that drive their client's decisions and behaviours.

Effective storytelling starts with understanding your coachees' narrative, and understanding begins with listening.

It is this nuanced insight that then allows the coach to share a relevant story – one that provides the coachee with an opportunity to come to an awareness of their own real underlying issues through the coach's story; it is as though the coachee gets to watch and hence, understand, themselves through the life of another – just as movies and books often do for their audiences. This enlightenment often brings hope, helping coachees feel that on account of this new understanding, a feasible path to success can now be charted.

The art of acknowledgement and ownership

A coach can share personal stories to demonstrate how their lives were positively shaped by difficult experiences, showing how they used those experiences as tools of transformation. Through stories, they can show that strength is often found in acknowledging the hard and painful parts of our journeys, which in some instances, also involves taking ownership of our contribution to those difficult circumstances.

After these initial steps of acknowledgement and ownership, coaches must then help their clients accept their journey for what it has been, and no matter how messy it appears, come to an appreciation of its unique, prized and inestimable value in shaping their futures for the better.

Simply put, acknowledgement, ownership, and acceptance of one's difficult journeys allows the coachee to:

- Connect with (rather than withdrawn from) the realities of their journey and appreciate themselves for the adversities they have overcome
- Recognise and celebrate the value of their journey, drawing lessons from it and charting measurable steps for a positive future
- Share their life story in the spirit of inspiring others (rather than seeking sympathy)

Storytelling challenges faced by leaders and coaches

Have you critically examined your life and the stories you tell about it? In what ways do you think your life story can impact others? What kind of preparation – reflection, assessment, organisation – do you think is necessary to share your story effectively? Are there parts of your story that you struggle to acknowledge or accept? How does your own healing process play a role in the tone you use and the emotions you convey when you tell your story? Have you thought about the need for permission from others involved in your story, and how that might lead to deeper conversations or negotiations? What can you do to ensure your story is framed authentically?

cally? How can you tailor your stories to be relevant for each conversation or coaching session while still maintaining their authenticity?

Despite these challenges, storytelling remains a powerful leadership tool that leads to lasting transformation; indeed, persistence in the skill and thoughtful selection of narratives can eventually break down resistance and build trust. Next, I describe some practical ways of developing your storytelling skills, which primarily involve ensuring that your content, delivery, and intended effect respect a few key principles of emotional intelligence.

Developing storytelling skills by respecting the principles of emotional intelligence

Principle 1 – Vulnerability

Brown (2012) highlights the role of vulnerability in leadership, asserting that "vulnerability is not winning or losing; it's having the courage to show up when you can't control the outcome." Leaders who openly and unpretentiously share their stories and the lessons they learned from them – resisting the urge to control or fear of a negative outcome, are more likely to build deep connections and foster loyalty and trust with their team members than those who choose a more guarded and less sincere manner.

Principle 2 – Building empathy

Empathy is at the core of effective leadership. Leaders who use their stories to express their genuine empathy for their team members' struggles, having faced similar struggles themselves, will build stronger relationships with those they lead and thus foster a more cohesive, motivated team. When a leader demonstrates empathy towards those they lead, their team members learn that they can fail at tasks and not be deemed failures, struggle without being termed lazy, and honestly share their issues with their leader without fear of judgment. This knowledge creates security and gives team

members the motivation to grow, and confidence to seek the help they need to do so, which boosts individual and team success.

The future of storytelling in leadership and coaching

I conclude with another anecdotal reference to my experienced colleague in the aviation industry, who helped me navigate my initial years at an airline company. Beyond sharing useful insights from his personal story, he advised that I seek external coaching support. My personal coach played a critical role in helping me achieve individual growth and stability, which resulted in the phenomenal performance of my team and improved profitability for the company.

When I left the corporate world to establish my own coaching organisation, Kaskazini Coaching – Africa, I met another experienced professional who used his own story of successes and failures to help me navigate the credentialing process and other challenges of my new world.

I can count, on one hand, the leaders who have used their stories to equip me with the critical information and tools I needed to succeed in my various ventures; tens more chose to withhold valuable information that could have contributed to my growth. I am indebted to those who used their stories of struggle and success to inspire and push me down roads I wouldn't have chosen or found on my own.

As leaders and coaches, it is time that we choose to help others find their feet and rise, without being fearful that they will outshine us. Every subsequent generation of leaders and coaches must be better than the preceding one – and therein, lies the power of storytelling. Storytelling is more than just a communication tool; it is a critical leadership and coaching strategy. It builds connections, fosters trust, drives growth and documents history. Leaders and coaches who embrace storytelling will find themselves better equipped

to guide their teams and clients through challenges, inspire change, and build a legacy of resilience and success.

It is time to embrace the power of stories. I daily pay my debt to those who shared their stories with me, by using my life story to support and raise the next generation of leaders around me.

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Dr. Mbithe Anzaya (ACC) is executive and systemic team coach with over 24 year experience across academia, aviation and non-profit industries. She obtained a doctorate in Strategic Human Resource Development and has provided strategic consulting services to organisations such as The World Bank and Amref Health Africa. She is former Head of the Kenya Airways Pride Training Centre – an internationally accredited aviation academy, CEO of its Approved Training Organization (ATO) and the recently founded Kaskazini Coaching-Africa, an organization that utilizes a 360-degrees actualization model to foster success in the interdependent personal and professional lives of her coachees. Dr. Anzaya has also co-authored 7 books on successful live transitions.

Vignette

A Narrative Approach to Supervision

A Turning Point in My Professional Life

■ Riitta Malkamäki

One of the revolutionary moments in my professional journey led me to Adelaide, Australia. There, Michael White and his team at the Dulwich Centre organized an extensive, international training on narrative approach. A period of this training also took place in Mexico, during a period of political turmoil marked by a coup and military occupation. In the midst of this chaos, one of our key themes during the two-week session was narrative approaches in trauma processing. We experienced the sounds of gunfire and the destruction of a city under siege, yet even then, the power of narrative working helped us to process and make sense of the situation, collectively. There are theories and then there are theories. Living life gives a touch, where the theory really talks like it walks and walks like it talks.

A brief Introduction to the narrative approach

The narrative approach has a broad, interdisciplinary founda-



tion. Michael White, alongside New Zealander David Epston, developed a practical method that continues to evolve. While White's sudden passing created a momentary pause, the approach has found new directions.

Its interdisciplinary nature draws from fields such as social constructionism, which focuses on how reality is shaped through social interactions and the importance of language in this construction. Personality is viewed as constantly evolving, and narrative working considers stories as a way to organize and sustain one's perception of reality. These stories—whether rich or thin/ narrow—are central to how we live. The field has been heavily influenced by anthropology's emphasis on culture, as well as a strong commitment to giving voice to those living on the margins of dominant societal narratives.

White's last book, *Maps of Narrative Practice* (White, 2007), became an essential resource in this field, with metaphorical

maps guiding narrative work. These maps provide a way to navigate potential routes, without pre-determined outcomes, allowing people to explore the most beautiful and meaningful



Michael White

paths in their lives. This metaphor also applies well to work supervision, as it supports the journey toward discovering the most enriching possibilities.

The narrative process in supervision

According to Michael White, the process of narrative work involves several key steps:

1. People organize their experiences and thoughts into stories, which follow an internal logic, often highlighting some aspects while omitting others. These stories become a person's perceived truth.
2. Through listening and interviewing, alternative stories—ones that might have been overlooked—can emerge. By “thickening” these stories and connecting them to larger contexts and the person's history, they can become more vibrant and impactful.
3. Moving through these stories allows for the construction of new landscapes of action and identity. These landscapes can reshape or reveal significant relationships between meanings, deepening the person's understanding of their life and opening up opportunities for new interpretations and self-relationships.
4. The ultimate goal is to help people connect with their intentions, values, beliefs, dreams, and visions, rather than dominant societal narratives or existing theories. The idea is for the individual to remain true to what they find meaningful, both personally and in relation to their surroundings.

The role of the narrative in supervision

In Finland, as in many other countries, there are no official definitions or certifications for supervision, only recommendations. This leaves much room for individual approaches and preferences. For me, the foundational assumptions of solution-focused and strength-based approaches have been particularly meaningful. The narrative approach, which shares these foundations in many ways, emphasizes creating a space

“The person is not the problem; the problem is the problem.”

(White, 2007). Michael White 1948–2008.

where people can at first explore their own stories without the pressure of predefined goals.

Initially, I believed that the relationship with goals would steer the narrative approach in a different direction from solution-focused methods. Now, I see it differently. The uncompromising narrative stance of not pushing toward specific outcomes but instead creating the space for individuals to explore their stories has won me over. The place of goals comes only after the conditions for success have first been created.

The rich possibilities of narrative supervision allow for the exploration of diverse perspectives. Narratives can shape both concrete actions and higher-level values, dreams, and beliefs. Often, changes in these higher domains can impact day-to-day realities without direct action. At other times, practical actions help to establish new links between thought and behavior.

In the end, right now

Narrative supervision transcends the resolution of immediate challenges, offering a path to profound personal and professional growth. It creates an opening for individuals to explore hidden potentials, gain fresh insights, and realign with their deepest values. This process allows them to unlock their full potential, both in their careers and personal lives, paving the way for lasting, meaningful change. As American psychiatrist and the creator of a new concept of expertise, Milton H. Erickson so insightfully expressed: “People have all they need to solve their problems; they have all the answers. Only they don't know that they know.” His words capture the essence of supervision: creating a reflective space where individuals

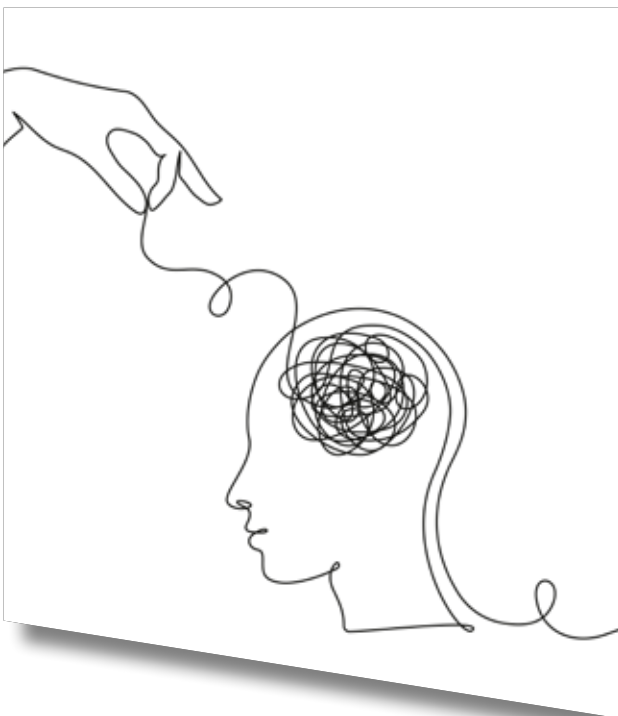
reconnect with their inherent wisdom and strengths. Through this supportive journey, supervisors help clients access new dimensions of understanding, empowering them to navigate life's complexities with resilience, confidence, and grace. Supervision, then, is not merely a professional exchange but a transformative process—a voyage toward realizing the beauty of life's untapped possibilities, allowing both the person and their potential to truly shine. ■

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Riitta Malkamäki is an experienced training psychotherapist and supervisor with a long and diverse career, as well as extensive education. She serves as the President of Suomen Työnohjaajat ry (STOry) and also works as a human resource coach and especially in work ability area. Internationally active Malkamäki divides her time between Finland and Italy, bringing a global perspective to her supervision and coaching work. She received comprehensive methodological training in various approaches, with a particular focus on strengths-based and narrative methods, which aim to empower individuals and create meaning through storytelling and resource-based work.



■ Olivier Laval & Clément Jacquier

Abstract

This article delves into storytelling and narrative approaches in coaching and supervision, emphasizing their role in addressing power dynamics. Various examples illustrate how dominant narratives trap clients in limited self-perceptions while alternative stories reveal hidden strengths and possibilities. By weaving new narratives, supervisors enable their clients to break free from problem-saturated identities and embrace a more empowered self-image. Techniques such as externalization, symbolic modeling, and the Emergence Game are potent tools for reshaping stories and reclaiming the author's rights over one's life.

A leader in a large international group who struggles to prepare a presentation on current issues in front of an audience

Storytelling and Narrative Approaches: A Power Issue?

of decision-makers

A senior executive must respond to her company's injunction: "Tell us a story that can make us dream".

A coach-supervisor who must write an article about his profession.

What do these supervision topics have in common?

The act or art of stories: storytelling. The term is used today in marketing when a brand creates a story highlighting an evolution or strategy.

A story... The fact that "History" originates from Herodotus's book *The Inquiries* (*Historíai*) makes sense for our profession. Herodotus is considered the father of modern geopolitics, which means integrating geography, climate, and lifestyle (today, we'd speak of culture) into history. According to French geographer Philippe Subra, the term geopolitics now generally refers to the study of power dynamics in any spatial context, even on a local scale. Thus, when we address storytelling issues with our clients, aren't we also addressing power dynamics?

The Tools a Supervisor Uses to Help Tell a Story

Breaking Free from a Belief

When our clients or supervisees come to us, they are often stuck in a problem they are experiencing, and sometimes, it can be difficult for them to break free from it.

It's as if a cloudy veil prevents them from connecting to their true identity, making them act according to the identity of the problem. Suddenly, "the person IS the problem..."

According to American psychologist Jerome Bruner, a narrative is:

- Events
- Stapled together in sequence along the timeline
- According to a dramatic plot (meaning/significance)

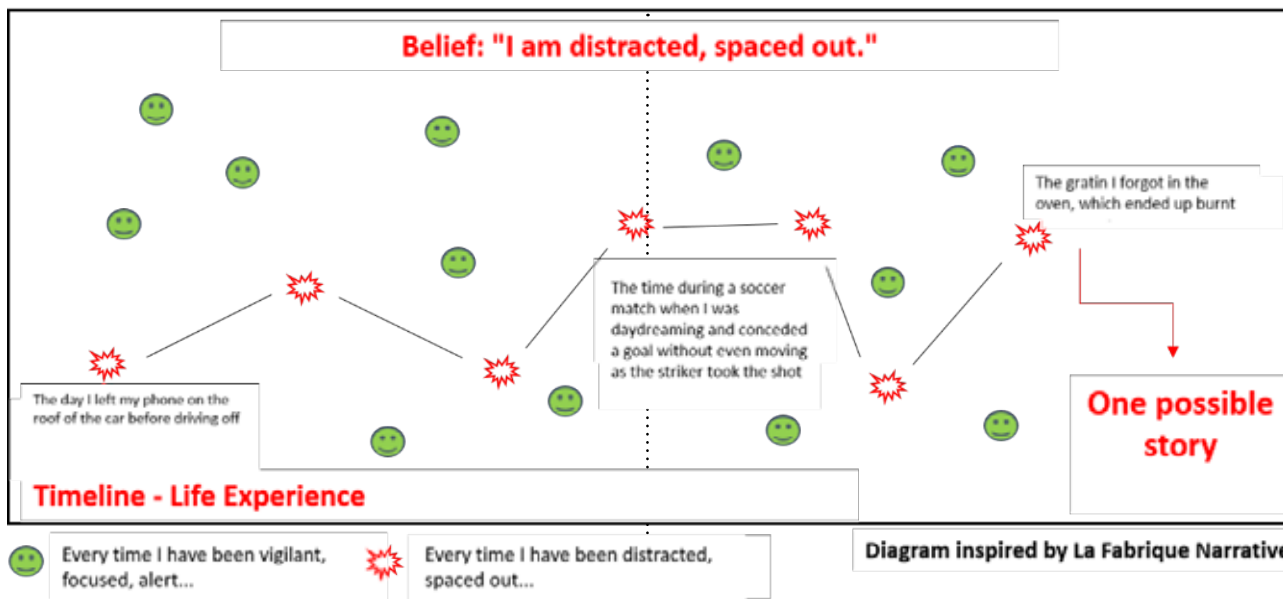
Telling or narrating is always about selecting some events and experiences while neglecting others...

Let's consider someone who believes, "I'm distracted, I'm scatterbrained." When this person tells their story, they will tend only to select experiences related to that belief.

This shows us that **telling is making something exist!** What is not told doesn't exist!

It is the power of narration: bringing our experiences to life. Without narration, other experiences that could tell a completely different story about us remain in the shadows, lost in the limbo of our memory.

However, we all have multiple stories: no one is just "shy," "outspoken," or a "follower"... It overlooks the moment when the "shy" person was the only one who stood up to the boss during a tough executive committee meeting, while everyone else kept silent. It disregards when the "follower" takes the lead in their team to manage a crisis...



The Trace That Restores Power

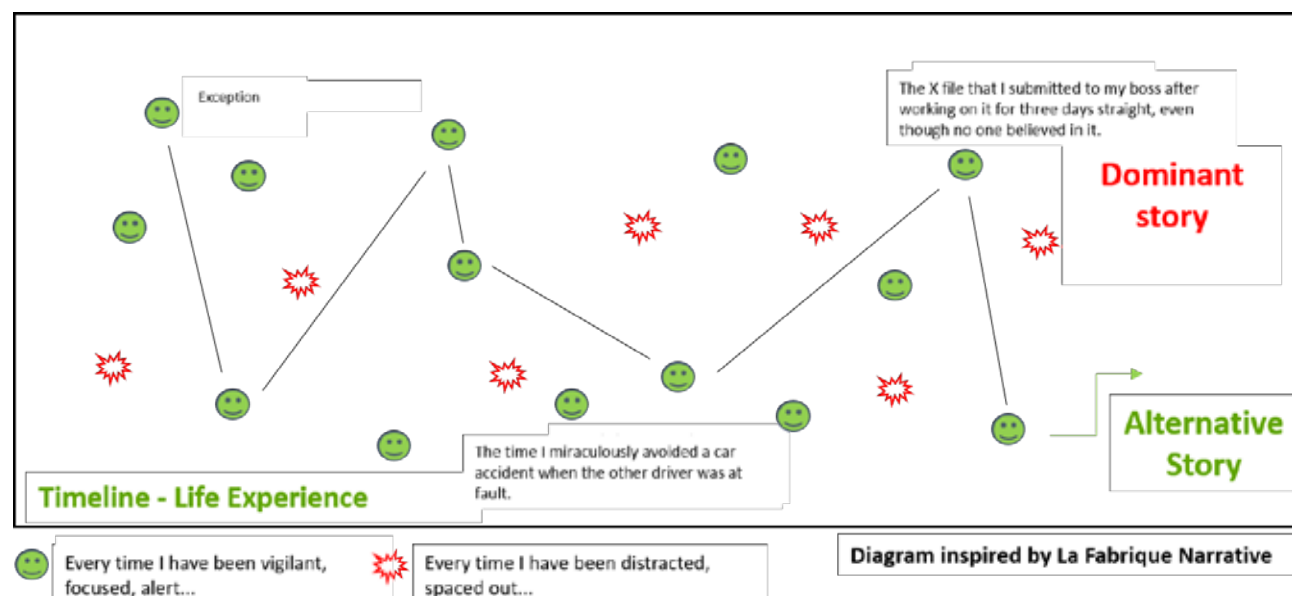
It is the core challenge for the coach-supervisor: to detect the fine traces in our client's narration that show another story is possible, to detect those fleeting moments where the person no longer acts according to the identity of the problem but expresses a moment of beauty, acting according to their own identity. To hear these fine traces and question our client about them is to start a reconstruction of their story, allowing them to step back from their problem.

In our jargon, this is what we call externalization: the person is the person, the problem is the problem, but the person is never the problem!

The person has a story of a problem: I am not shy, but I have a story of a problem with 'shyness.'

We are no longer two in the room at that moment in the session, but three: the coach, the coachee, and 'shyness.' At this point, we accompany our client to renegotiate the place of shyness in their life: how does it act, who are its allies, enemies, and modes of operation...

If a narrative can highlight only a dominant story ("I am shy"), it also has the power to weave an alternative story by emphasising other events along the timeline.



The other day, I accompanied a client who said, “I am a forgetful person.”

After discussing with him to understand better what was happening for him, I learned that he was going through a period where he was overstimulated on many fronts with high stakes in many of his projects.

We started working with Mr Forgetfulness (the name the client gave to his problem, referring to the Mr./Ms. books he loved as a child), which was not always present in his life but appeared “only” during these periods of overstimulation when he tended to say “yes” to everyone on every task to “please” others, creating a mental overload, disorganization, and thus... many forgetful moments, not knowing what he had committed to for each of these people!

Realizing this allowed him to move from “I am a forgetful person” to “I have a story of a problem with Mr. Forgetfulness when I’m in a period of overstimulation.” It was the beginning of a whole new narrative where he finally regained his author rights over his life!

We then worked on other Mr./Ms. characters who could be allies for him to “fight” against Mr. Forgetfulness. He told me how he would call upon Mr Pause and Mr NO/Ms Yes, duo, to help him in this process.

These were characters with whom he had already shared great adventures in the past, but as life went on (or rather, as his internal narration went), they had lost touch...

Externalization can be done through an imaginary character, as in the example above, but also using a projective tool. We regularly accompany leadership teams to tell us their stories, challenges, and fears via... Lego Blocks!

Building and narrating their reality in real-time and in 3D often allows them to see things differently, becoming aware that

We regularly accompany leadership teams to tell us their stories, challenges and fears using Lego.

they forgot something: a brick or a character in their story!

For example, a leader who wanted to slow down and begin his company’s succession but thought his executive team wasn’t ready. He saw that the system remained stable by removing his character from the structure along with all the links connecting him to others (employees, partners, clients...). This made him realize that the autonomy and responsibilities he had allowed his employees to develop made the system “non-dependent” on him, enabling him to finally consider his succession calmly.

Or this manager, whom I asked to build something with Legos when he arrived for a session. Once he finished his construction, I commented, “It’s funny, when you put characters in a Lego construction, you put them without legs... Now tell me, how does this represent your work problem?”

All of a sudden, I saw his face change, amazed to see that, indeed, he had been feeling completely powerless and paralyzed in the face of his professional challenges, and, at the same time, it’s no surprise he was finding it hard to move forward... without legs!

By working on his construction and the new story he wanted to build (this time with legs!!), he could identify what would give him momentum and thus an action power in his context.

- Allowing a Coachee to Tell Their Story Gives Them the Power to Detach and Regain Control Over the Situation
- Trusting hands to tell the story: what if we gave hands instead of just our heads the power to narrate?

A Process That Narrates Power Relations in Space

The Emergence Game

The Emergence Game (also named The Emergence Play) is the corporate version of the King-Queen Game designed by Dominique Vincent (body-psychotherapist and therapist supervisor), who describes it as follows:

“Before being a leadership coaching process, the King-Queen Game or the Emergence Game is a path of wisdom that dates back to ancient times. It is an integrative approach encompassing all components of human experience, beginning with listening to feelings, which are bodily and emotional experiences, continuously connected to thoughts.”

The process involves positioning oneself within one of the archetypes derived from Jung’s work:

One of the supervised coaches takes on the **King/Queen** archetype (the Self, constant integration of all archetypes within oneself and in the group / Alignment with emergence / Integration of the masculine and the feminine / Ability to clearly assess situations and make appropriate decisions).
Pour l

The others can choose to position themselves on the archetypes as follows:

- **Warrior** (Willpower, determination, courage / Authenticity / Action-taking)
- **Companion-Builder** (Logical thinking / Intelligence, honesty / Implementation and execution until completion)
- **Sage** (Ability to pause / Penetrating insight into reality as it is / Helping relationship, advice, facilitation)
- **Artist** (Imagination / Expression of emotion / Sharing

and celebration) Or position themselves in:

- **The Unknown** / The Emerging (Mystery, emptiness, the Source / Attentive waiting, open availability / The primal place of emergence of intuitions, feelings, images, scenarios).

The Intervention Process

One of the Emergence Game processes is to create a scenario in which participants are immersed.

For example, we might announce a power vacuum and the need for supervisees to agree on new leadership. All supervised individuals can position themselves within the six archetypes in this scenario.

As recently used during a supervision session with six executives wanting to explore their relationship to leadership, each was able to develop their storytelling within the proposed scenario:

- “We need shared governance.”
- “We need to move fast, and I’m taking the lead to accelerate the process.”
- “I’m not interested in power, and I step back.”
- “I see myself in this role but don’t show it.”
- “If asked, I’ll step up.”
- “I create disorder to move things forward.”

During the debrief, the supervisor invited each coach to “tell their relationship to power” and “how what they just experienced sheds light on that relationship.”

During the process, each leader experimented:

- With their **body**, moving in the space and feeling the tension linked to the scenario
- With their **emotions**, feeling anger, fear, sadness, or joy
- With their **thoughts**, reflecting their beliefs about what is right or wrong in this kind of situation

Telling is making something exist.

The supervisor then invited each coach to explore the three doors of communication¹ (thoughts, emotions, and behavior):

- When it comes to your relationship to power, what immediate thought comes to mind?
- Tell me about situations when this happens.
- And when you think about what happened, what new insights emerge?

And what happens in your body when you think about what you think? What do you see yourself doing?

What did you see yourself doing during this experience? And when you do what you do, what do you feel as an emotion? Traveling through these three doors of communication allows the coachee to narrate their experience and introduce a different angle or another perspective.

Let’s consider the situation of the executive/leader within a large international group struggling to prepare a presentation on current issues for an audience of decision-makers. Before the Emergence Game workshop, we had an individual supervision session. I suggested he tell me the “anti-story”: “Tell me how you’re going to fail this presentation successfully.”² He then listed all the possible obstacles, whether they were real (imperatives in his schedule), difficulties (difficulty delegating part of the preparation), or beliefs (“If I don’t master 150% of the subject, I will stammer, and it will be a disaster”).

During this individual supervision session, I conducted a body exercise. I invited the executive/leader to move to another

chair and recount what he had observed about this other self, listing all the obstacles encountered. Then, moving again to a third chair, he was invited to tell the story with solutions to all the problems listed.

Throughout the Emergence Game workshop, this executive/leader found himself switching between multiple archetypes, at times embodying the Warrior’s energy to push the discussion forward, at times the Artist’s energy wanting to “stir things up,” sometimes the Sage’s energy wanting to tackle core questions about what governance means today, and at other times the Builder’s energy proposing a process for making collective decisions.

I asked him about the common thread between all these positions and movements during the debrief, and he replied: “I’m all over the place; I talk a lot... but I don’t dare say what truly drives me, which is to take the place of the King/Queen.”

I then asked him what connection he made with power, and he replied: “Instead of fully owning my leadership, ideas, and intuitions, I create a whirlwind, take up space in the group, and it’s a power that is not stated but takes up space nonetheless.”

Symbolically, I invited him to position himself in the archetype of the Emerging/Unknown and move towards the **King/Queen** archetype, looking at all the participants while owning his desire for leadership fully.

During the individual supervision that followed the workshop, this executive/leader was able to link the initial situation (“I struggle to prepare a presentation in front of decision-makers”) to the second (“I take power covertly rather than fully owning it”).

¹Paul Ware, « Types de personnalité et plan de traitement », Les Classiques en Analyse transactionnelle, Vol. 3, pp. 264-273)

²There is a crack in everything European Journal for Supervision and Coaching Volume 7-2023-Issue 1. Pages 15-20

- Allowing the body to move so the mind doesn't occupy all the space alone.
- Using symbolism to help our clients step out of their power dynamics.

And can we conclude by using the example of the coach supervisor who needs to write an article about his practices?

"Tell me what Storytelling and Narratives evoke in your practices!"

As highlighted in this article, the very process of writing this article was a power game for us:

- The power to move from "I'm not a specialist and have nothing special to share" to "I have a real practice on this issue that can interest peers."
- The power to reconnect to moments in our past when we both knew how to tell stories, especially about professional practices.
- The power to shift from the mind to the body because it was the body that allowed us to reconnect to these lived experiences.

Remember, **"Telling is making something exist"**: we thus have a creative capacity through our narratives to shape our identity without being defined by external labels imposed upon us... to reclaim our author rights over our own lives! ■



Olivier Laval

During 15 years as an Administrative & Financial Manager and/or HR Director, Olivier Laval has accompanied teams. From 2009, he worked as an organizational coach before creating his company "Visions Croisées" in 2012 and merging with Coheliance in 2016.

Trained in didactic supervision and coach trainer for five years, he relies on everyone's potential. He is convinced of the relevance of "opening the lid of the pot" so that each person can, at their own pace, become aware of the ingredients inside and those that need to be added so that individuals and collectives function smoothly.

While operating within a Transactional Analysis contract, he places great importance on being open to different approaches and postures.

His clients also tell him that he has the art of confrontation that makes it possible to move forward: Coheliance has invented the neologism "Tensionaute", a posture and tools that allow coaches and leaders to identify virtuous tensions from dysfunctional ones.



Clément Jacquier

After several years of professional experience in the commercial divisions of significant groups such as Danone, Barilla, and Reckitt Benckiser, Clément Jacquier decided in 2017 to give a new direction to his professional journey to regain a sense of purpose and motivation in his actions by placing people at the centre of his activity and creating his business consulting structure, H2OM. Whether through coaching or training, he believes a strong link connects these two missions: "contributing to individual fulfilment to elevate the collective."

A certified professional coach in the Process Communication Model and a Narrative Practitioner since 2022, he enjoys listening to his clients tell their stories. He bases his interventions on a caring and pedagogical approach, using playful and interactive experiences that enable collaborators to develop autonomy and solve challenges. His clients usually share that they feel supported, not judged, and within a framework of complete trust while appreciating the playful and teasing side that he uses to challenge them when necessary.

Getting the grip of the narrative thinking?

■ Elisabet Wollsen

Abstract

The invitation to write this article has specifically involved three challenges: First: How can I make the narrative approach visible, which is so integrated in me and my life that I sometimes wonder when I am working or not? Secondly: How do I convey parts of my approach in this verbal and linear format? That what is mostly improvised, co-created and developed through processes? And can't be generalized nor repeated? And lastly: An artistic approach is equally central to my way of supervising. Embracing the sensory, poetic and aesthetic. Can I describe my narrative approach without including that?

Introduction

The following thank-you card I received from the supervision group I had seen for five years perhaps best describes my approach as a narrative influenced supervisor. With them above all. Though I recognize myself in their description and am glad for what they took away from it.

"A big thank to you, our supervisor and agitator! You have encouraged us all to do things we never thought we would dare, helped us develop both as individuals and as a group. There has always been warmth and humor, but also a sense that everything is OK (even sleeping...). We have never laughed as much as we did during your supervision's sessions. Thanks to you, we will continue to tread our goat paths". Family Law Group" June 2024.

Supervision is always about collaboration. The contributions

of the supervisees is as important as mine. Together, we create the unique and local supervisory culture that emerges. To make clear how this aligns with my important values, I start with a story:

A handwritten letter to Michael White (1)

The year was 1988. I was planning a round-the-world trip when my supervisor said, "I think it would be interesting for you to meet Michael White." I didn't know much about him or the narrative approach, trusted though my supervisor, got a welcoming reply to my letter and ended up at Dulwich Centre in Adelaide, Australia.

I left with a backpack filled with philosophical articles. And a very good feeling. Having experienced the congruence between the narrative approach and the people I had met. The care, curiosity, and approach clicked almost immediately, even though it conflicted with much of what I had previously learned.

I continued to join Michael during week-long trainings, several times in Paris, together with French narrative colleagues. I was also honored to be the "warm-up band" when he gave a course in Sweden. Last time we had a lunch in the Latin Quarter in 2007. Sadly, Michael died the following year.

Storytelling and the narrative approach

My encounter with Michael White is telling a story. I hear many say they are 'narrative' in reference to the use of stories. Talking in terms of having different 'narratives and the



use of 'storytelling' in communication and marketing seems popular today. However, only a few professionals I have met embrace what I mean by a narrative approach in theory, practice and research. Without me being remarkable or special. Many versions of 'what is a narrative approach' exist of course. In this article, I have been invited to share mine.

My starting points

Narrative thinking and practice are important parts of what makes up my ideas and values as a supervisor, therapist and human being, to use common parlance. The main influences come from Michael White and other narrative writers and from my narrative research. I have also implemented two different but interlinked perspectives to my artistic, systemic, and collaborative approach: psychoanalytic and psychodyna-

mic ideas and practice

Later in this article I will tell more how I apply these influences in my supervision practice.

Why a narrative approach?

The 'red thread' of my life is about isomorphism, in the sense of living as you learn. From a young age, I have challenged dominant beliefs and authority; seeking congruence between values and behavior.

Choosing a narrative approach is an ethical and political stance, a way for me to be in the world. Contributing to richer life stories is what I am passionate about. Stories that give meaning, direction and identity.

Why telling this?

I believe we always look at the world through the values and concepts we use, based on our hopes, passions and intentions in life; formulated and reformulated in an ongoing story of our life. Founded long ago, and maybe established already around the age of 17?

From these values we choose our meta-theories, which in turn determine the more concrete theories and explanatory models we favor that relate to them; all made visible in how we design our practice, how we speak and live our lives. My preferred truths, values and theories about narrative thinking follow here:

My wider narrative framework

The narrative approach describes identity in terms of 'we are our stories' (and more than that) and is seeing the concrete self as, to a large extent, identical to the life story. Believing human suffering and problems are the result of the importance of values, moral ethics and what we want to stand up for and honor, these aspects are being treated.

The historical, cultural, socio-economic and geographical location at a given time conveys its prescribed norms and

values about how to think and make meaning. This constitutes the wider "framework story" within which our personal stories are constructed. Challenging this frame of reference is important, like how different aspects of culture might contribute in inscribing people and phenomena into thin stories, silencing their voices, leads to suffering.

The approach assumes though that we already have the necessary skills and knowledge to deal with life, though these resources need to be activated. Behind our values are always stories that can be made visible, articulated and connected to the person's intention in life. Formulated by themselves. People shall be able to formulate worthy stories they can live with, not be judged and described based on dominant contemporary norms, as so often happens in modern psychology! Placing the problem outside the individual, making it possible to fight and take control over, is central to the narrative approach, in contrast with the prevailing consensus about problems, often placed inside the person, individualized and described, not seldom in thin stories. This is perhaps reflected in today's "inflation" of diagnoses?

Placing the problem outside the individual makes it possible to fight and take control, and is central to the narrative approach.

Normative power and the "permission bureau"

We live in a normative society. We compare and see ourselves through others. Where stories and voices of marginalized people and groups can be less visible and heard. Living in a normative culture makes many things possible, but

can also be demanding in the desire to live up to the norms that exist.

Today, there is less need for an external power as the normative power successfully places a 'little devil' on our shoulder saying 'shame on you'. Or 'you don't deserve it', 'you've talked too much', etc. More or less visible, an effective voice to make us stay within the 'box' and adapt to belong, not be excluded for thinking or behaving differently. Often also having us reproduce these norms. Always demanding more, in an endless request to follow the norms. "We were born as originals but end up as copies" (Michael White, seminar Paris, 2006).

To help me with this, I use "The Permission Office," my own intervention, which I consult when supervisees wonder; "Can/should I do this or that?"; "One moment, let me check with the Permission Bureau," which often gives approval... The message usually works; go ask your own permission bureau!

Inspiration from narrative research

When I took on a research project in the 1990s, I realized that I could not possibly conduct research based on the paradigm "if I know why, I know how." I had to research using a narrative approach. Easier said than done, as the research approach was unusual at the time. There were few supervisors available, so I saw no other option than to study foreign narrative research literature myself (e.g., Riessman, 1993, and Mischler, 1986). "I also participated in a course on 'Life storytelling research methods'(2) and joined a network with researchers, also seeking their way in a narrative approach.

The research proved fruitful both for my narrative practice and vice versa. Like the importance of activating those we meet, not seeing them as ready-made reservoirs of answers from which we can extract information. And how refraining from having before-hand questions make it easier to discover important entry points to richer storytelling.

Also bearing on both my research and practice (and life), is the attention to how different types of speech emerge during a dialogue pointing to the importance of the 'production context' for what comes up. There are more examples, and I will choose one mentioned in Shapiro et.al (1991). They use the drug metaphor to describe the dominating way of thinking around treatment. Therapy, supervision and psycho-social work are often based on the assumption that change occurs when the professional administers a number of active ingredients to the person seeking help. Thereby the helper is seen as a specialized expert that knows which solutions are appropriate for different problems. This involves the idea that certain ingredients exist and that these ingredients are under the control of the 'professional helper', regardless of what the 'help seeker' contributes.

This expertise is quite unlikely to be the case but made me recognize how common this setting is in the "helping professions", reflected in language such as: 'getting treatment', 'receiving therapy'. What about in supervision?

Contemporary norms within the profession?

Different professional approaches, as proposed, often reflect contemporary norms and culture. Training of supervisors seems to be quite similar, for example with its focus on the verbal language and often linked to a 'drug-metaphorical-idea'. Where are the alternatives?

Applying a narrative approach – make art, not content!

I will make the following statement: If you don't want to go 'blank' in your head, change your language (usage) and challenge your vision and own prejudices at every supervision session, don't choose the narrative artistic approach I describe. Nor if you dislike laughing, improvising and getting off your chair.

I don't have a model saying that if you take 'these steps or

follow these three keys', a predictable outcome will follow, as many contemporary models promise, models that are often linked to trending psychological theories, language and concepts explaining what 's wrong and why. At least, that's my opinion as far as such ideas go, ideas which I am happy to challenge!

As supervisor I am both withdrawn and influential, leaning backwards in terms of interpretation, and forward in terms of structure – acting as a 'language police' and an 'activator'. Sometimes I also act as an 'agitator', challenging prejudices, thin inscriptions, highlighting entry points to important stories and maintaining the narrative language use.

The supervisees "taken for granted" ideas and knowledge are deconstructed and exoticized in exploring if the "seemingly unimportant" might be linked to important values. That what is dormant, has not yet been said or seen or put into use, silenced by norms or for other reasons. "What's already there" only need to be unpacked, as norm- and value-free as possible. I don't applaud. The aim is to activate and to value.

What is created together in narrative supervision and research can never be generalized or repeated. Nor can it be taught by reading a book or using some of the psychological explanations favored today.

What is created together in narrative supervision and research can never be generalized or repeated. Nor can it be taught by reading a book or using some of the psychological explanations favored today. Equally difficult is it to describe and 'market'. In an ongoing co-creative "knowledge-in-the-making", each supervision session is its own 'work of art'. That is why I call it an approach, not a model.

I also look at supervision as an artistic profession, and supervisors and supervisees as artists, inviting their own colors and style, authenticity, courage and isomorphism. There is no right or wrong. Personality and expression should make an impression!

I choose resonance over reflection. So that dominant explanatory models in the current culture don't take up too much space. The recognition that our stories are heard evokes something in others and transforms through questions like: 'What captured you, and how does it relate to something you recognize in yourself, in your own life?'

The preconditions for such emotional resonance are about trust and confidence. Therefore, what is of most importance is to provide a safe space, verbally and non-verbally, by being the structure carrier, and less the content producer.

The overall approach is always the same. The settings to choose from, vary. Offering opportunities to experiment and experience, train and focus different abilities, skills and thinking. Always including embodied and artistic variants in addition to verbal exploration.

– seeing the body also as a skillful speaker is important! Here follows a brief description of some points to choose from (more alternatives exist). All of them are also interconnected and more or less applied within each other.

Life Staging*

Life Staging is a format I have developed and practiced over the last 25 years. It consists of an (initially) non-verbal group sculpting process offering a dynamic storytelling from many

perspectives where meaning must be sought primarily in the relational context, from sources other than the cognitive and verbal. This approach includes practicing perception, improvisation, the use of relational and embodied knowledge/skills that makes us more present, empathetic and courageous, and better at 'reading situations.' It also transforms through the activity itself, just through doing it.

The same opportunities and challenges are also given to me, not knowing either what the 'sculpture represents' or what the "stager" hopes for. There is no need to understanding or interpreting either.

The five question approach (3)

I don't follow the language 'Who wants to take up a case today?' 'What kind of help do you need?'. I have instead formulated five questions that I always and continuously use in all encounters to clarify/agree on the context, believing each time we meet is "new" in some parts. And, as everything and everyone change over time, an ongoing transparent negotiation about the collaboration and influence over the process is needed.

The questions are each time: who is here, shall you be here, what do you want to do here? – making a deal and plan for the supervision session, and continuously checking: Are we on the right track, are we doing the right things, when shall we stop?

The narrative conversation

I'm asking narrative questions while the supervisees contribute with their answers, not that the answers need to be "understood" or interpreted by me. Inviting the supervisees connect their answers/stories to important values, hopes and purposes in their profession and life. They formulate meaning for themselves (and others); holding the pen and is authorized to write and produce content.



Examples of narrative questions:

- What does this say to you about you?
- Is it good, bad, neither or, or both and?
- How is it connected to what you stand up for?
- Who have seen these aspirations in you before?
- Can you tell from a time you noticed you held these values?

An example from a supervision: I interviewed a nurse, new to her workplace but experienced as a nurse, who couldn't put her finger on why she felt so bad. She even had physical symptoms. Through the narrative questions, she quite quickly- and with surprise- came to understand the reason; she had violated her core values as a nurse, to give a 'white lie' to some parents and cancel their meeting, to join some AW with the colleagues. In wanting to 'fit in' at her new workplace. The insight was hurtful, though profound, and had her formulate; "I will never let it happen again"!

An example from life: I asked my daughter's friend why she had been placed in a family home in the town we lived. - 'Social services wanted to place me out in the bush, so I checked if I could stay with a relative and found my aunt's family'. - 'What does this tell you about yourself Sofie?' After a short pause. 'How cool I am that have done this myself!' Then she ran upstairs to my daughter telling her the story, how proud she was of her resourcefulness.

This 'sense of agency' often emerges through the self-validation in self-authored narratives.

Final words

Choosing a narrative approach is challenging and requires constant attention to what I produce/reproduce, and how I construct my truths in what language I use. At the same time, I also feel an artistic freedom, beyond the norms of how a supervisor should be, free to use everything I know and who

I am, based on my important values. Since professionalism, as I see it, is mainly about 'understanding what you have to do there'; it is more about choosing the questions of what, when and how? ■

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Notes

1. Michael White is considered one of the pioneers and best-known practitioners of narrative thinking and practice. He founded the Dulwich Centre in Adelaide, Australia, has written many books, trained and lectured internationally during his professional lifetime.
2. Fischer-Rosenthal, W. 1995 Södertörn University; Sweden.
3. Ria- Ra in Swedish



Elisabet Wollsn

I am a Licensed Psychologist, Licensed individual- couple- and Family Psychotherapist and have a Diploma in Advance Family Therapy. A Supervisor, Meta-supervisor, Educator and Researcher. Worked clinically since 1976, in my own practice since 1983. Until today I have supervised/trained and met with around 200 groups, and seen many families, couples and individuals in clinical work. I join several international groups with colleagues from around the world and have presented my work at international and national conferences since 2007.

Storytelling: A Reciprocal Coaching Ritual

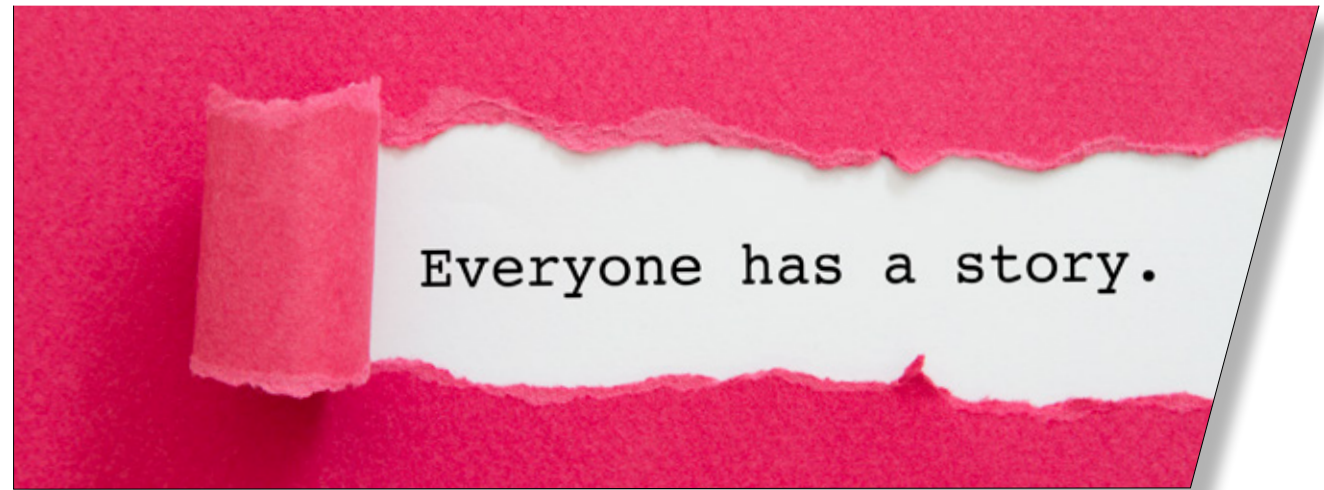
■ Deborah 'Sunni' Smith

Abstract

Storytelling is a component of all coaching practices because coaching operates through communication exchanges – the basic sending and receiving of messages. Although most coaches are engaged in more receiving than sending, this article illuminates how much storytelling requires accountability on the part of the story's narrator as well as the story's receiver. By examining basic coaching practices, and then deconstructing the neurobiology of storytelling and its effects, we are reminded that one successful coaching methodology exemplifies the power of telling stories. The Narrative Coaching approach relies heavily on the functional identity of both parties in the storytelling scenario, including their ability to reflect on their parallel roles. Last, we are asked to entertain a broader, more critical view of oral history storytelling and its ethical implications as they might apply in coaching.

Introduction

The Oxford Dictionary defines a story as “an account of past events in someone's life or in the evolution of something.” Stories, regardless of how they are told, make lasting impressions and are a central element of the coaching process. I invite you to consider that the telling of a story, like the



fundamental communication process, is a two-way and often cyclical experience. Whenever a story is being told, it is in an incubation stage.

The full realization or manifestation of the story occurs when it is received, seen, read, heard, or ultimately taken in or embodied in some way by another. Let's look at a few shared aspects of storytelling in coaching and how each can promote, if not enhance the coaches' capacity to be reflective.

“A well-told Story is a gift to the reader/listener/viewer because it teaches them how to confront their own discomforts.”

Shawn Coyne, The Story Grid

Listening: the Transformational Bridge

As coaches, a major portion of the time we spend with clients, individually or in groups, is spent listening. We are trained to listen actively and develop presence while holding intrinsic space that facilitates and fosters organic client transformation. Whether it is a client describing how they want to show up by the end of the session or a coach relating their ethical dilemma about being covertly asked to document something that might potentially violate their client's trust, we actively listen to stories. And that receptive activity also has a conjoined reflective component. Together, the reception and reflection form a bridge from the past to the present while mapping future pathways.

In contrast with counseling and therapy, coaching is fundamentally present and future-centered in its approach. Even though the client or coachee (in coaching or Coaching Supervision, respectively) may be relating past events, the primary focus is on how they are feeling in the here and now. Even the coach or supervising coach is actively engaged in how the narrating client or coach's story is impacting them as the listening or receiving party.

Neuroscience: the Cerebral Storyboard¹

Perhaps you can begin to see or sense how the activity of storytelling has a direct and powerful impact in more than one dimension. From a neuroscience perspective, research reveals that storytelling has a measurable impact on the brain. When we hear a story, the neural cortex activity increases, like a switchboard has suddenly illuminated the circuitry of our mind. Neuropsychologist Donald Hebb coined the phrase, “Neurons that fire together, wire together.” During a storytelling event, different areas of the brain are engaged, stimulated, or charged, including the frontal, sensory, and motor cortices (NeuroLeadership Institute, 2021).

“We are, as a species, addicted to story. Even when the body goes to sleep, the mind stays up all night, telling itself stories.”

Jonathan Gottschall, The Storytelling Animal

One of the neurological chemicals released when listening to a story is dopamine. This is what induces your listener to really feel something, and it facilitates focus, memory, and motivation. It goes to the heart of the often-repeated Maya Angelou quote, “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Oxytocin is the chemical that helps build bonds between the narrator and the listener, and it is key to conjuring up compassion in the listener. Paul J. Zak, Ph.D., director of the Center for Neuroeconomics Studies at Claremont Gradu-

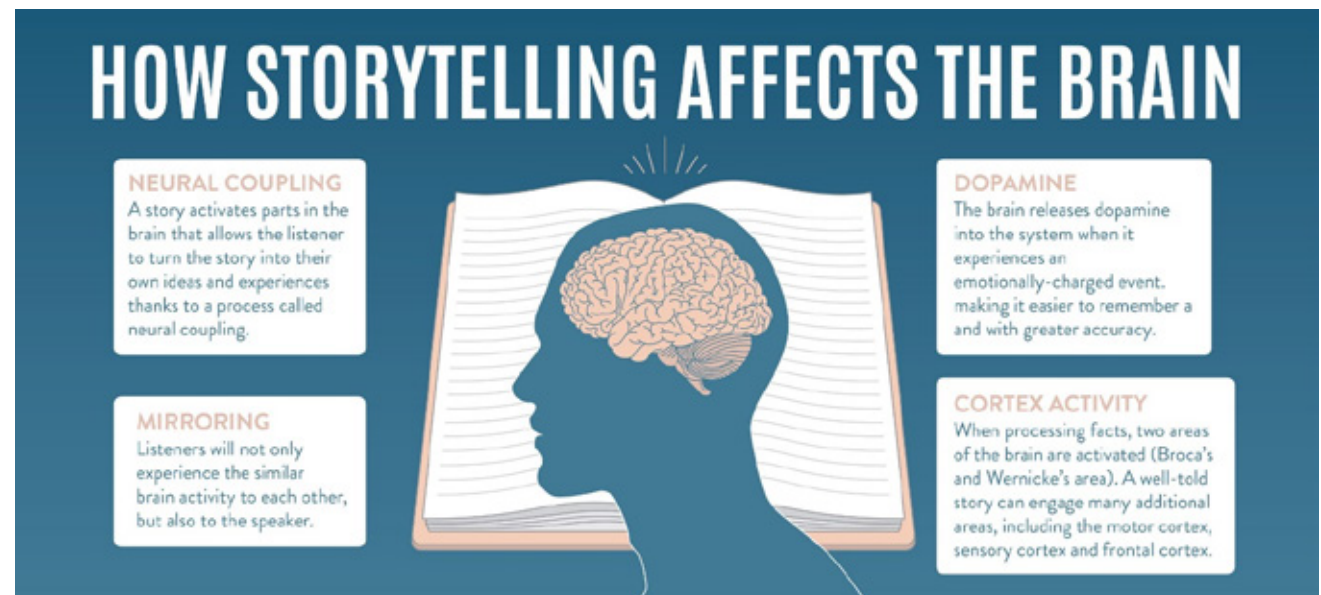
ate University, dubbed oxytocin the “moral molecule.” He explains: What we know is that oxytocin makes us more sensitive to social cues around us. In many situations, social cues motivate us to engage to help others, particularly if the other person seems to need our help. (Zak, 2013, para. 20) The science behind storytelling demonstrates that stories stimulate emotions, which may be the link to improved learning, attention, empathy, memory, and even decision-making for the receiver /listener as well as the storyteller/ narrator and the viewer or listener. The neural coupling and mirroring effects also facilitate relationship-building and bridge trust between parties in the coaching process.

Narrative Coaching: the Change-maker

Of course, the idea of powerful cognitive connections between what we tell ourselves and what we experience is old

news in the field of narrative coaching. Throughout history, stories have been the vehicles for instinctively making meaning of our world and ourselves. David Drake, considered the “father” of Narrative Coaching, would describe the approach as one that focuses on helping people change their narratives to create new possibilities and outcomes. It’s based on the idea that people’s stories shape their beliefs and behaviors, and that helping people build new identities through alternative narratives can lead to new behaviors and results.

Narrative coaching is based on the belief that observation and connection through stories, both verbal and nonverbal, can transition us from more intellectual perspectives to more emotional and creative vistas that are necessary for real, sustainable transformations.



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¹A storyboard is a visual depiction of how a story will play out, scene by scene... a chronological series of images, with accompanying notes. It's like a roadmap, guiding the journey of storytelling...

Early in my executive coaching development, I learned a particular coaching modality and process that began with conducting a life story interview. This was followed by queries into mindsets or beliefs and elective work with the client around modifying identified self-talk that the client discovered was no longer of service to them. The profound impact of the process emerged when the client began to recognize the positive and negative patterns that resulted from the outcomes or story results. Then, change or transformation became an organically emergent function of reciting and electing to reframe their own stories. This was not a pure narrative coaching approach, but the storytelling became its own reflecting pool and invitation to change their beliefs, values, and goals, which constituted their narrative identity.

The narrative identity is perhaps the most compelling element of narrative coaching that drives the quality of leadership development in the client and, in a parallel sense, the professional capacity of the coach. Both the coach and client (and the coachee and coach supervisor) must consider and conduct self-reflection around their storytelling journeys. In the Leadership CIRCLE publication, Anna Chatburn emphasizes the power and pivotal role of the narrative identity in effective leadership (Chatburn, 2023). In fully affirming that concept, I invite us to apply a similar awareness to coaches and coach supervisors.

“Stories are a communal currency of humanity.”

Tahir Shah; in Arabian Nights

Ethical Considerations: A Panoramic Perspective

In conclusion, there is another type of storytelling that potentially holds a significant place in coaching groups, in supervision group settings, and with other helping professions—and that is the value of oral histories. An oral history is a storytelling mode that often takes the form of an extended interview, not unlike the executive coaching interview exercise described earlier. This history serves the purpose of collecting information and creating a safe space for the narrator or storyteller to share their background and related culture, identity, and experiences.

This type of storytelling is particularly valuable in coaching Indigenous populations and in coaching around social justice issues. While researching this topic and preparing for Coaching for Social Justice (CSJ)² supervision, I discovered a dynamic and progressive not-for-profit organization, called Voice of Witness (VOW). Its mission includes utilizing “oral history to illuminate contemporary domestic and global human rights crises through an oral history book and educational program” (Wikipedia, 2024).

Most compelling is VOW’s articulated goal to democratize history and contribute to narrative change while encouraging individuals and institutions to use ethical approaches to storytelling. And that applies to coaching and coaching institutions. VOW’s Ethical Storytelling methodology, based on over 15 years of experience may easily be applied to coaching and coaching supervision.

VOW’s Ethical Storytelling Principles³

1. Invest in relationships to build trust, mutual respect, and collaboration.
2. Prioritize ongoing informed consent and transparency throughout the process. Ensure narrators have owner-

ship and control over their stories.

3. Honor authenticity, complexity, and the whole person, rather than approaching with preconceived expectations or framing narrators as victims or heroes.
4. Use a trauma-informed approach.
5. Position narrators as the experts.
6. Acknowledge and mitigate power dynamics and biases.
7. Ensure stories are accessible to narrator communities.

The one question regarding the relevancy of principle number 7 might come to mind because, on its face, you might wonder about the coaches’ role in ensuring accessibility. Fulfilling this obligation is ethically important, it may depend on multiple factors, like the ultimate use of the oral history, the original language used in storytelling, translation accuracy, bias, clarity of agreement between consenting parties, etc. Regardless, storytelling in coaching must be valued as a reciprocal process. It requires accountability as a shared, dually burdensome, and beneficial experience for both the storyteller and the listener. ■

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²<https://coachingforjustice.org> a nonprofit helps to transform coaching practice through reflective group supervision sessions

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DeBorah “Sunni” Smith, MS, JD, LLM, PCC is an organizational strategist, thought partner, and executive/leadership coach. Her brand of transformational coaching includes numerous coaching certifications including Team Advantage Coaching®, Conversational Intelligence®(C-IQ), Coaching Supervision, and Creating Futures that Work (CFTW), with an Arts-based Experiential Learning (ABEL) component. Most recently, she was recruited to supervise Coaching for Social Justice (CSJ) groups and completed a South African “Ubuntu Coach” training. Her global coaching and consulting practice has served communities from China to Uganda and is underscored by a background in public policy law, and cultural competency, with an emphasis on bias, equity, and inclusion principles.



The story of ANSE and social media

■ Reijer Jan van't Hul

Abstract

In this article the story is told of ANSE and social media. In seven years, ANSE has become far more present on social media platforms. News about ANSE and the events we organize are now regularly brought to the attention of more than 1,000 people. The author describes how ANSE became more visible for its members on social media and how the interaction developed. He also explains how to cope with different

social media and how algorithms work. Finally, he states clearly where ANSE now stands in its relation to social media and how things still develop. He ends with a 'call for action'.

Introduction

Nowadays ANSE is very active on social media. In 2024 we have 1141 followers on Facebook, a private ANSE Commu-

nity-group with 311 members, a private ANSE IIG (International Intervention Groups)-group with 206 members, a company page on LinkedIn with 854 followers, a LinkedIn ANSE-community with 391 members and finally 167 followers on Instagram.

All in all, I can say that on a regular basis we have provided more than 1000 people with news and events we organise. But to get this far, we had to come a long way. I will describe how ANSE became more visible for its members on social media and how the interaction with members/followers has developed. Next to that I explain how to cope with different social media and how algorithms work. And I attempt to make clear where ANSE currently stands in its relation to social media, which is markedly different from the situation in 2017. And things still develop. The article therefore ends with a 'call for action'.

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ANSE's history on social media

When I became an ANSE board member in 2018, my goal was to make ANSE more visible.

In the run-up to my board term, I discovered that it was very difficult to find out more about ANSE. So, the visibility of ANSE had to be improved.

In 2017 the ANSE Summer University was in Rotterdam. The newsletter of the LVSC (the Dutch National Association who was co-host) gave all information. This Summer University

was the 7th edition. ANSE was the big booster of it all. Apart from the website, www.anse.eu, not much could be found about ANSE via Google. So, if ANSE was to be made visible, attention had to be generated.

As a fresh board member, I started looking into the various platforms we could join. By then, ANSE had accounts on Facebook and Twitter and on LinkedIn there was an ANSE community group. First action was to get login names and passwords of all the accounts. Once that was done, we checked: on Facebook we had 321 followers, Twitter 48 followers and in the LinkedIn group there were 216 members.

A social media plan

On Facebook there was an average of ten posts a year. An occasional post was made when there was something to report. On Twitter there were one or two tweets a year. In the



Photo by Gabriel Scherer

Mentimeter

LinkedIn group, nothing happened for a long time. My wish was to post something every week because it was clear that this is how social media algorithms work. You only become visible if there is action and interaction. It starts with posting content and then, if you are lucky, people start responding, reposting, following and you are increasingly seen by other people as well. This meant it was time to develop a social media plan.

We chose to start offering the same content on all platforms. The aim for the first six months was to post on three platforms every Wednesday at noon. If there was no news, we would make something up.

First new media steps: new ANSE board and Summer University Bolzano

We started by presenting the new board. That already filled seven weeks. The next upcoming event was the Summer University in Bolzano in 2019. They could use some publicity, because colleagues had taken on the organisation of the Summer University at the last minute. The 'call for workshops' was posted, "save the dates" and keynote speakers were presented. Once the programme was filled, we were able to present all the workshop leaders as well.

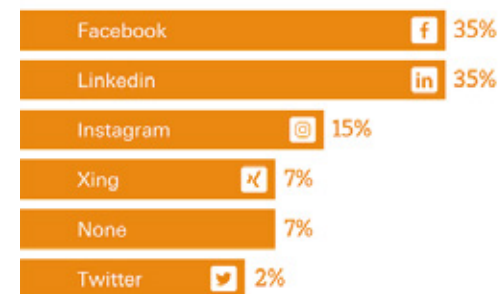
More and more enthusiastic reactions came to the posts, and that was what we aimed for.

We could no longer manage with one post a week, we soon moved to two posts and in the summer of 2019, it became even three posts a week. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday there was a post on social media. We became more and more active, and we were followed by more and more people.

Bolzano: Poll in Mentimeter

During the Summer University in Bolzano, we presented our new social media policy and at that time we also got clear where the participants were active in social media by using a poll in Mentimeter.

On what social platform do you interact? 59



The effects of Covid 19: online meetings became normal

In 2019, we also started to advertise the International Intervention Groups (IIG) more. A first digital intervention group was launched through Zoom. Digital working was still in its infancy. However, six months later in 2020 Covid19 forced us to work more online. With no events to promote we had two posts a week and even organised the biannual General Assembly of ANSE online. We launched a first series of 'online tools for supervision and coaching'. That received a lot of positive feedback.

Social Media

- Facebook**
 - 489 followers
 - Weekly updates and extra information
 - Closed group for International Intervention Groups (IIG)
- Twitter**
 - 61 followers
 - Weekly updates and short information or link to webpage
- LinkedIn**
 - 216 members
 - Small activity until last week
 - From now on, weekly updates and extra information
 - Interactive platform for discussions on supervision related topics

Slide of the PowerPoint of the ANSE session on social media. SU 2019.

In 2021, we promoted the Summer University in Riga, but it was postponed because of Covid. We then used social media to promote a digital event, the Summer Online Special. Nice to see how flexible we had become and how we managed to stage a two-day event with more than 100 participants. We found out that Europe had become a lot smaller thanks to Covid. It was very easy to meet, to organise workshops, keynotes and webinars. Then the idea of starting the ANSE Talent Talks was born. We promoted these Talent Talks mainly through social media.

In 2023, ANSE stopped on Twitter. After the company was taken over by Elon Musk, the atmosphere became increasingly grim and because we had very few followers there, we disbanded our account even before Twitter was renamed X.

Summer Universities

The Summer Universities also showed that we could use the platforms to still give people who do not participate a nice impression of what takes place during such an event. In Bolzano 2019, Gerian Dijkhuizen was asked by the LVSC to make a video blog of each day for the digital newsletter for the Dutch members. She did that so nicely and we started posting those videos daily during the Summer University.

In 2023, after Elon Musk took over Twitter and the atmosphere became increasingly grim ANSE disbanded its account even before the company was renamed X.

Three years later in Riga, we expanded these series to two videos a day with interviews and impressions. Thanks to all the publicity and visibility before the summer, the Summer University of Budapest was sold out four weeks before it started. In Budapest we even posted almost four videos a day. In the latest ANSE journal of June 2024 a vignette was written about following the Summer University in your backyard through social media.

In 2024 we had less events to promote. We decreased the number of posts per week, but we also started a new series. Every second Friday a colleague presented a “Useful tool for supervision and coaching”

Algorithms

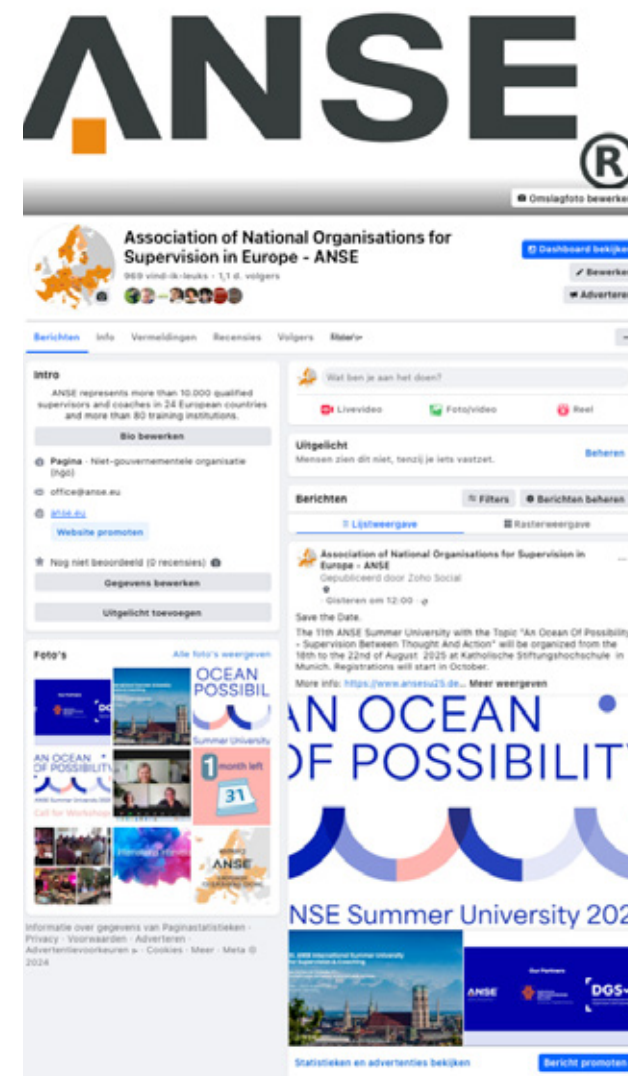
ANSE has now been active on social media for ten years. We have experienced considerable growth, especially in the last five years and we are clearly more visible. But if we want to stay visible, we will have to stay active to avoid being ignored by the algorithms. Algorithms work as follows: every platform has its own specific algorithm, and they all work differently.

Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube

For Facebook it is important that there is a lot of interaction. The more likes, or the more often the posts are shared, the more visible they are. It is good to realise that every post is seen by about 15% of the followers.

So don't expect that every follower also sees the posts. If posts by ANSE are wanted more often, people have to follow the page and regularly like or share a post.

As a content creator on Facebook, it is important to generate interaction. There should be variety in the posts. For every repeat of a particular post (events or gatherings) there have to be a different stories, different pictures. It also helps to regularly post a video. That keeps visitors hanging around longer and generates more “likes”.



Facebook Page

LinkedIn is a platform for professional users. It is all about networking. Early interaction ensures that a post is seen more often. Notifications from people in the network who like, repost, or comment on a post generate the most attention.

on. Comments are especially important. The more comments, the more visible you are.

Instagram is the hardest medium to influence. It is mainly about relationships between users. People can click so they only see the posts of people they follow. But if they don't, they will mainly be funnelled into a tunnel of videos. If that happens to be a funny cat video, they will then mostly be treated to funny cat videos. This is known as Instagram's funnel. Only a small part of ANSE's target audience is on Instagram.

It is also important *how* to post. On Instagram, it works well to post stories or reels. However, this cannot be done easily from a content management system* like Zoho Social or Hootsuite. This is why ANSE followers count is low and remains relatively low.

ANSE also has a YouTube channel. We used that mainly to share the videos of the Summer University with national organisations. YouTube makes it easy to create links for on a website or in a newsletter.

ANSE is not active on Snapchat, TikTok, Xing or Threads. This is largely due to familiarity with the various platforms who in general attract younger people, or are too much in a niche.

Content Management Systems*

When creating a social media plan, it is important to think about who and what is to be reached. Research of target audience and on what platform they interact is important. For ANSE, LinkedIn and Facebook are clearly the most important platforms. So that's where we are aiming the most.

Our plan also included posting content about ANSE weekly. My wish came through: over the past three years, it has been more like two or three posts a week. And in very busy periods, we post daily or even several times a day. Posting on three different platforms takes time and energy. Especially when you consider that it means three times per week logging

It is important how to post. On LinkedIn, early interaction ensures that a post is seen more often.

in to every platform. But there are ways to manage that. In 2018, we started with a free version of Hootsuite. With this application, we could schedule ten posts on five platforms for free. In the beginning, this meant we could schedule four weeks ahead for two platforms. When that became three platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram), we switched to the paid version of Hootsuite. At that time, it cost around 350 euros a year, but it was well worth it. It is easy to schedule posts for a month and it means about one afternoon a month getting all the posts ready on all the platforms. The posts are posted at targeted times. The only thing necessary is to monitor the interaction on social media. Follow interaction and "like" if someone has reposted the post or respond to a comment or question.

Since this year, Hootsuite became five times more expensive than before. So, we switched to another program. We now work with Zoho Social for €10 a month. A very user-friendly application in which it is easy to schedule posts and even easily monitor the interaction of all networks.

Call for action

Not yet a follower of our social media networks? Then follow us on the network that suits you best. Click on the words to get to our Facebook, LinkedIn, or Instagram. And if you like ANSE to become even more visible, please share or repost a post from us from time to time. Comment below a post or like our posts or put a heart to our posts. Interaction is greatly appreciated. ■



Photo by Christian Schinkel

Reijer Jan van 't Hul (1968) is supervisor and meta-supervisor in the Netherlands. He runs his own practice "WeerZin Supervisie". He is connected to the supervisory training programme at Windesheim University of Applied Science in Zwolle. Reijer Jan has been an LVSC member since 2002 and was regional contact person in Zwolle from 2014 to 2018. He then joined the ANSE board on behalf of the LVSC. In that capacity he is responsible for ANSE's website and social media.

(All other photo's – from ANSE Social Media – free or copyright ANSE)

Vignette

Navigating Social Media

A Storytelling Approach

■ Helena Ehrenbusch

According to some surveys, many of us actually see social media more as an avenue for storytelling—one where we can educate, advocate, and connect. Posts focused on mental health at workplace, work-life balance, and self-care raise awareness and invite dialogue about the human aspects of our work. Stories about the counselling process, insights into handling burnout, or reflections on the client experience (within confidentiality rules, of course) foster a sense of trust and openness. Posts on managing stress at work or explaining how someone might prepare for their first session could become not a sales pitch but as an invitation to consider (mental health) support.

Social media can strengthen connections within the professional community, allowing us to share knowledge, insights, and support with others in our field. These connections create a network where ideas flourish, helping us stay informed on new approaches and foster a collaborative spirit. Yet, even storytelling-based content can feel like or actually is very often targeted as self-promotion. It raises the question of whether social media blurs the line between information-sharing and subtly inviting engagement.



What could be the accompanying risks when relying on social media for professional engagement? The platform's emphasis on visibility can shift focus from service ethics to popularity metrics, potentially pressuring professionals to share more frequently or personally. This tension risks diluting the ethical focus of our work, where maintaining trust and respect are of critical importance. While, on one hand, marketing is a normal part of capitalism, it also carries the mark of commodification, or suggesting the need to prove the necessity of the service, which is stepping to the ethics realm. Who takes responsibility for development, when professional is initiating the contact?

Ultimately, social media storytelling does offer sort of an alternative to traditional marketing by focusing on advocacy and knowledge-sharing. While this approach can build trust, foster understanding, and encourage conversations, it's im-

portant to remember that social media inherently thrives on visibility, potentially pressuring professionals to post content more frequently or personally than may be appropriate. And, making personal stories is also just a marketing strategy for sales.

I recognize that my perspective may be somewhat unconventional and could spark differing views, but I welcome further dialogue. In my mind, supervision should be seen as a health profession, facing similar ethical considerations on social media, and open discussion can only strengthen our profession. ■



Helena Ehrenbusch, MSc, MA

Professional supervisor, psychologist, educator and trainer. Specialist in mental health, professional development, bodywork, and social circus. President of the Estonian Supervision and Coaching Association 2016-2022



■ Sijtze de Roos

Abstract

The ANSE Code of Ethics² was adopted by the 14th ANSE General Assembly on 22 September 2012 in Berlin. In this article, the author explains what went into getting to this point, how the Code came into being, what choices were made and why, and what considerations led to the final composition of the document. The need for sound professional ethics, more than just fixed rules and regulations, shines as a leitmotif through the text.

Introduction

Like any set of laws, a code like the ANSE Code of Ethics is a document that is very rarely consulted, mostly only when something has gone wrong - what were the rules again? - or as a study object for dusty intellectuals surrounded by messy stacks of old books, incunables and antique parchments. How very dull. So why bother? What's the use of codes? More exactly: what would we need an ANSE code of ethics for? Well, there may be very good reasons for that. To expand on those, I'd like to take you through the main aspects of the

The story of the ANSE code of ethics¹

ANSE code. How did it come to be? How is it constructed and why? What are its main characteristics and how is it supposed to work?

History

About twenty years ago ANSE developed into a fast growing platform of National Organisations for Supervision and Coaching in Europe. At the same time, National Organisations in many European countries were growing as well and new ones were popping up, turning to ANSE for support and expertise. The ANSE board saw itself confronted with two major problems.

- An overwhelming, fast moving world: volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous (VUCA), or, as Jamais Cascio³ prefers to describe the turmoil inside and around us: brittle, anxious, non-linear, incomprehensible (BANI). How to deal with this professionally? How to develop an active, aspirational attitude?
- Trust - in government, in institutions, in each other - was receding fast, and today even more so. Trust, it would appear, is no longer self-evident. Trustworthiness must be demonstrated by tokens of authenticity, transparency, openness and integrity, all of which need guidance by statutes, action protocols, codes of conduct and documentary proof by audits and visitation reports. How to deal with these defensive and distrustful practices? Under these conditions, how to develop and guarantee the reliability and the quality of our services, and how to com-

municate this to customers and society at large? To enhance (moral) quality assurance, ANSE formed a small committee to work on this and to design an overall ethical code which could be of use to the membership as a yardstick or an example.

Design principles

To start with, the committee investigated supervisory codes of conduct of about twenty ANSE-affiliated national organisations, including codes from related professional groups. Codes of internationally operating sister organisations were also included in the project.

What immediately caught the eye was the regulatory nature of most, if not all of the documents we examined, prescribing - often in great detail - the desired professional behavior and explicitly prohibiting unprofessional or unethical conduct.

ANSE holds no statutory power over its members and will therefore not compete with, overrule, or replace existing national codes.

We felt, quite contrarily, that a code on ANSE level should rather reflect the aspired state of professionalism and the professional core values member organisations should strive to uphold. ANSE, moreover, serves as a supra-national platform for national supervision and coaching organisations. As such, ANSE holds no statutory power over its members and will therefore not compete with, overrule, or replace existing national codes. The ANSE code should clearly express the widely accepted ethics of supervision and coaching. It therefore had to be a 'code of ethics' rather than a highly specified and elaborate 'code of conduct'.

Now in order to design such a document, and to make it useful for the ANSE membership, we found that the ANSE code should not repeat in detail what had already been stipulated in the various national codes. Given the historical, cultural and institutional differences between member countries, and consequently the variety in developing, implementing and practicing supervision and coaching, we advised ANSE - again - to restrict itself to the fundamental ethics that underlie the profession we all share.

Composition

After several consultations and discussions at ANSE general assemblies at that time (2010-2012), it was further agreed upon that our core professional standards revolved around dealing with relational power through care, trust, responsiveness (or 'resonance' to quote Hartmut Rosa⁴) and responsibility. (for more comprehensive reasoning, I refer to the preamble of the ANSE code of ethics)⁵. It is these professional values that had to be represented as clearly as possible, both in the code of ethics and in everyday practice.

As you may see from the document itself, the ANSE code consists of four articles, namely (1) General principles, (2) Institutional requirements, (3) Codification requirements and (4) Professional requirements. These articles are purposely formulated in general terms, so as to leave national organi-

zations room to elaborate, and to specify in terms of desired professional conduct.

Another rather special characteristic is the following: compared to literally dozens of other codes we saw, the ANSE code is the only one that does more than just formulating a set of minimum requirements to individual practitioners. It also sets minimum requirements to the institutional level > i.e. it describes how national organisations should aspire to deal with their members, with each other, with ANSE, and so on. Next to that the ANSE code provides minimum requirements for 'local' codification. Member organisations might use these to design, check or upgrade their own code. Lastly, let me point out how we explicitly and repeatedly refer to the universal declaration of human rights (UDHR) and the European convention on human rights (ECHR). We did not find anything like this in the many codes we studied during this project.

Functionality

Clearly, once on this track, the ANSE code could not be anything else than aspirational. Its main function is to inspire our colleagues all over Europe to act as a caring, trustworthy, responsive and responsible professional, and our member organisations to train, promote, sustain and develop their members to uphold these ethical standards in their daily work. Or at least to aspire to do so.

The ANSE code ideally should function as a guideline against which national organizations might measure their own codes and moral principles. It is also meant as a tool to promote regular discussion on the ethics of our trade, both on the national and the European level.

Because ethics cover a wide field, both philosophically and in practice, and because codification is informed by diverse ethical theories and comes in different formats, what kind of code are we exactly talking about? If we follow the figure below 'from the bottom up', the ANSE code of ethics can be described as a means to strengthen an uphold the (written or implicit) 'social contract' between individual members

of - and with - their national organisations, and between these organisations with each other, ANSE and our societies at large. Next to that the ANSE code invites practitioners to live and work by the social and professional conventions of our (European) professional community.

Theoretical aspects

Theoretically, the ANSE code is based on the (Kantian) 'categorical imperative', and thus deontological and non-consequentialist in nature (meaning that it does not necessarily concern itself with the outcomes of professional conduct). As an aspirational code meant to inspire⁶, it proposes what should ethically be strived for. At the same time it also shows traits of Aristotelian virtue ethics (see figure 1').

All in all, it could be said that the ANSE code is based on an intuitive mix of cognitivist and virtue-ethical reasoning. There remains, however, a certain tension between the deontological (non-consequentialist) and the teleological (consequentialist) aspects of the code. In practice, it may therefore be difficult to clearly distinguish between the formal rules and regulations of our profession, and one's personal sense of ethics in everyday practice.

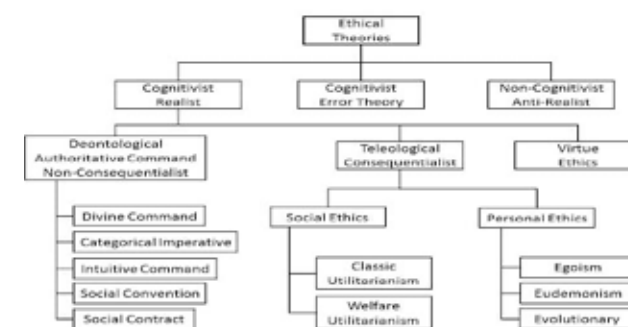


Figure 1

As a practitioner you may methodically follow the rules of your trade, whatever may be the outcome. Yet, results matter to clients. You will therefore feel obliged to properly serve them and thus keep a close eye on the consequences of your interventions. Confronted with complicated situations or moral dilemmas, you may even feel forced to break rules. In that case, you should of course be prepared to take full responsibility and answer to critical inquiry by your peers. But the question remains: on what grounds will judgment be made? Since there will probably never be a definitive answer to that, we have to weigh our arguments again and again, especially since no two moral dilemmas are the same.

In conclusion

No code will ever fully cover live, any attempt in that direction is doomed to fail miserably. No code, moreover, is valid forever. As times change, codification will have to change with it. But we should, I feel, never lose the link with the fundamental values of our profession as these evolve in practice and in reflection thereon. Ethics are not static. Acting ethical is a continuous learning process. That is why it is so important for practitioners, their organisations and their training courses to regularly discuss the everyday ethics of their practice, for instance by studying complicated cases or moral dilemmas.

Given the state of the world we live and work in, these values are under constant and severe pressure. Because care and commitment do not necessarily produce fast shareholder value, many would argue that we could do without supervision and the values that come with it, let alone ethical codes. But that, I fear, would lead us downward even more. We live in a chaotic world that may easily overwhelm us all. As Hetty Einzig⁸ writes: 'the provision of guidelines, social codes, may serve to help us through this messy complexity. And that is precisely what ethics are meant to provide'. But codification is by no means enough. She adds quite rightly that: 'the

concept of care - not just caring for, but caring about, caring with, being care-full - is fundamental to a decent, well-functioning society and to a viable human presence on this earth". And therefore essential to supervisors and coaches. Ethics should be part and parcel of any supervision and coaching training course. This is what I think. How about you? ■

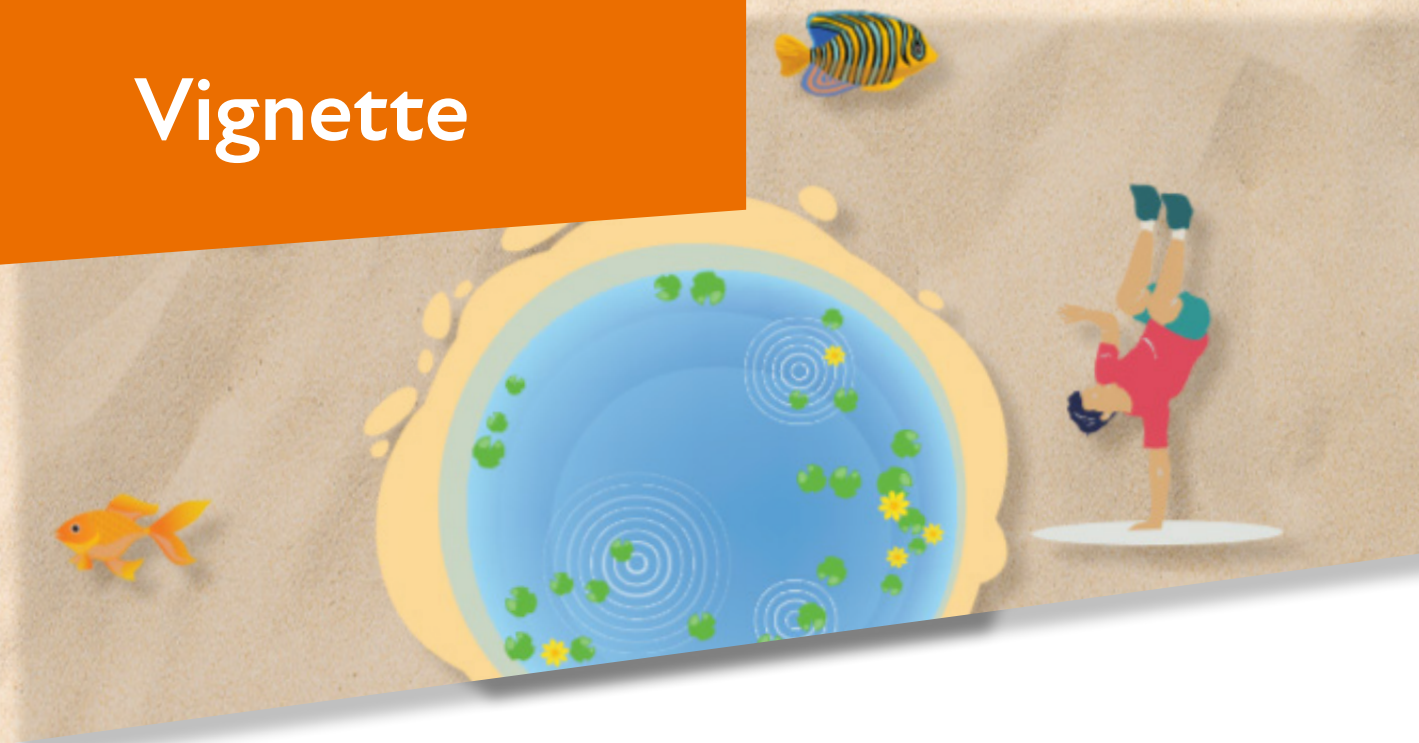
Notes

1. This article is an adaptation of the ANSE Online Quality Talk on Professional Ethics I delivered on April 25, 2024.
2. The ANSE Code of Ethics can be downloaded via the ANSE Website, or the websites of the ANSE-affiliated National Associations for Supervision, Coaching and Organisational Consultancy.
3. Jamais Cascio explored the intersection of environment, technology, and culture for 25 years, specializing in the creation and exploration of plausible future scenarios. In 2018, he created the "BANI" framework for understanding a chaotic world; this model is now in use by businesses, academics, and governments around the world. See: <https://www.santanderopenacademy.com/en/blog/bani-world.html>. Consulted 25 April 2024
4. Hartmut Rosa (2019). *Resonance: a Sociology of Our Relations to the World*. Cambridge (UK): Polity Press
5. ANSE (2012). *Code of Ethics*, Consulted 24 April 2024 – For this document: see the ANSE Website
6. The ANSE Code is *aspirational* in so far as it purposely aims at high ethical standards in practice. It is inspirational in so far as it invites others – i.e. national organisations and its members – to follow that example
7. Figure 1 > <https://www.quora.com/What-constitutes-ethical-theory-and-are-there-schools-of-thought>. Consulted 24 April 2024
8. Hetty Einzig (2023, January). Who do we care to be? The ethics of care revisited for the coaching profession. In: *Coaching Perspectives* 36 (1); 32-39



Sijtze de Roos (The Netherlands) served as ANSE vice president and ANSE president till 2018, and currently as Interim Chief Editor of ANSE Journal. Next to that he is active in private practice and on the editorial board of the Dutch Coaching Magazine.

Vignette



Creative techniques and a sense of wonder

■ Sunčana Kusturin

Abstract

Creative techniques can awake a specific sense of wonder that supports the supervision process in its journey towards discovery of inner wisdom. In this vignette, the author provides a brief overview of how she applied creative methods in both face-to-face and online supervision settings.

Introduction

I love working as a supervisor, and I have been doing it for quite a while. Every group is different, every supervision

process is unique, and when I recall them, they evoke different sensations. Some supervision meetings I have forgotten, but some still echo in me for various reasons. When I thought about describing the use of creative techniques, two supervision meetings came to mind. They are connected in a way and remind me of the importance of the supervision process and the significance of an individualised approach to beneficiaries. This particular supervision group consisted of five professionals from the same civil society organisation that provides professional support to young people at risk. We started working face-to-face, and after a year, due to financial reasons, we shifted to an online setting.

Supervision meeting “Damn hippie girls”

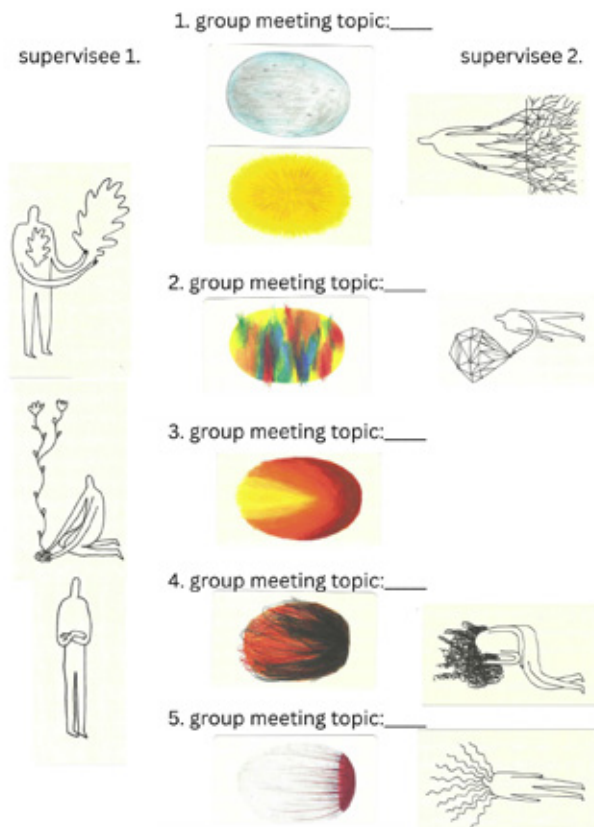
During the third meeting, two supervisees who jointly led workshops with a group of young girls expressed their desire to talk about their group and look closer to what is going on with their group dynamic. They were finding it difficult to reach the girls and began to question whether their work was effective, wondering if it would be more useful to work with other young people. They shared feelings of dissatisfaction, but they had slightly different impressions of what was happening during some of the group meetings and what might be the main problem.

I wanted to give each of them an equal opportunity to freely express their impressions of that group process. Since I knew they were open to using diverse visuals and creative techniques, I proposed using the associative cards *Emocije i stanja* (“Emotions and Shapes”), which feature two types of cards: one with coloured pictures and another with black and white figures.

They were invited to recall the topic of their first group meeting and then to choose associative cards that best describes their impression of that particular meeting (cards with colours). After placing the card on the flipchart next to the topic of the group meeting, they were asked to choose a card that describes how they felt during that meeting (cards with figures).

This process was repeated five times, as they had held five meetings with the group so far. For some meetings, they both chose the same associative card; for others, they selected and placed different cards.

Once all the cards were laid out, the supervisees were asked to speak about the cards they had chosen for each meeting. They described one group meeting after another, and I wrote down the key words they used on the flipchart. After dis-



Key insights and ideas to move forward:

Recreation of the original flipchart titled "Impressions of Each Group Meeting," created using the associative cards "Emocije i stanja" (translated as "Emotions and Shapes", https://www.instagram.com/p/CO2mLzgri44/?img_index=1). (For reasons of confidentiality, the original text on the flipchart has been omitted.)

cussing all the meetings, they were asked what came to their mind or heart after saying all of that and seeing it laid out on the table. The group was then asked to share their insights.

Everything the supervisees identified as important process within group dynamic that was described was written on the same flipchart (in yellow). The two supervisees that both the issue were once again asked how all insights resonate with them and what they see as the next steps.

They identified a few crucial interventions directed toward the group and one that was important for them as group leaders. They said they needed to become "damn hippies" and approach this particular group with that kind of inner energy. This metaphor invited laughter and became their new identity, which strengthened them as a pair of group leaders.

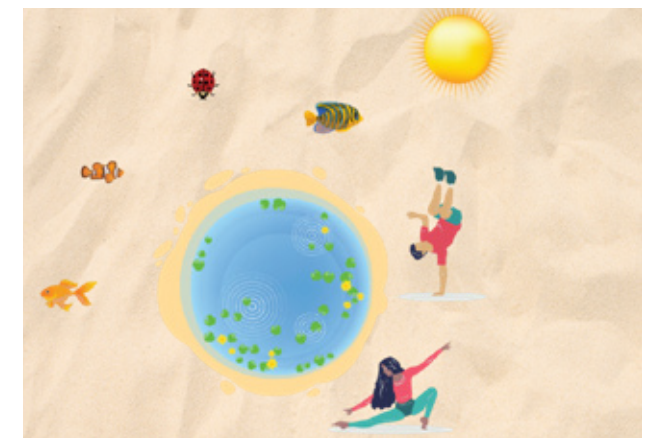
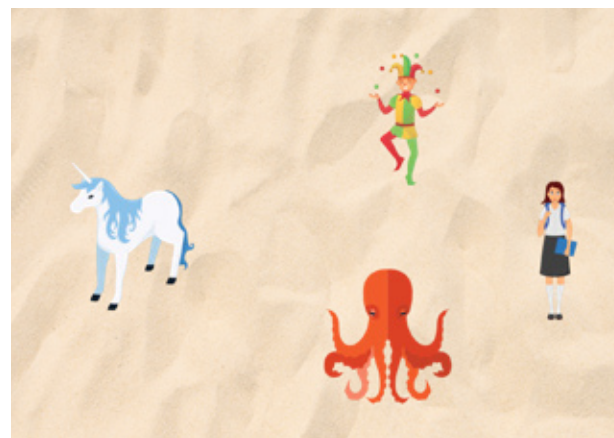
At the next supervision, they reported that they had approached the next group meeting with a "damn hippie girls" mindset, and that they noticed a change in the group members.

More importantly, two of them felt more connected, in sync, and satisfied at the end.

Supervision meeting "Taming the fishes"

We had a bigger gap between the fourth and fifth supervision meeting due to a summer break. At the fifth supervision, the same two supervisees stated that they now have a new group with different girls, and they wanted to talk about it because it seemed this group was not responding to the "damn hippie girls" approach. This was our first online meeting, and I knew they were worried about how it would go, feeling that all the creative and colourful things we used during face-to-face meetings would no longer be possible.

Having all that in mind, I proposed that they create a visual representation of the atmosphere they were experiencing with this new group. Since we were online, I sent them a link to the Online Sand Tray by Dr. Karen Fried, part of the free tools on Violet Oaklander's website, and suggested they use it.



Depiction of the group meeting atmosphere using the Online Sand Tray, created by Dr. Karen Fried and featured on Violet Oaklander's website. <https://www.onlinesandtray.com/>

When I thought about describing the use of creative techniques, two supervision meetings came to mind.

They were invited to share the sand tray image (which can be downloaded as a PDF) and to describe it. One supervisee said she saw herself as a juggler and the girls as unicorns, while another described herself as an acrobat and the girls as fish in a peaceful pond.

Them and the group were asked to share their insights after hearing the story about the group atmosphere and how supervisees felt in it. They had several introspective moments. Among other insights, they noticed that the group was quite peaceful and calm, like fish in a pond—quite the opposite of the previous group. We explored how they perceive this

calmness and how fishes express their satisfaction. They stressed out their feeling that the girls were distant and difficult to reach and that led us to exploring how a juggler could approach a unicorn and how an acrobat could approach a fish. Two of them came up with several strategies, and the group also contributed with ideas. This gave them a new perspective on both the group and themselves.

This process also brought some relief to the entire group, as they realised they didn't have to abandon all the creative techniques and visual elements in an online setting. It also brought peace of mind to me, too. While I prefer face-to-face supervision, I was relieved to see how even in an online setting, creative techniques manage to evoke that specific sense of wonder that they usually awake. ■

Note

- Supervisees in focus gave the permission to describe the process and to show their creative work within this article



Sunčana Kusturin is a social worker, supervisor in psychosocial work, youth worker, and trainer. Throughout her career, she has been involved in managing NGOs and projects, as well as directly engaging with children, youth, parents, teachers, and youth workers. She is the author of several publications, research papers, educational films, and tools. Her expertise spans youth work, alternative care, non-formal education, social inclusion, and the mental health of helping professionals. Currently self-employed, she collaborates with various organizations in Croatia and abroad.

Learning from children's psychodrama story

■ Kristina Urbanc & Sandra Matijević

Abstract

Participating in a children's psychodrama group is one of the ways that children and therapists can search together for the values and messages of the stories experienced during group sessions. In this, as in any therapeutic context, learning takes place at all levels and in all directions: between individual members of the group, between the individual and the group, and between the group and the therapist.

The paper will present a segment of the work of a children's psychodrama group, from the authors' experience of co-leading children's psychodrama groups. The aim of the work is to point out the value of stories and the symbolism that children bring to them, and to contribute to the understanding of the specificity of the psychodrama method in working with children. The therapist's effort is to hear and understand the "voice of the child" as a client, to the best of his/her knowledge, which would not be possible without supervision.

Introduction: Psychodrama as a way of expression

Psychodrama is a group therapy method in which children express their difficulties in a symbolic way through play, work through different emotionally demanding situations and try different solutions through play (Đurić et al, 2004; Veljković and Dukanac, 2023). It developed from Moreno's modified concept of psychodrama, and it was first used by French psychoanalysts (Moreno, 1953; Moreno, 1959; Urbanc et al., 2023). Psychodrama represents a specific way of expressing emotions and working them out in the context of a group

game, in an appropriate way for children, through a process, through interaction and through play. In doing so, the participants jointly design the story, assign themselves and the presenters roles in the story, and then act out the story. Playing the story enable children and young people to experiment with new ways of thinking, experiencing and behaving. At the psychodrama group, the child can choose any role for himself/herself - can turn into anything and anyone, everything is possible. The "as if" rule ensures that even aggressiveness is expressed symbolically. So, for example, violent behavior is allowed in an "as if" way, from the role the child plays in the story. Children's psychodrama is a method by which a child can use symbols to formulate a problem, try out various roles and solutions through story and play, and change his self-image. The game takes place in the "as if world" where everything is possible and where there are no bad solutions, there is no assessment and evaluation, and in this sense the psychodrama group represents a safe place for the child. These rules contribute to the release of creative potential and encourage the ability to self-heal (Kende, 2017; Winnicott, 2004).

Psychodrama represents a specific way of expressing emotions and working them out in the context of a group game.



Masks made by children in a psychodrama group. Published before in: Urbanc, K., Matijević, S. and Bačurin, I. (2022). *Prozor u svijet dječje psihodrame*; Velika Gorica: Centrar za djecu, mlade i obitelji., p.27

Authors have been working as co-therapists leading children's psychodrama groups at the Center for Children, Youth and Family for the past 12 years. In the article, a story from one of the children's psychodrama groups that took place in authors' practice will be presented. It is important to point out that in this context children's psychodrama is defined as a group approach in child psychotherapy, and not as "group treatment", a term that was used in the 80s of the 20th century to denote one-sided ways of treating the client as an object that has relatively a passive role (Ajduković, 1997; Urbanc et al., 2023). In children's psychodrama, the participants are actively involved in the process of joint discovery of constructive changes, in creative and proactive ways they face the difficulties they experience in their everyday life and are active agents of these changes. The group approach in children's psychodrama enables mutual learning, and we cannot actually think about psychodrama separately from the group context as a therapeutic resource (Nikolić et al., 1988).

The context and way of working of the children's psychodrama group

The children's psychodrama group consists of a maximum of 8 children, approximately the same age, and two co-leaders. Group meetings take place once a week, lasting from 45 to 90 minutes, depending on the age of the children. Given that the application of children's psychodrama is possible already at the age of 5, when working with younger children, the duration of the group will also be shorter. It is desirable that there is an equal ratio of boys and girls in the group, and that the group is led by a leading couple who sets the rules, ensures that each member of the group gets their own space and time to express their needs. Therapists are also active participants in playing out the story, have therapeutic interventions during the game and monitor and analyze the dynamics of the group, but do not interpret the content of the children's story in the context of the group (Kende, 2017). During the creation of the story, all members of the group

participate in this creative process, which is accompanied by a feeling of satisfaction and the release of children's creativity. It is important to achieve a relaxed atmosphere and trust in the group. Therefore, this is a closed group and special attention is paid to the confidentiality agreement. The stages of group work, as stated by Kende (2017), are as follows:

1. The introductory phase - "warming up" or "cooling down" aims to focus the participants on "now" and "here" and to contribute to the creation of an atmosphere in which children feel welcome and experience that they can enter a different world, a world where everything is possibly, in the "as if" world. The first meeting in the group psychodrama cycle is at the same time the most important because it starts with getting to know the members and the way of working and enables the participants to create an idea of future meetings.
2. Next comes the stage of choosing the topic and creation of the story. It is a creative process that can take place in different ways and in which all members of the group participate. For example, a child can initiate a story inspired by something he/she has experienced in everyday life, at school, family or with peers, but it is also possible to inspire the story with different techniques, a bibliographic approach in such a way that the presenters read a part of a pre-arranged story that reflects some current the group's theme, or through a joint drawing, or through the roles that the children want to play, which are then connected into a whole. Children can be stimulated by something they have experienced in the media, also by a movie, computer game, book, etc.
3. Everyone in the group can choose one or more roles for themselves, and the leaders accept any role assigned to them by the group or child. At the same time, it is interesting to monitor who assigns a role to the leader and what role, because it indicates the needs of indi-

vidual members of the group. For example, children often expect additional support from leaders in the role they have chosen for themselves, so they can say: "I will be a powerful wizard and you will be my apprentice" or "I am a knight and you will be my squire and assistant, so you will watch my back". The leader's role is to get as clear an idea of these roles as possible through an empathetic interview: "What kind of knight are you, what do you do, where do you live, are you scary, are people around you afraid of you... what kind of squire do you need, what does he do, how does he help you ...".

4. In children's psychodrama costuming is used, as a part of the process that does not exist in psychodrama for adults. Costuming includes the use of improvised props (scarves, cloaks, hats, bags, caps, magic wands, crowns, swords, shields, helmets, etc.) which serves the purpose of immersing oneself in the role and contributes to the feeling of creative transformation in a "as if" world.
5. The story begins when all the members are ready and costumed, there are no observers in the group, all group members participate in playing the story. If the children are allowed to spontaneously play out the story and free improvisation, the story that is played out on the scene usually turns out to be different from the one agreed by the group, and during the game it is modified, just like in real life where we cannot predict all the outcomes and interactions with others. During the game, leaders intervene from the roles assigned to them and with their therapeutic interventions try to bring the work to a resolution, respecting the boundaries of their role and the individual child's need for initiative. For example, if someone in the game is killed, they can transform and be revived through another role.
6. At the end of the game, the members of the group give feedback on how it was for them to play a particular role in the story, and then they leave their roles by undressing costumes and saying, for example: "I'm not a wizard,

now I'm Maya again".

7. Each group story ends with a sharing phase, where the children tell how it was for them in the group, what they got for themselves while eating sweets or a small snacks together. Eating together is a way for a group to share emotions, symbolizes everyday life, family, and in a nurturing way calls for soothing impressions and self-care.

A story: One day at school

In the continuation of the article, the meeting of one of the psychodrama groups will be presented, which resulted in the story that the children named "One day at school". The story was created on the 13th group session (out of 23) and it represents a milestone for the group dynamic - it was the first time that some group members consolidated and developed cooperation. During previous sessions competition and intolerance among boys was present and there were no group stories, just individual or dyadic stories. Also, we singled out this story because of the strong symbolism and content of the messages that children send to adults, which reflect the current situation and values (their experience of school), as children see it.

Group consisted of seven children, aged 12-14, three girls and four boys, sent by school psychologist or recommended for a group work after individual therapy:

- Ema (12), had no friends at school, mostly spends time lonely at school, speaks very quietly, new in the class, likes drawing.
- Mark (14), stealing in drug stores, occasionally drinks alcohol, divorcing parents, absent father works abroad.
- Kristian (12), after parent's divorce lives with her mother, spends weekends with her father, who has a new family, often feels fear of school and test situations, had no friends at school.
- Paula (14), has experience of being verbally abused by her classmates, expresses a lack of confidence, often experiencing school tests anxiety

- Matei (12), had problems with rules at school, labeled as a "troublemaker" by his teachers, loves computer games and hanging out with older kids.
- Sara (12), does not talk at school, individually approached in school test, loves drawing and painting.
- Deni (15), loves gaming and reading, gifted in math and physics.

Roles from previous sessions which children choose for themselves represented rather "primitive" levels of life, such as: non speaking cavemen, living in caves, eating raw animals, or living in the woods with no signs of civilization; half animals - half humans; characters from action movies and cartoons, such as Iron Man, Cat Women etc. and mythical or magical roles, such as unicorns and magicians. Roles which children they gave to therapists were mostly assisting roles such as: an assistant to a magician, helping in saving the world, a bad pupil, a stupid student, a butler etc.

The story "One day at school" follows:

The dumbest student in the school, Rudi, has to take remedial exams in all subjects. He failed all subjects except sports. He goes from one teacher to another (Geography, Computer science, Mathematics, Art, Biology) and tries to pass the tests but fails. He fails all the exams.

He finally gets support from the school principal, Zac, who wants to bribe the teachers so that Rudi can pass the exams. Rudi agrees with that at first.

There is also a top spy and agent working at the school, Phil, who is employed as a school manager. Phil can't stand principal Zac, he annoys him because he is lazy and stupid, he is not competent to run the school, corrupted and wants to solve everything by bribery.

Phil starts a rebellion against the school principal, enters his office, tries to talk to him first and prove to him that he is not competent to lead the school, provokes him and rebels.

During that time, Rudi goes to exams, experiences failure in all subjects and joins the rebellion together with students and professors, together they fight against corruption and incompetence. Finally, the principal Zac is thrown out of his office, Phil takes over the management of the school, sits in the principal's chair and brings order to the school. After that, the rebellion calmed down, Zac no longer has authority in the school and the school becomes a better place to live and work.

The role of the school master Zac was given to Sandra, a co-therapist. Zac was described as corrupt, incompetent, careless, a person who adores power and guns, has a statue of a tank in his office and a hidden tunnel full of weapons. The role of the most stupid student, Rudi, was given to another co-therapist, Kristina. Rudi is known as the "academic failure", unable to pass any of the exams at school. At the beginning he tries to get the help of the school master Zac, but later he turns against him. Other roles in the story were: Phil, a manager staff member at school who is actually an agent - spy, and is clever, highly skilled, annoyed by Zac, wants order and justice at school (played by Deni); School cook, shy and quiet, making sandwiches to children and feeding them (Sara); Biology teacher - has interesting lectures, loves her job, has good relations with students (Ema); Computer science teacher - drinks at school, verbally abusive to children, calls them idiots (Mark); Math teacher - young, humorous, cool, interesting (Kristian); Art teacher - patronizing and preaching to students, but otherwise good, creative (Paula); Geography teacher - according to him, Geography is the most important in the world, very demanding teacher, cruel to the students, always yelling at them (Matei)

The contents that the children bring to the story relate to their experience of the atmosphere and relationships in the school environment where corruption, ignorance, incompetence, indifference to relationships and abusive behavior reign. Some professors are devoted to their work, but some treat children in an extremely inappropriate manner, with verbal abuse and inappropriate behavior (such as drinking alcohol, glorifying weapons and violence, etc.). Problems can be solved by bribery, and there are no sanctions for such behavior and it mostly works. Individuals in the class have marginalized positions, they have no friends or someone they can rely on at school, they feel lonely but no one cares about that. The environment at school is full of stress and uncertainty, there is pressure from tests. Those who do not meet academic standards are not worth the school's attention. Adults break the rules but don't suffer the consequences for it.

After growing tension and frustration due to the inappropriate behavior of the adults who should lead the school and ensure that order prevails, a catharsis occurs - a rebellion in the school.

In the story, after growing tension and frustration due to the inappropriate behavior of the adults who should lead the school and ensure that order prevails, a catharsis occurs - a rebellion in the school and the principal, who symbolizes the power and lack of concern of adults for children's problems,

is deposed. The school gets a new manager who has proven to be able to bring order and take care of others. In this context, the new school manager has a healing role in the story, presenting fairness and competence for the role he has. It represents new hope, a new beginning and school life without the stigma and corruption of the past, with adults who take responsibility for their behavior and can be a good role model for others.

During the following group meetings, the group continued to improve cooperation, the roles the children chose were no longer non-speaking cavemen, living in caves, eating raw animals, with no signs of civilization or half animals - half humans. In the further group sessions, the children chose the roles of people who had very specific competences for dealing with certain difficulties, with occasional calls for help from the fantastic powers of action heroes. In the stories, the one who defeats the bad ruler becomes a hero, so the members of our group were also the heroes of their stories, looking for and finding creative ways to face the experience of injustice, sadness and losses, with increasing group cohesion and mutual empathy (Bettelheim, 2004).

At the last, farewell meeting, the group chose to play the story of going together on a wonderful, long-awaited boat trip that takes them into the unknown. Everyone on the ship had their own role and was responsible for safe navigation. And as they set sail from the port, they waved and said goodbye to the coast they were leaving behind, traveling to a new, exciting adventure, the adventure of growing up and maturing.

The role of supervision in the implementation of children's psychodrama

When it comes to the symbols and metaphors that children use in creating and presenting stories, we can keep in mind the archetypal approach to the language of symbols, accor-



A Magic Tree, by Maša Urbanc. Published before in: Urbanc, K., Matijević, S. and Bačurin, I. (2022) Prozor u svijet dječje psihodrame. Velika Gorica: Centar za djecu, mlade i obitelji, page 18

ding to which the idea of a collective unconscious connects people, regardless of their individual differences, groups and communities to which they belong (for example, symbols of nature, mythological symbols or culturally created symbols). According to Brun et al. (1993), if we refer to a symbol as

belonging to a “group” of symbols, we look upon a symbol of itself and not at the significance of it. So, the process of interpretation is always more complex and should be placed in the child’s life context. This is where a constructivist approach in supervision is used (Taibbi, 1990; Lahad, 2000; Žvelc, 2023)

As the symbolism becomes stronger during the story, it is important to see what meaning the child attaches to that symbol in a specific context of the game. For example, fire as a symbol: it does not have a good or bad meaning in itself, but has the meaning that the child assigns to it in the context of the game, it can be something dangerous, destructive or it can represent warmth, safety, etc. The therapist asks the child: “Who started the fire, what kind of fire you are, how you burn, where you spread?” It is important to note that in children’s psychodrama, analysis and self-analysis of the roles, flow and content of the story is not part of the process. Therapists do not ask the children how they see the connection between the chosen role and the way of participating in the story with their current situation in life, but for leaders and monitoring needs and considering therapeutic interventions in future meetings, the leader’s supervision plays a key role.

Although, many supervisors use modeling and role swapping, which are techniques derived from psychodrama, the child psychodrama supervision is based on the postulate: “Don’t tell me that, show it, do it” (Moreno, 1946: 21). So, in psychodrama supervision, questions and dilemmas brought by therapists as supervisees are directly »played out« on the stage. The task of the supervisor is to provide an opportunity to investigate on stage with the help of psychodrama techniques what contributed to our understanding of child’s construct of specific symbol and how it can be helpful in listening and understanding child’s voice better. This “group action supervision” is a specific approach in supervision, while, the supervisor is the facilitator who helps supervisees recreate and experience the story that took place in the

child’s psychodrama. The aim is to get a chance of immersing themselves in the role the child had in that story, interacting with others characters and group dynamics and the needs of individuals and the group as a whole. According to Brun (1993) it is sometimes difficult to include the child’s inner world which could be behind the symbol and to stay with it to face the whole picture, the gestalt. According to the experience of the authors, it would be impossible without the support of supervision. As the co-therapist, we are both also parents, and sometimes, facing children’s inner world and symbols they brought into the story was frightening and we wondered how we could help these children, our children or any other children at all?!!

As action and creative approach to supervision, psychodrama supervision enables supervisee to experiment with the empathy and identification to different roles in a particular story and to experience how is it to be in the role of “dumbest student in the school”, or the role of “corrupted school master” or “incompetent teacher who is often drunk at work”, what can we learn from their interaction and position within the group, what does it tell us about the needs and interventions, because it acts not only on a cognitive but also an emotional level and enables the insight into one’s gestalt.

In this context, the group represents a particularly good medium for work because it enables participants to be activated, encouraged to self-disclose, express themselves, be exposed to different experiences and opinions of other group participants, and take personal responsibility for participation and learning. In a group, participants simultaneously give and receive, learn from each other, activate their creative potential in a way that excludes humiliation and stigmatization (Pregrad, 1996; Pregrad, 2003). This aspect is particularly important for members of the group described in this article. In their daily lives they receive messages that they are marginalized, demanding and do not have the experience that they

too can help someone and give something to others, therefore the idea is that they contributed something to the work of the group, encouraged its creation and with their role in the story they gave something to others, which is often a new experience for some of them. In other words, what is healing in each group is what arouses hope, facilitates insight, reduces the feeling of loneliness in facing problems, creates an environment for self-discovery and emotional relief, altruism, acceptance and learning from relationships (Yalom, 1995). ■

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Kristina Urbanc is social worker, holds PhD in social pedagogy, licensed supervisor in psychosocial work, systemic family therapist and integrative child therapist. She works at the Department of social work, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb as a full professor. She also works at the Center for Children, Youth and Family in Velika Gorica, Croatia, as a child psychodrama therapist. She is the author of three books and over 70 articles published in scientific and professional reviews. She works home and abroad in various supervision trainings and projects.



Sandra Matijević is a social pedagogue, she works as a professional associate at the Center for Children, Youth and Family in Velika Gorica, Croatia where she leads individual counseling for children and parents and various group programs. She completed her education as an integrative child psychotherapist and integrative child psychotherapy educator. She was involved in Gestalt psychotherapy education. She is a mentor for student practice for graduate students in social pedagogy at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation at the University of Zagreb.



Supervision under Fire

■ Gerian Dijkhuizen with Sissi Alder (Austria) & Oksana Vorona (Ukraine)

Abstract

In this article we hear two voices: one of a trainer of supervisors (Sissi Alder) and a supervision student (Oksana Vorona). They both tell about the effects the war had, from their own perspectives, on the training program. Sissi explains the history of the education of supervisors in Ukraine and what happened when the war started in February 2022. Both are very clear what their motivation is to go on with their work. Sissi emphasizes what we can learn from Ukrainian supervisors and how the ANSE community may be supportive for them. Oksana is on the board of the Ukrainian National Organisation (USSC) and she tells us how the war effected this Organisation.

Introduction

We live in hectic times. All over the world people live by their own narratives every day. We narrate events from our own perspective. Nice memories: a party, a birth, a get-together. But also stories of war, loss and collective trauma. People figure in all these stories. They move, walk away or flee, come closer, stand still or develop further as a human being. The spectrum of development may also include training, learning at work, gaining experience and expertise in people-oriented professions.

There has been war in Ukraine since February 2022. In this article - based on two interviews - two colleagues tell us how they persevere, continue and survive in their daily and their working life during wartime: Elisabeth Alder from Austria (Vienna) and Oksana Vorona from Ukraine (Lviv)

Sissi, how did you get to work in Ukraine and what is your commitment to this country?

Sissi: 'I came to Ukraine via a friend of mine who had trained therapists in the Truskavets (a spa in the Carpathian Mountain, where Austrian therapists did their trainings. Starting in the 90ies. GD). This was a program for about ten years. The Austrians - first ÖAGG then Sigmund Freud University - were the first to start educating therapists there in the nineties. I immediately fell in love with the country and the people. From then on, I travelled there at least once a year and did little things like short seminars or consulting for companies. In 2006 we started with the first coaching seminar but that could not go on, due to financial reasons. Some years later I met Viktoriya Sliusarenko (among other educations: Psychologist-lecturer and who became in later years the president of the Ukrainian Organisation for supervision and coaching USSC. GD) and she convinced me to pick up the idea again. In 2012 we started the first full education together with the systemic section of the Ukrainian Therapeutical Organisation. Since then, it has been a rocky road: Maidan 2013, annexation of the Krim and start of the fights in the east in 2014. Most of the students did voluntary support work for displaced persons, soldiers, wounded, families etc. That all left little time and strength for education. It took us about half a year to get on track again. In this education it was the first time that we included supervision for social workers who support traumatized people into the curriculum. When the first course of supervisors (according to ANSE standard. GD) graduated in 2018 we felt proud of what we had managed and thought that we had adapted to the situation. Little did we know. March 2020 the pandemic forced us to change to ZOOM for the running education. September 2021 brought light at the end of the tunnel. I was back in Ukraine. In February 2022 the full-fledged war started. Papers and graduation for the Kyiv group of supervisors were delayed again. The students were scattered around the world.

ZOOM proved to be helpful again.

The training was not only in Lviv but also in Kyiv and Odessa. A new training has started on ZOOM.'

Oksana, could you tell us something about your life and work?

'I live in Lviv, a city in the western part of the country. Although it is far from the active war zones, the impact of the war is still felt here. We have curfews, frequent missile and drone attacks, electricity cut-offs, and many new graves in the cemeteries.

Before the war, I was completing my education in coaching and supervision in the education lead by Sissi. I was scheduled to defend my graduation paper in March 2022, but the war delayed it for almost two years. I finally defended it in January 2024. One month before the war began, I changed my place of work as BI developer to reduce my workload, in order to be able to work part-time and gradually transit to coaching and supervision as my main activity. However, when the war started, I realized I could contribute more if I continue working as a programmer, so I had to postpone my plans.'

Leading a supervision training course during wartime. How does that work? And how does the story of war is reflected in your lessons?

Sissi: 'With flexibility and determination. Imagine a three day seminar on ZOOM where people "come and go" because there is an electricity shut down or an alarm. Nearly everybody will be missing a part of the seminar. Peer groups take over to multiply exercises and theory (based on my slides) after the seminar.

If the translator is missing, somebody else might take over. We do easy things like exercises in subgroups. I talk in English or German according to the language spoken by somebody who will translate.

Morning rounds might bring stories of traumatizing experiences during the night or in the morning. But generally, the students enjoy the normality of the education compared

to their challenging life. There is something like a long term perspective, clear standards, a group that became some kind of home – especially for the ones abroad.

War is everywhere, in cases, in emotions, in the need for more safety and structure. I doubt there is anybody there – including me – who is not traumatized by what is happening. As Kurt Lewin would have said, war is the field on which everything is taking place. What we can do about it is to reflect what is happening – if possible – from a meta position, have a close eye on parallel processes and support each other.

Oksana, how do you reflect on studying supervision during wartime?

'When the war started, everything was uncertain. Everyone was trying to understand the situation, what to expect, and how to support our army and internally displaced persons. Many people were emotional and panicked. My supervision training taught me that even in such circumstances, you can find a meta position and ask questions that help you see your options and choose the most suitable one.

As mentioned earlier, I had the opportunity to participate in a meta supervision program, which helped me stay connected to the supervision circle despite my plans being postponed due to the current situation. This program provided me with the resources to move forward and gain valuable supervision experience.

The educational program was structured with Sissi as our main instructor, guiding us through the entire learning process, along with other invited trainers from different countries. Having multiple trainers was beneficial as each brought their unique style and expertise, enriching the learning experience.

You need motivation to be strong. And sometimes you're not, and you're beset with uncertainty and longing for peace. Sissi, how does working and learning during wartime effect your

motivation?

'In March 2022 I was crying a lot. Even witnessing the funerals of young men in Lviv in the period from 2014-2022 did not prepare me for what happened. I was afraid for my friends and students. I was walking in my mind through all the beautiful Ukrainian cities, I love so much, where I feel so much at home. And then at some point I got terribly angry and decided to do the little thing I could do to resist this madness. I would go on doing supervision and education, support groups and transfer of knowledge to my Ukrainian colleagues who now spread the education. Because at some point we realized supervision is booming in Ukraine. We would have loved to have another reason than war for it.'

War is everywhere, in cases, in emotions, in the need for more safety and structure. I doubt there is anybody there – including me – who is not traumatized by what is happening.

Oksana how did you manage to stay in the present?

'At first, it was challenging to stop reading the news and focus on anything else. There was a constant need to do something useful. Over time, I realized that I was living more in the present and no longer making long-term plans. This situation brought many opportunities to learn new things. While it decreased the number of job opportunities in my primary profession, it increased the demand for supervisors. The war

has made me value stability, live in the present, and seize every opportunity to learn and develop.

Initially, the war was a hindrance, but as it became part of our routine, it acted as a catalyst for change. The war prompted me to enroll in university for the third time to pursue formal psychological education.

Additionally, the war brought significant support from colleagues in other ANSE associations. We had the opportunity to participate in international supervisions and a meta-supervision program, and we were introduced to innovative methods like the online interactive board for systemic constellations, the Yucel Method, and the Coreszon Method. In many ways, the war has contributed to my professional growth.'

Oksana, you recently joined the board of the Ukrainian National Supervision and Coaching Organization (USSC). How is this association doing in these turbulent times?

'When the war started, our members found themselves in various challenging circumstances, and some planned activities had to be put on hold.

However, we are gradually resuming these activities. Despite the war, we have welcomed new members and initiated new training projects.

Our association was represented at the Summer University events in Latvia (2022) and Budapest (2023).

Many of our members are actively involved as supervisors in projects aimed at supporting social workers.

We are also planning an internal online conference where our colleagues can share their experiences related to these activities.

Additionally, we continue to participate in regular ANSE activities and are exploring ways to introduce supervision to a broader audience.'

Sissi, what do you think Ukrainian supervisors can contribute to the ANSE Community?

'I suppose you mean what the trainers and meta-supervisors

get from their students. I just can tell you from my perspective. First of all, you're in contact with intelligent and brave colleagues. I always see it as a privilege to teach them. An entrance into another world of thoughts, theories, experiences, history; always challenging our theories and professional belief systems. And to experience that "impossible" is a word we use much too easily in Western Europe. If you want to know what flexibility and determination means, work with our Ukrainian colleagues.'

And conversely, Sissi, how can the ANSE community contribute to the training of Ukrainian supervisors, or more in general to alleviate their war time sorrow?

'First of all, witnessing. Be there and show that you are approachable. Nearly all forms of contact are helpful, but let the Ukrainian colleagues decide on the topic, the time and the duration. You never know under how much pressure they are and what is needed from abroad or is already available in the country.

Invite them to international intervention groups, to conferences and seminars. But accept if they cannot manage to come. Sometimes it might be helpful if you provide and pay for a translator.

Learn about their approaches and the challenges they have to master.

Try to put yourself in their shoes and you will get further ideas how to support Ukrainian colleagues. Just one very practical example:, USSC supervisors mostly sleep too little und nearly never undisturbed. How could we at least sometimes help them to be in a place where they can relax and refill their batteries.

The education for supervisors is now passing over to my Ukrainian colleagues. ANSE can help by supporting the application of USSC for international projects in the Ukraine. Maybe it would be a good thing to have one contact person from ANSE if there are questions about the training'

A last question to you both, maybe the most important and most difficult one: can supervision contribute to peace?

Sissi: 'To think so as a supervisor would be a little bit megalomaniacal. So, no I do not think we can bring about peace just by doing supervision. But I am convinced that supervision and also coaching can help to rebuild the country after the war. There will be a lot of work, hopefully soon. But we experience the first steps already.

At the moment Viktoria and me are working on a project for the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development. We are doing supervision for a team of psychologists who among other things help veterans who come back to work, support traumatized families and employees. Here we also build on methods that have been developed by one of my students and documented in her thesis in 2018.'

Oksana: 'This is a tough question. I believe that supervision has the potential to contribute to peace, but it requires sufficiently influential participants who are interested, motivated, and ready to work towards that goal. Currently, for me, supervision is more about readjusting to new circumstances and survival rather than directly contributing to peace. It helps find

We cannot bring peace just by doing supervision. Yet supervision has the potential to contribute to peace, if there are sufficiently influential parties ready to work towards that goal.

new perspectives in these dark times. Supervision definitely supports social workers, psychologists, internally displaced people, those forced to emigrate because of the war, and people whose regular routines have been disrupted. It also helps our supervisors maintain peace of mind while supporting others.



Gerian Dijkhuizen is member of the LVSC in the Netherlands and as such internationally active, with a special focus on Ukraine. She is a senior supervisor/educator of supervisors and runs her own practice

In Conclusion

The questions Oksana and Sissi answered took of course precious time and we are grateful they were so kind to take this time and to tell our readers about their current working life in a very difficult situation. They have a very strong commitment to what they do and to help others keeping on doing all that concerns our profession. They deserve all the support they can



Elisabeth Alder or Sissi as she likes to be called) is a Vienna based educator and trainer of supervisors in Ukraine. Originally Sissi is a mathematician and an economist. Later on she graduated in Supervision and Coaching. Since then, she has twenty years of experience as organisational consultant and trainer in diverse educational programs for organisational culture and development. During the war years, she continued to train supervisors in Ukraine, albeit sometimes in an adapted form (e.g. zoom sessions). Her experience in this field meant that even during the war situation, 'normal' supervisors could graduate. That takes courage and gave hope to our Ukrainian colleagues.

get from the ANSE community. To be effective: not so much by what we may think helpful, but on their own conditions. ■

In the next Volume of ANSE journal we put the spotlight on other colleagues who do training courses in Ukraine

A slightly shortened version of this article – translated by Sijtze de Roos - appears simultaneously in the Dutch Magazine for Coaching (Tijdschrift voor Coaching).



Oksana Vorona is one of those supervisors, trained by Sissi. She lives in Lviv and currently works as BI (Business Intelligence Developer GD). She provides individual consultation as coach and supervisor online. Oksana also took part in a (meta-)supervision guidance program run by supervisors from the ANSE community for almost two years. That also gave hope. Despite the horrors, taking studious care of your profession turned out important to find answers to the question : how do I maintain my professional identity in times of war?

War, Stories and Supervision: Has Ukraine's Conflict Changed the Baltic Scene?

■ Helena Ehrenbusch, Laima Abromaitienė, Žilvinas Gailius

Abstract

In the context of the Ukrainian war, the Baltic supervisory field has shown varied responses, prompting the question: could these differences in support signal a new form of supervision? This article invites readers to consider whether these acts of solidarity might shape a distinct supervisory model or simply reflect regional adaptations to global needs. By examining these variations, we explore how professional support in the Baltics may evolve in response to broader socio-political events.

Introduction – metaphors in counselling

The war in Ukraine has reached far beyond its borders, touching not only its immediate neighbours but rippling through Europe and beyond. In the Baltic states—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—the effects are being felt socially, politically, and economically. However, one might ask: has the war changed the professional supervision scene in these countries?

Supervisors in the Baltic countries have been actively involved in support activities, particularly in providing services to the helpers of Ukrainian refugees and, in some cases, opening supervision groups for Ukrainian professionals in need. The focus of this article is to explore whether this type of support has had a greater influence to the supervisory approach in the Baltic region, which is perhaps also more sensitive to the

actual influence of the war than the rest of Europe. Is it, in fact, reshaping the supervisory landscape? Are new forms of supervision emerging to meet the unique challenges presented by this crisis?

Through my brief inquiry I found out that the impact of the war on supervision has been uneven. In Estonia and Latvia, while there has been involvement in supporting refugee helpers and sharing expertise through short-term supervisory courses to the Ukrainian colleagues, these efforts have not led to any substantial shifts in the supervision landscape or changes to national curricula's.

In Lithuania, however, I spoke with two supervisors, Žilvinas Gailius and Laima Abromaitienė, who have been leading

supervision groups for Ukrainian professionals or practitioners in social work. These unique experiences revealed some subtle shifts, particularly in the emotional and psychological demands placed on supervisors working with people in crisis. However, even in Lithuania, there was no major transformation in the formal structures of supervision, nor did it transform the understanding and essence of supervision generally, although the personal and professional impacts on individual supervisors were significant.

Lithuanian Experience

Žilvinas' and Laima's supervision groups were composed of various professionals, some from social work and others from different fields. These groups were conducted both online



(Ukrainian professionals working and living in Ukraine) and in person (refugees working in Lithuanian social system). The participants' emotional states were in both stories characterized by terror, uncertainty, sadness, grief, and an overwhelming sense of change and loss—all of which reflected the intense emotional burden of living through war. In these supervision settings, the main topics of discussion

In supervision, the main topics of discussion were very often their personal experiences and emotional responses to the war.

were not always the professional work of the participants, but very often the personal experiences and emotional responses to the war. As Laima has described: "People who have a traumatic war experience live with it and try to overcome it, but do not break down." The emotional intensity of these sessions was palpable, with both supervisors and supervisees struggling to maintain professional distance from the trauma they were listening, experiencing or witnessing.

Emotional Neutrality – The Supervisor's Dilemma?

A key challenge, what I personally collected from the Lithuanian experiences was the theme of emotional neutrality. Traditionally, professional supervision requires the supervisor to maintain an objective stance, allowing the supervisee to reflect on their work without becoming overwhelmed by personal emotions. However, in cases of war-related trauma, is this neutrality possible, necessary or desirable?

Supervisors, like anyone else, are human. They may feel deep empathy for their clients, a strong desire to protect them,

or even anger towards the aggressor in the conflict, as we in the Baltics share the same neighbour, history and fear. These emotions, however, can create unequal relationships within the supervision process, where the supervisor may unintentionally prioritize emotional support over professional reflection. Žilvinas and Laima described different approaches to this dilemma. The most natural response was to be human, to feel sorry, to lean into the emotional flow of the sessions, which allows the supervisor to experience the emotions alongside the supervisees. Through time it was also possible to change the state of mind, to focus on the strengths of the supervisees, that would allow to offer structure and safety in reflecting upon the work itself.

Both ways raise important questions about the role of supervision in times of crisis. Should supervision in these contexts be seen as a form of crisis intervention, where the emotional well-being of the supervisee takes precedence over their professional reflection? Or should it remain focused on professional development, even when the supervisee is in the midst of personal trauma? What is then the difference between the psychological crisis intervention programs and supervision in the same conditions?

Supervision or Crisis Intervention?

These questions point to a broader issue: when supervising individuals in direct crisis, such as those affected by war, should the supervision itself be categorized differently? Is there a need for a specific type of training that helps supervisors manage their own emotional responses while guiding supervisees through traumatic experiences? Or should a new term be coined to describe this hybrid form of supervision and crisis intervention?

The experience of Lithuanian supervisors suggests that traditional supervision models may not fully account for the intense emotional demands placed on both supervisors and

supervisees in such situations. Perhaps this is an area where the field of supervision needs to evolve, developing new frameworks that better address the complexities of supervising individuals who are navigating personal crises. Or is supervision still the secondary service in crisis situation?

The Role of the Supervisor in Crisis Situations

An additional consideration is how supervisors themselves are supported in these settings. Just as supervisees in crisis need care and attention, so too do the supervisors who are exposed to their trauma. This raises the question: how can supervisors protect themselves from emotional burnout while maintaining their professional responsibilities? Is there a system in place to offer supervisors the emotional support they need when working with individuals in crisis, or are they left to navigate this terrain on their own?

Opening the Discussion

This article aims to open the door to a critical conversation about the nature of supervision in times of crisis. As professionals, are we equipped to handle the emotional intensity of supervising individuals who are in mourning or facing severe personal trauma? And is it overall our job? Should we reframe our understanding of supervision to include more elements of crisis intervention, or does this blur the lines between supervision and therapeutic support?

Traditional supervision models may not fully account for the intense emotional demands placed on both supervisors and supervisees in situations of war.

The war in Ukraine may not have dramatically changed the supervision landscape in the Baltic states, but it has raised important questions about how supervisors respond to crises. These questions deserve further exploration, particularly

as the profession continues to evolve in response to global conflicts and other large-scale traumatic events. By engaging in this discussion, we can better prepare ourselves as professionals to meet the challenges of providing supervision. ■



Helena Ehrenbusch

Professional supervisor, psychologist, educator and trainer. Specialist in mental health, professional development, body-work, and social circus. President of the Estonian Supervision and Coaching Association 2016-2022



Laima Abromaitienė

Certified supervisor, certified mediator practitioner, lecturer, PhD of educational sciences. Since 2007 supervises groups, teams and individuals in different professional fields: social, educational, health protection, children's rights protection etc.



Žilvinas Gailius

Partner at Consultancy Company "Kitokie Projektai", supervisor and coach, trainer of supervisors in Lithuania and Ukraine. Currently works with individuals, groups and teams from different fields (social, educational, child protection, refugees, business, etc.) in different countries.

Mother Teresa of the North - Ólafía Jóhannsdóttir (1863 - 1924)

■ Sveindis Anna Jóhannsdóttir

Abstract

Ólafía Jóhannsdóttir, Mother Teresa of the North. Who was she? How can we look to the past to build a better future? This article is a historical journey where you get to know a pioneer in many fields. A strong woman born in Iceland who founded a home for outcasted women in Oslo. She worked on human rights issues, wrote a book, *The Miserables* about the lives of the women she served. In the field of supervision, she reflected on professional practices. How she could do the most good without crossing people's sensitive boundaries. She also describes the professional's emotional and ethical dilemma on keeping own kindness in order not to make things worse and to never cause a harm. Ólafía traveled around Iceland, United States of America, Canada, England, Scotland, Denmark and Norway to give lectures on equality, education, religion, pension rights and health.

Introduction

I'm going to take you on a little trip back in time and introduce you to the story of a woman from Iceland. A woman who was an innovator in many fields, but whose values were such that they are just as relevant today as they were over a century ago. In this article I call her: the mother of social work and supervision and I hope she will be as inspiring to you as she was to me.

The foster child

Ólafía was born on October 22, 1863, in a rectory just outside Iceland's capital Reykjavík. Her parents were Reverend Jóhann K. Benediktsson and Ragnheiður Sveinsdóttir. They moved to the countryside in 1865 and placed little Ólafía in foster care with the Stephensens, who lived in a mansion on a small island not far from Reykjavík. She should stay with them until her parents could pick her up later. The home was one of the most prestigious and richest homes in the country at that time, so Ólafía grew up there in the best conditions until she was five years old. A great love developed between Ólafía and Mrs. Stephensen, or my lady as Ólafía always called her. It was a shock for her to have to leave the home when her mother came to pick her up. Ólafía did not move with her mother to the countryside, but she was placed in foster care again, now with her aunt, Þorbjörg Sveinsdóttir, a midwife in Reykjavík. Ólafía had little contact with her parents. She visited them when she was an adult, but she got to know her siblings and therefore knew her origins well.

During her upbringing, Ólafía enjoyed a lot of freedom and became independent in her thinking and opinions early on. Her aunt and uncle, Þorbjörg and her brother Benedikt, who was a member of parliament and speaker of the Lower House of the National Council, were passionate in the nation's struggle for independence and both of them had a formative influence on Ólafía growing up.

The mother of social work and supervision in Iceland

Social work as a profession and discipline is about a century old. The profession springs from the social upheaval that followed the industrial revolution and growing urbanization. In Iceland, social work was founded in the 1960s and 1970s. University of Iceland started to teach social work in 1981. The beginning of the profession can be traced back to the turn of the century, and Ólafía Jóhannsdóttir has been called the mother of social work in Iceland, although she is best known for her work in Norway for the benefit of prostitutes. Her



work was characterized by what defines the work of a modern social worker. Respect for the human value and uniqueness of each individual, as well as working to solve social and personal problems and working against social injustice were important to her.

Ólafía can also be considered a role model in the field of supervision. She described social care as a civic duty of all people, guided by understanding and intuition. It would not be possible to fully help people without learning to understand them holistically. In this way, Ólafía was concerned about professional work practices. She wrote about how thinking about one's

self-help work involves critical introspection as well as being aware of one's own feelings, reactions and boundaries.

She described how the professional can be between a rock

Respect for the human value and uniqueness of each individual and working against social injustice were important to Ólafía.

and a hard place, both emotionally and morally, when the value of giving of oneself is in conflict with what today is considered codependent. When kindness can even make things worse and be downright harmful: *You feel deep, fearful joy. You are so afraid of damaging something, pressing too hard or holding on too tightly.*

Here we see a direct connection to today's supervision theory. But supervision is a method intended to promote professionalism, protect the professional, as well as guarantee the quality of services. This balanced art of social care and self-awareness stands the test of time extremely well and falls under reflection on one's own work, which is the basis of supervision. Supervision is part of personal career development, but also serves as a prevention against stress and burnout.

A pioneer in many fields

Ólafía was the first woman to graduate from the Iceland higher education school in 1890. Women's rights issues occupied her mind early on and she had a strong desire to establish an educational institution for women. She went abroad in the fall of 1892 to learn about such institutions. She took part in founding the Icelandic Women's Association in 1894, in addi-

tion to which she lobbied for the establishment of The White Ribbon¹ in Iceland and was elected its president in 1895. She was the first woman to be elected to the supreme board of the International Organisation of Good Templars (IOGT) in Iceland, and she temporarily performed the duties of the High Templar within IOGT in Iceland. Ólafía took action in Iceland in the fight against the alcohol problems with big success. The main owner of a restaurant in Reykjavík tried to get an injunction against the women who "were walking outside the restaurant" and talked people out of going in and buying alcohol. Ólafía's ideas and arguments in the fight against alcohol problems and for increased women's rights can largely be attributed to the work of Frances E. Willard, president of the World Federation of The White Ribbon Union. Last but not least, she was one of the catalysts for the establishment of the University of Iceland.

Ólafía's ambitious pioneering work was not limited to Iceland, even though the patriotism was great. She was renowned for her eloquence and a good linguist. With these qualities as a weapon, she excelled in the field of international business, among other things. She became an agent for the British life insurance company Star in Iceland and the Faroe Islands, long before the days of pension funds and social security existed. She rented an office in an insurance company and this was usually open two times a day, at lunch time and in the afternoon. Ólafía's annual salary at Star was 300 ISK but at that time, around the turn of the century, the annual salary of working women was around 40 ISK or just over 13% of Ólafía's annual salary. It is therefore safe to say that she was a high-income woman in an independent business with flexible working hours.

Ólafía traveled around Iceland and gave lectures on behalf of The White Ribbon Union. Later she went to the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, Denmark and Norway to give lectures on equality, education, religion, pension rights and health.

Ólafía's books

In 1912, she founded a home for outcasted women in Kristjania (which is now Oslo) and wrote the book *The Miserables* in Norwegian. In the book, stories are told by women; prostitutes, delinquent women, homeless women as well as women suffering from syphilis and other consequences of their lives. Ólafía went off the beaten track and wrote, among other things, about sexually transmitted diseases. In those days sex was not discussed in books, and therefore less about diseases related to it. Ólafía used the American "case work" methodology in her work and describes in the book *The Miserables* based on individual examples how the character of the helping person, the professional, has to keep his/her feelings and opinions separate from those being helped.

The book attracted a lot of attention both in Iceland and abroad, was often republished in Norway and also translated into Icelandic, English and published in Canada.

Ólafía later wrote her memoir *From Darkness to Light*. The book, which was published in 1925, was a landmark in Icelandic literary history. This was the first time that a woman's autobiography was published.

Ólafía describes well her own sympathy and solidarity with the outcasted women and their fate in her writings. She describes the sensitivity, the limits and the hope. But also how the strong solidarity, empathy and sympathy must be set limits, restrained and tamed both for the benefit of the clients but also for their own sake. In her own words:

I longed to help others. I wanted to do so many things that my mind wandered further and further, beyond time and space and power and direction. I thought of everything that could come true, when there was harmony between my desire for a work and my ability to work, when I was free to work on my interests, without hindrance and without any coercion, when everything that lived in me was allowed to enjoy itself. Soon all this would come true.

(Ólafía Jóhannsdóttir, 1925, p. 65).

¹The White Ribbon: (<https://white-ribbon.org.uk>)

The legacy of Ólafía

Ólafía lived in Norway for about twenty years and was known for her service to outcasted women. A holistic view has been one of the main values of social workers and other professions and Ólafía applied a holistic view in her words, writings and works. She emphasized that all needs, both economic and spiritual, had to be taken into account. She also talked about the need to show special caution to people's feelings. She wrote in her publications that it was, for example, more difficult to deal with street girls than queens because street girls needed to be shown more courtesy and consideration than queens. She wondered about the best way to work with people in difficult situations.

Her approach was *first and foremost by learning to understand the person. Then to provide the best physical services available but last and not least by trying to help people in their ordeals and feelings.*

In Norway, she always kept her ancestry in mind and always wore Icelandic national costume. She was known in the city as The Icelandic one and could safely walk around the slums without being attacked. Ólafía's attitude testifies to a greater understanding of the situations and behavior of the poor than could often be seen in the writings of people in the 19th century.

Ólafía was also a pioneer in the field of vocational rehabilitation. She quickly realized that people needed support in finding suitable jobs in order to provide for themselves and their family.

Ólafía made full use of her network and worked to find jobs and housing for her clients.

In Oslo, a street is named after her, Olafiagangen and there is a statue of her close to her street. The University Hospital in Oslo has an outpatient department called Olafiaklinikken where people can receive advice, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. The Icelandic congregation in Norway has a place called Ólafíustofa where various gatherings

are held. Ólafía's birth and death are memorised in many ways both in Iceland and Norway on anniversaries.

In Iceland, there are statues of her at the church, where she was born, at the Womens House in Reykjavík and in the University of Iceland. In 2003, the play Ólafía premiered in the church at her place of birth and in 2006 a book about Ólafía's

Ólafía used purposeful reflection to develop herself as a professional helper and a listener.

story was published.

Students in social work and supervision at the University of Iceland learn about Ólafía. How her work is reflected in the basic values of social work and her own reflection and ideas about professionalism are related to modern supervision.

In her books, Ólafía writes about when *a person becomes destitute, the sense of independence becomes so sensitive, often pathologically sensitive, and it takes so little to hurt that person.*

Ólafía's reflection has helped her to distinguish between her personal self and her professional self, to know her own limits and limitations, to be able to use professional methods instead of emotions, but at the same time to put herself in other people's situations and show them empathy. She activates her own initiative for method development and innovation in her



work. In her stories we can see how she let go of cases through responsibility and professionalism. Today, these skills of hers can be classified as standards in supervision, and her work meets modern quality standards.

An inspiration to future generations

Now that 100 years have passed since Ólafía's death, it is clear that there is still a fight for gender equality and the need to fight against gender-based violence. Women in Iceland went on a one day strike in a special *Women's Strike* on October 24, 1975. Since then the trumpets of equality have been regularly blown.

In the labor market, psychosocial safety at workplaces needs to be taken into account. Many workplaces have implemented communication agreements in addition to personnel policies and other policies. Workplaces must identify and assess job risk factors, including social risk factors. Too many women leave the labor market prematurely due to multiple discrimination and lack of psychosocial support.

The problem is not limited to individuals but lies in the culture of companies, institutions and social attitudes. We need to realize the toll the third shift, unpaid and often invisible work of women is having on their health and well-being.

Ólafía used purposeful reflection, which is a key tool in professional supervision, to develop herself as a professional helper and a listener. Today, there are specially trained supervisors who supervise employees as part of their personal career development. It is still too common for professionals not to go to supervision until the symptoms of stress and burnout have become severe.

Ólafía is best remembered for being a philanthropist who can turn darkness into light. But her humanitarian work for the benefit of the less fortunate in our society and her outstanding professionalism led her to be called the *Mother Teresa of the North* and it is clear that she is also the *Mother of Supervision in Iceland*. ■

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Sveindís Anna Jóhannsdóttir

(1969) has a master's degree in Social Work and a diploma in Supervision from the University of Iceland and is also a mediator. She is accredited specialist in Social Work with emphasis on healthcare services. She is a director of Vocational Rehabilitation Center, has a private practice and is a part time teacher in Social Work and Supervision at the University of Iceland. She has written many articles, some book chapters and has been on editorial board of books publications, the last book *Supervision – for professional empowerment* (2020). She is the president of The Icelandic Association of Supervision.

What collapsing systems mean for supervision, coaching, organizational consulting and the DGSv

■ Annette Mulkau & Robert Erlinghagen – DGSv Board

Abstract

In April 2024, the Executive Board of the German Association for Supervision and Coaching (DGSv), published a position paper concerning the consequences of climate change on supervision, coaching, organizational consulting and the tasks of a professional association. The following text is a slightly extended version of this paper, in which we argue that it is now too late to prevent serious changes to our living conditions. Consequently we believe that we are now dealing with a palliative process regarding our familiar structures and social systems, and that on the individual self-preservation is increasingly replacing than the idea of personal growth.

In view of the findings of climate and environmental research on the one hand, and the observable social changes on the other, we as the Executive Board of the DGSv present an assessment of the future prospects of supervision, coaching and organizational consulting in a fundamentally changing world. This assessment forms the basis for our strategic actions. It is intended to create transparency about the basis on which we make our decisions.

We assume that it is too late to prevent some serious changes to our living conditions. The extinction of species, environmental pollution and global warming will continue to escalate. As a result, we can expect our natural livelihoods

and the social systems based on them to fall into massive crises and collapse. Incidentally, this is not a plea to stop climate and environmental protection measures; on the con-

We no longer want to cling to the illusion that the collapse of social systems is still avoidable, we want to accept the idea that it is too late for that.

trary. Even the smallest mitigation of the effects is extremely important.

However, we no longer want to talk abstractly about dangers and tipping points and cling to the illusion that these changes are still avoidable or lie far in the future.

We want to accept the idea that it is too late and is already happening to us now. Every few days, we get new impressions of collapsing systems from different corners of the world - from the Ahr valley flood in our own country to gigantic forest fires, droughts, tempests or floods all over the world. The coronavirus pandemic has given us a foretaste of global social collapse phenomena.



What we are addressing here is sensitive. It touches on very existential issues. Ideas of collapse, if you allow them to touch your mind and soul, can trigger sadness and fear, perhaps even despair at first. As the Board of Directors of an Association for Supervision and Coaching, we see it as our task not to close our eyes to this, but to actively seek and promote discussion about it. We believe that we are capable of overcoming such paralyzing feelings, acquiring new knowledge and thus remaining capable of acting. The overcoming of illusions feels liberating and inspiring to us.

It is very likely that the upcoming changes, which have already been taking place for a long time, are something other than crises as we know them (also from counseling). A crisis will pass. Ideally, you emerge stronger from a crisis. The term “transformation” doesn’t really fit either, because it suggests that the changes can be overcome largely without loss. It is too late for that, because the path dependencies within the existing economic system, which spans almost the entire globe, are too great for a radical change of direction within the system to be possible. This can be observed on a small scale, where each and every one of us feels the dependencies on the existing system on a daily basis (finance, energy, mobility, food, etc.) and an individual exit is virtually impossible. This can be observed on a larger scale, in the dependence of the social system on economic growth or global supply chains. This is why dealing with these existential changes to our livelihoods is not just one issue among many others, not just another crisis. We believe that with regard to our familiar structures and social systems, it is more of a palliative process; with regard to the individual, it is increasingly about self-preservation rather than self-development. Society as we know it will cease to exist. Of course, something new will emerge, but it is still completely uncertain what this will look like. Ecological and social systems will be thrown out of balance not in a few decades’ time but much earlier, perhaps in a few years – and they will not stabilize again in the usual way.

Collapsing social systems – by this we specifically mean: infrastructures are collapsing. As a thought experiment: Imagine you get up in the morning and something that you took for granted simply no longer works. Electricity is rationed. The bus no longer runs. The telephone system fails. There is no more gas for the heating. You can no longer withdraw money. Your medicine is no longer being produced.

Collapsing social systems – that also means: loss of control. Insurance companies decide to no longer insure a region threatened by environmental damage. Land and houses are no longer worth anything. Concepts of life are thrown overboard.

We are talking about living conditions that are part of everyday life in some regions of the world, but still seem unimaginable to many in western industrialized nations like Germany. Probably, we can learn a lot from those countries, that already face this sort of instability. Reality checks, disillusionment, dealing with impositions, processing grief, frustration, feelings of guilt and anger, etc. are the core business of supervisors. If we as supervisors and the DGSv as an association claim to have special expertise in this field, then we should make use of it.

Collapsing social systems – that means: loss of control and concepts of life as we know it are thrown overboard.

Collapsing social systems also mean that social relationships are becoming even more important because they can compensate for a collapsing infrastructure. Contrary to what Hol-

lywood films would have us believe, collapsing social systems always lead to more cooperation. Two pioneers of collapseology, Pablo Servigne and Raphaël Stevens, believe that we are entering “an era of mutual aid”. Courage and confidence are therefore also appropriate. You can also look at it this way: We are fortunate to be witnesses and actors in a process that will end the destructive exploitation of global resources. And we can influence whether it comes to a “collapse by disaster” or a “collapse by design”. We are not talking about a distant future, but about creeping and presumably accelerating processes that have already begun, for which we want to be prepared and which we want to help shape.

As supervisors, coaches and organizational consultants, we are called upon to review our mental models. Where do we position ourselves between self-development and self-preservation, between progress and adaptation, between pessimism and optimism?

As an association, we have already taken steps towards an uncertain future. These include the focus on networking amongst members and the DGSv as a community. This also includes a new project: We will be certified according to the criteria of the common good balance sheet. And this includes the intention to make the great know-how of supervisors, coaches and organizational consultants usable for this future, in which our skills will certainly be well needed. We therefore organize or participate in various events to discuss the consequences of our position. One space we created as DGSv in April 2024 was our annual association forum, where we had a presentation by Ulrike Herrmann, author of the German bestseller “The End of Capitalism”. The participants greatly appreciated her inspiring ideas about alternatives to our destructive way of life. In May 2024 we published our member magazine (“Journal Supervision”) with a focus on “Collapse – and then what?” and we received much more feedback than usually – most of it supporting. Quite a few members announced, that they are willing to debate these subjects in

their local networks.
It seems to us, that we have hit a nerve.

PS: If we are wrong in our predictions about the destruction of natural resources and the collapse of infrastructures, we would be delighted. However, the main features of our strategic considerations would change little, because a focus on networking, relationships and the common good would still be desirable. In the face of collapsing systems, this merely takes on a greater urgency. ■



dr. Annette Mulkau, Chairwoman and Spokesperson of the German Association for Supervision and Coaching (DGSv), Supervisor and Coach (DGSv). From 2016, she served as DGSv deputy executive director and as a member of the DGSv board from 2021-22. Prior to this she ran her own practice and taught consulting psychology at the university level as a substitute professor. She earned her PhD in psychology from the University of Leipzig.

Robert Erlinghagen, DGSv Board member since 2022, Supervisor and Coach (DGSv). He is the owner of Mindshaker, his coaching business of 15 years. Erlinghagen earned a M.A. in Political Science from the University of Marburg. From 2010-2017 he taught at Inscape Institute in Cologne. He was a lecturer at International Psychoanalytic University, Berlin, and currently teaches in the Future Trends & Sustainable Management MBA program at Nürtingen-Geislingen University of Applied Sciences (NGU).

■ Manuela Wittig

Supervision inhabits the charged space between major issues (values, attitude, power, transformation, democracy, diversity, etc.) and practical tools of the trade (clarification of the assignment, working relationship, communication, intervention, contract, fees). As supervisors, we think about the world, society, organisations, roles and people. At the same time, we engage in exceedingly practical activity in our attempts to develop and implement useful interventions for our supervisees and clients.

Between thinking and acting truly lies an ocean. At the ANSE Summer University 2025, we intend to explore the shores of this ocean and dive into its depths.

› From the shore of thought...

What social, political, fundamental questions are we supervisors concerned with when looking at the world, Europe and the various countries? What concerns us? Of this, what is important for our profession?

› ...across the ocean...

How does all this affect our inner work as supervisors? How do we manage the complexity? Where do we navigate safely on the high seas and where are there cliffs or shoals? Where

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An Ocean of Possibility – Supervision between thought and action 18th – 22nd August 2025 Munich, Germany



do we feel competent and powerful? Where do we feel overwhelmed and powerless?

› ...to the shore of action.

How does the big picture ultimately reveal itself in the concrete details? Which questions do I ask and which do I not? Which interventions, which working methods (still) work and which don't (any longer)? How is the practice changing and in which ways should it remain the same?

We invite participants to reflect on this together and to experience practical handholds – with thoughts and actions.

We can already provide you with a selection of the keynotes:

- ***“Futures with an ‘s’! How we can strengthen our resilience with futures literacy”***
Katrina Günther (Futures Scientist, Strategic Designer & Illustrator; co-founder of the futuring collective Futures Probes, www.futuresprobes.com)
- ***“The Rise of the Adaptive Society”***
Prof. Dr. Philipp Staab (Professor of Sociology of Work, Economy and technological change at Humboldt University of Berlin and co-director at Einstein Center Digital Future) <http://philippstaab.de/>
- ***“Navigating the Future: Exploring the Potential and Challenges of AI-based Coaching and Supervision”***
Dr. Vanessa Mai (head of the research group “Smart Technologies in Coaching & Learning” at Cologne Cobots Lab and Cologne Training Center at TH Köln/ University of Applied Sciences)
<http://www.th-koeln.de/personen/vanessa.mai/>

This Summer University will also be a milestone as the first ANSE SU in Germany so far. Join the Summer University in Munich – let's get together in 2025!

Tickets (Link): <https://www.ansesu25.de/>

NB: The deadline for submission for the call for workshops has been extended till 31 December 2024.

The Jury (Barbara Baumann, Michael Greißel, Ella Büchner, Janine Thone & Lennard Roseland-Geffert) will decide in the beginning of 2025 which workshops can be offered.

We are also grateful for the support of the planning group: Prof. Dr. Sabine Pankhofer, Ella Büchner, Janine Thon, Dorothea Reihs & Robert Erlinghausen.



Manuela Wittig (Social Worker, M.A. pedagogy and management; Advisor for projects, events and networking - German Association for Supervision and Coaching (DGSv) mw@ansesu25.de

Did you know?



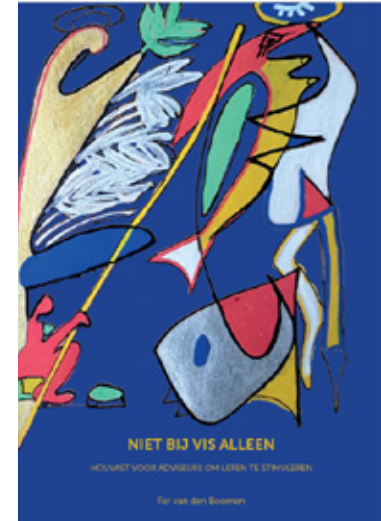
Short news from the ANSE COMMUNITY and the ANSE BOARD

■ Gerian Dijkhuizen

- ANSE has grown with two new members to an association with 21 full members? The Czech Association for Supervision (CAS) from Czech Republic and the Icelandic association Handis were welcomed by the General Assembly in Paris in October 2024.
- The ANSE board has consisted of six members since the General Assembly in Paris? We thank Piret Bristol and

Hans Ueli Schlumpf for their commitment and presence and welcome Arita Featherstone from Latvia and Enikő Kapsza from Hungary for their first term on the board.

- On November 14, a Talent Talk was hosted by Ulrika Ernvik from Sweden with the title: 'Storytelling in Supervision'? A tremendous fit with the theme of this ANSE Journal. The next Talent Talk will be organised in April 2025. A great way to work on your points for further education. Each participant will receive a certificate after participating in a Talent Talk. And it is a great opportunity to meet other members of ANSE.
- That you can still register for the Summer University in Munich? From 18 to 22 august 2025, this SU will be organised by our colleagues from the DGSv, the German National Organisation for Supervision and Coaching. The theme of this SU is 'An ocean of possibility'. Surely, that should provide enough opportunities to register soon. See on: www.anse.eu.
- NOSCO (The Norwegian Organisation for Supervision and Co-Operation) celebrated it's 20 years Anniversary this year, 7th – 8th of June 2024 at the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (HINN).
- About 90 supervisors participated in the 2-days conference «Supervision in a Multicultural Society», arranged by NOSCO in cooperation with HINN & «The Supervisor's network Innlandet» as part of the jubilee. The program reflected a.o. the values of, and potential for finding sources for personal and professional growth by crossing national borders in Europe (ANSE values).
- Management consulting is not only about fixing problems ("giving fish"), it is also about enabling clients to realize sustainable change themselves ("teaching them to fish"). In this thesis, for which Fer van den Boomen recently obtained a PhD at Twente University, Enschede (NL). Van den Boomen focuses on how management consultants can stimulate a learning process within the client system, especially in highly complex situations, requiring inno-



Fer van den Boomen: Niet bij vis alleen – Houvast voor adviseurs om leren te stimuleren (Not just fish – how management consultants can stimulate learning processes)

vation and thus 2nd order learning. Combining in-depth interviews, exemplary practice research and validation by systematic literature review, Van den Boomen concludes to a match of four basic advisory 'roles' and ten usable principles, resulting in 40 options that may be used heuristically.

- LVSC (the NL) has a Professional Development Committee (CVO). The purpose of this Committee is to activate the network and encourage research into the field of supervision, coaching and organizational coaching. They bundle the existing or new information and make it accessible for members. They initiate dialogues about e.g. the narratives of the different professions, new developments or trends in society. This year three new members are installed to develop professional knowledge within the National Organisation.

- The Second Quality Expert group (2023 – 2024) finished their work and delivered a Guide for Quality Management. This was presented at the General Assembly in October in 2024. It gives an overview of the diversity of our ANSE community and examples for its quality management practices. Please be invited to use it as a source of inspiration, reflection and dialogue on the topic of quality. Members of the group: Gerry Aerts, LVSC, The Netherlands; Christoph Bär, bso, Switzerland; Ella Büchner, DGSv, Germany; Rita Škriadaitė- Vrubliauskė, LPSKA, Lithuania and Inese Stankus- Viša, LSA, Latvia. For information: www.anse.eu.
- The ESF+ project (France), entitled “Establishment of the Academy of Social Welfare and Development of Human Resources in the Social Welfare System” run by Academy of Social Welfare in cooperation with Synapsa organisation concerns the implementation of supervision within the social welfare system. It encompasses the provision of supervision for professional workers, managers and family mediators in the social welfare system.
- Supervision will be conducted by licensed supervisors, members of the Croatian Society for Supervision and Organizational Development, both in group and individual formats, involving approximately 400 professionals from the social welfare system, from all parts of Croatia, from October 2024 till June 2025. In total 1530 hours of supervision will be provided across 50 groups and individual sessions.
- Finally a special message to our colleagues all over Europe. We highly appreciate your articles. Further contributions are very welcome. Please contact your national editor or ‘your’ Editorial Board member (see the Colophon). To give an example: for information and guidance, our French colleagues can reach out to Jeanne-Elvire Adotévi Billès (coaching-jelag@gmail.com). ■



Gerian Dijkhuizen is member of the LVSC in the Netherlands and as such internationally active, with a special focus on Ukraine. She is a senior supervisor/educator of supervisors and runs her own practice

Colophon

ANSE Journal Editorial Board



Top row from left to right: Jeanne-Elvire Adotévi Biliès (France), Barbara Baumann (Germany), Helena Ehrenbusch (Estonia), Kristina Urbanc (Croatia). Front row from left to right: Jan Sjøberg (Norway), Eva Nemes (Hungary), Gerian Dijkhuizen (The Netherlands), Sijtze de Roos (Interim Chief Editor, The Netherlands)

ANSE Journal is a publication of the Association of National Organisations for Supervision and Coaching in Europe (ANSE, Vienna), appearing online under the name of “ANSE”, with “European Journal for Supervision and Coaching” as subtitle.

The Journal is registered under number: e-ISSN 2667-0305, and is designed and published for ANSE by Kloosterhof BV, Neer, The Netherlands. The journal appears twice a year, in June and December, and is freely available. Links to the journal may be found on the websites of ANSE National Organisations for Supervision and Coaching, on the ANSE website and on the website of Kloosterhof BV.

The publisher is in charge of the marketing of the journal. ANSE will advertise the (contents of) the journal on the ANSE website, on social media and through its national organisations, and provide links for members of the ANSE community and all other interested parties to download content.

With the journal and with the active involvement of its members and affiliates, ANSE offers a platform to strengthen the European community of supervisors/coaches, to boost networking, to present specific topics and enhance the dialogue between theory and practice. In this way the ANSE community promotes our profession on the European level and presents the expertise with which it is carried out. The Journal is mainly a practitioner-to-practitioner publication, although there is room for scientific content. The Editorial Board takes care of the quality and reliability of the Journal, but full individual and legal responsibility for their contributions rests on the author.

All members of ANSE national organisations for supervision and coaching are free – and invited – to submit contributions to ANSE Journal. Before doing so, authors, national editors and editorial board editors are kindly requested to carefully take note of the following instructions:

Editorial requirements ANSE Journal

General provisions

- Authors are kindly requested to submit their contribution - article, interview, short vignette, review - to their national editor. Check the website of your national organisation for exact contact information. After initial editing, the national editor will forward the manuscript to the editorial board
- Authors will submit their contribution in Word, together with a 'teaser' of no more than 5 lines for dissemination on social media, an abstract of no more than 10 lines and a short bio of no more than 8 lines, containing the most characteristic and recent personal information only
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