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## Parallel Process of Professional Identity Development during Clinical Supervision

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## Parallel Process of Professional Identity Development during Clinical Supervision

### Abstract

Counselors-in-training (CITs) and counselor educators-in-training (CEITs) have a similar need to develop professional identities that are genuine to self and congruent with the counseling and counselor education professions. As CITs and CEITs enter their respective professional roles, they experience a parallel process of professional identity development (PID). This parallel process can be used as a tool to promote PID during clinical supervision. The authors will explore the PID processes of CITs and CEITs, consider their mutual influence on each other's growth in clinical supervision, and provide a case study application with suggestions for supervision practice that fosters mutual PID.

### Keywords

professional identity development, parallel process, counselor educator-in-training, counselor-in-training, clinical supervision

Professional identity is central to the decisions and actions of counselors and counselor educators (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010). Developing a professional identity, defined as the “integration of the personal and professional self” (Moss, Gibson, & Dollarhide, 2014, p. 3), is a necessity to clarifying professional roles, duties, scope of responsibility, and purpose as a professional (Gibson et al., 2010). Counselors develop professional identity through academic coursework, clinical experience, reflective practice, interacting with other professionals in the field, supervision, and other professional activities (Gibson et al., 2010). Of these avenues for development, clinical supervision is designed as an intentional space for self-exploration; integration of self-knowledge, learning to apply theory and treatment strategies to practice; and, provides an intimate environment for challenge and growth to occur. A parallel process of development, where supervisor and supervisee experience similar needs for and responses to growth, can occur as exploration elicits learning and maturation (Corey, Haynes, Moulton, & Muratori, 2014). The overarching goal of clinical supervision is to develop counseling professionals’ knowledge, skills, and professionalism, all of which are integral pieces to professional identity (Corey et al., 2014; Gibson et al., 2010). As a result, supervision can be viewed as the main avenue of fostering professional identity development (PID) for counselors-in-training (CITs) and counselor educators-in-training (CEITs).

CITs, students studying counseling at the master’s degree level, are often supervised by CEITs, students who hold master’s degrees and are studying counselor education at the doctoral level when the counseling program includes both master’s and doctoral programs. Counselor education programs can intentionally design clinical supervision to be mutually beneficial to CEITs and CITs (Limberg et al., 2013). Clinical supervision first and foremost serves as a gatekeeping mechanism to protect the welfare of clients, but it also is a learning tool for CEITs

becoming new clinical supervisors and ensures learning and growth for CITs in their first academically-based clinical experience (Corey et al., 2014). It also establishes a supervisory relationship that mutually influences the PID of both CEITs and CITs.

CEITs encounter a unique transition in their professional identities during their doctoral programs. CEITs who intend to become counselor educators must expand an existing counselor identity to include new roles and responsibilities of educator, supervisor, researcher, and leader (Dollarhide, Gibson, & Moss, 2013). The process of PID is revisited with similar angst and uncertainty as when they were developing CITs. While the content of a counselor identity and counselor educator identity is different, the development processes between the two are similar in form and structure (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010). This parallel process influences the nature of the supervisory relationship and the subsequent development of CEITs and CITs.

In order for CEITs to effectively supervise CITs, a theoretical foundation of supervision is needed (Corey et al., 2014). Bernard's Discrimination Model of Supervision (1979) is a process model of supervision designed to be flexible in meeting supervisees' needs in the moment. The discrimination model requires supervisors to shift between roles of teacher, counselor, and consultant depending on the supervisees' presenting needs, while also shifting focus between intervention, conceptualization, and personalization (Bernard, 1979). The discrimination model's flexibility in role shifts and foci provides a structure for CEITs and CITs to attend to both personal and professional needs for PID as they engage in the supervision process. In this article, we explore the PID processes of CEITs and CITs, consider their mutual influence on each other's growth in clinical supervision, and provide a case study application with suggestions for supervision practice that fosters mutual PID.

## **Literature Review**

Before considering the intricacies of PID and parallel process in clinical supervision, the nature of the supervisory relationship must be examined. A strong supervisory alliance is essential for effective supervision (Gard & Lewis, 2008). CEITs should consider supervisee and supervisor factors that contribute to the quality of the supervisory relationship. In part, growth is dependent on the creation of a nurturing relationship (Corey et al., 2014). Professional identity more readily develops as CEITs and CITs openly engage in the supervisory relationship (Gibson et al., 2010; Timm, 2015).

### **Professional Identity Development**

Professional identity development is the process of “successful integration of personal attributes and professional training in the context of a professional community” (Gibson et al., 2010, p. 23-24). Counselors develop their professional identities through intra- and interpersonal dimensions (Moss et al., 2014). Counselors form personal definitions of counseling, create therapeutic ways of being, evolve their loci of evaluation, and engage in the professional counseling community to build confidence and competence through both dimensions (Gibson et al., 2010).

Professional identity development is most often explored through a grounded theoretical model that focuses on understanding the process of PID from the participants’ points of view (Auxier, Hughes, & Kline, 2003; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010; Limberg et al., 2013; Moss et al., 2014). From this framework, PID is defined as a continual process of “learning, practice, and feedback” (Dollarhide et al., 2013, p. 137). In this process, counselors encounter a need for both dependence and autonomy in their journey towards “individuation, professional viability, and internal locus of evaluation” (Dollarhide et al., 2013, p. 137).

**Counselor professional identity.** Gibson et al. (2010) established a model of PID for CITs that includes three transformational tasks: “internalized definition of counseling, internalized responsibility of professional growth, and transformation of systemic identity” (p. 28). The process of PID is an evolution of knowledge and practice that occurs through “course work, experience, and commitment” to the profession (Dollarhide et al., 2013, p.138). CITs initially rely on external supports to guide their thinking and practice, but as they progress through their training, they develop more internalized definitions of counseling and accept greater responsibility for their clients (Gibson et al., 2010). CITs also develop their identities by connecting with the surrounding profession. Gibson et al. (2010) noted beginning CITs focus on “professional criteria” to define their identities and largely seek external validation (p. 30). However, CITs in their latter stages of training hold a view of professional identity that is more integrated with the counseling community; the focus of identity is not just on personal skills or qualifications, but also on how the counselor contributes to the counseling profession broadly (Gibson et al., 2010).

The Gibson et al. (2010) Transformational Task Model has been used as a foundation to explore PID throughout a counselor’s career (Moss et al., 2014). Experienced counselors complete transformational tasks “through the processes of continuous learning, work with clients, and help from an experienced guide” (Moss et al., 2014, p. 6). As counselors complete the tasks, they will feel more confident, be able to clarify their own personal expectations for their roles, and have greater ability to separate and integrate their other identities from and with their professional identity (Moss et al., 2014). Professional identity development can then be understood as an ever-evolving process that requires counselors to continually integrate their personal attributes, external experiences, and validation from self and others throughout their careers (Moss et al., 2014).

**Counselor educator professional identity.** CEITs undergo a similar PID process where professional identity is developed through intra- and interpersonal dimensions (Gibson et al., 2010; Moss et al., 2014). As counselors become counselor educators, the process of professional identity evolves and includes new traits as CEITs begin merging their identities to include educator, supervisor, researcher, and leader roles (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). Calley and Hawley (2008) noted the professional identities of counselor educators are formed based on training and affiliation, the transmitting and modeling of professional identity they experience, and the counselor educator's own values and theoretical orientation. The need for integration of personal and professional attributes and experiences remains consistent in the transition of identity from counselor to counselor educator. With successful growth, CEITs develop new competencies, engage in new experiences with clients, students, and supervisees, and receive validation from a larger body of counselor educators and professionals (Limberg et al., 2013).

The ways in which CEITs successfully merge their professional identities can be understood within a Transformational Task Model (Gibson et al., 2010). Dollarhide et al. (2013) explored the PID of CEITs and established three transformational tasks that provoke integration of professional identities. Three tasks including, "integration of multiple identities, evolving legitimacy, and acceptance of responsibility" (Dollarhide et al., 2013, p. 142), occur sequentially and develop over time with study and practice. Dollarhide et al. (2013) reported CEITs progress from a role of counselor, to doctoral student, and eventually to new counselor educator. Movement through the tasks is driven first by external validation and then progresses to self-validation as the CEIT gathers experiences that elicit competence and confidence (Dollarhide et al., 2013).

CEITs' needs for validation and experience to spark PID are supported by many professional relationships (e.g., with mentors, supervisors, peers, students, and supervisees; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Woo, Henfield, & Choi, 2014). In the context of clinical supervision, CEITs have a unique opportunity to practice new skills, merge their roles as supervisors into their professional identities, and develop competence and confidence in relationship with CITs (Majcher & Daniluk, 2009; Woo et al., 2014). As CEITs work to integrate their personal attributes with professional skills in intra- and interpersonal domains, the practice of supervision with CITs can support a parallel process of identity development (Destler, 2017; Moss et al., 2014). CEITs and CITs' professional skills and dispositions develop alongside each other. For example, as CITs develop counseling skills and dispositions to counsel clients, CEITs develop supervisory skills and disposition to supervise CITs (Destler, 2017; Gibson et al., 2010). As a result, successful integration of professional identities, for CITs and CEITs alike, is influenced by the interpersonal, parallel process that occurs in the supervisory relationship (Destler, 2017; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010; Majcher & Daniluk, 2009).

### **Parallel Process in Supervision**

Parallel process in supervision has most commonly been focused on the transference of experience between the counselor-client relationship and the counselor-supervisor relationship (Friedlander, Siegel, & Brenock, 1989; Giordano, Clarke, & Borders, 2013; Morrissey & Tribe, 2001). Parallel process stems from the psychodynamic supervision literature (Schneider, 1992). Herein the emphasis is focused “on the unconscious and intrapsychic occurrence of parallel processes in supervision as well as the potential transference and countertransference issues in supervision and psychotherapy” (Heidel, 2012, p. 22). Akin to the construct of isomorphism, a similar construct that has its philosophical roots in structural and strategic family systems theory



(Haley, 1976), parallel process is an internal experience that occurs in one setting and is transferred into another setting (Koltz, Odegard, Feit, Provost, & Smith 2012). The intrapersonal experience of developing identity can be transferred between CEITs and CITs in the supervisory relationship.

Because new learning and experience occurs for both CEITs and CITs in the supervisory relationship, professional identity develops in clinical supervision through a parallel process. CEITs can use the supervisory alliance as a way of helping CITs to connect and develop their relationships with clients (Gard & Lewis, 2008). Self-exploration and the tasks that require external observations, relationships, and validations occur similarly for both CEITs and CITs (Dollarhide et al., 2013). The CEIT's individual, intrapersonal process impacts the CIT's individual, intrapersonal process and vice versa. Even though the PID process is internal, the growth that occurs does not happen in isolation or without influence on the other in the relationship (Moss et al., 2014). This relational quality of development is magnified in the supervisory relationship. Additionally, the CEIT and CIT's relationship impacts supervision. The communication styles of the supervision dyad, the environment and context, the CEIT's feedback, and the CIT's ability to receive it all have crucial importance (Borders, Welfare, Sackett, & Cashwell, 2017; Roberts, Winek, & Mulgrew, 1999).

### **Fostering Professional Identity Development in Clinical Supervision**

Counselor educators and counselors alike are tasked to use techniques, procedures, or modalities that are “grounded in theory and/or have an empirical or scientific foundation” (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014, p. 11) in their practices of supervision and counseling respectively. Considering the intra- and interpersonal aspects of PID, Bernard's Discrimination Model of Supervision may be well-suited as a guide to foster personal and professional growth (Koltz, 2008; Timm, 2015). The model provides an adaptable structure that

can attend to both personal and professional needs for exploration and growth. As a result, CITs and CEITs will be able to emphasize the integration of personal and professional attributes that form a professional identity (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Gibson et al., 2010).

**CIT path of growth.** CITs are tasked to create a definition of counseling, take responsibility for professional growth, and ultimately transform their individual identities into to a systemic identity (Gibson et al., 2010). In the beginning, CITs must explore their understanding of counseling, what has influenced their views, and how their definition of counseling will inform their practice. CEITs can engage in both counselor and teacher roles to guide CITs' exploration and understanding. A counseling role will facilitate deeper exploration into influences and sources of knowledge, while the teacher role can inform what counseling is and is not. Then, CITs can more readily take responsibility for their learning and growth. CEITs can engage in a consultant role to provide more indirect guidance as CITs further explore their clinical skill development and PID. The counseling and teaching roles can still appear in moments where CITs integrate their personal attributes into their understanding of counseling practice. Finally, CEITs can place more focus on facilitating integration of identity as CITs build greater capability to self-validate and integrate an individual identity into the collective identity of counselors.

**CEIT path of growth.** CEITs' professional identity will be fostered differently in the supervisory relationship. CEITs are tasked to integrate multiple identities, evolve their feelings of legitimacy, and accept responsibility to create new knowledge (Dollarhide et al., 2013). As CEITs facilitate CITs' exploration of their definitions of counseling, CEITs confront their own understanding of counseling and supervision; the ways in which CEITs engage in the roles of teacher and counselor in clinical supervision will shed light onto their understandings of the various elements and roles within counselor education. Their clinical supervision practice becomes

a reflective process for their professional growth (Destler, 2017). CEITs also encounter feelings related to legitimacy as CITs engage in the supervisory relationship. CITs are often view CEITs as experts, but CEITs commonly encounter feelings of doubt and uncertainty in their new roles (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Finally, CEITs are challenged to accept responsibility to provide knowledge and guidance throughout CITs' development. As CITs inquire about various aspects of counseling and their own professional growth, CEITs move from referencing others' knowledge to creating their own knowledge from their experiences in the supervisory relationship.

### **Relational Influence in Developing Professional Identity**

The integration of personal and professional attributes can be a daunting task for CITs and CEITs alike. The counseling profession expects its professionals to be self-aware and understand what they bring into their relationships with others (ACA, 2014). Professional identity is grounded on the relationships CITs and CEITs form with their colleagues, mentors, and other professionals in the field. Each individual develops an identity that they believe compliments the larger group of professionals. As a result, the profession is a reflection of each individual molding a common identity and purpose. In other words, the counseling profession cannot have a common identity without each professional working to mold a shared identity and purpose; they mutually influence each other. The supervisory relationship can be viewed as a similar reflective process. The CIT looks to the CEIT as a model for guidance into the profession, and the CEIT observes the growing profession in the CIT's development. This inter-relational process is a primary mechanism for fostering PID.

In summary, CEITs and CITs PID processes are identical as they move from seeking external validation, to gathering experience, and eventually self-validating their skills and dispositions (Gibson et al., 2010; Dollarhide et al., 2013). CEITs and CITs are able to build

competence and confidence in their skillsets in part through active engagement in the supervisory relationship (Destler, 2017). The similarities in developmental processes, along with transference of experiences (Koltz et al., 2012), creates a parallel process of development in supervision (Destler, 2017; Majcher & Daniluk, 2009). CEITs develop supervisory skills as CITs develop counseling skills, and each individual looks to the other for validation and support (Destler, 2017; Gibson et al., 2010). As a result, supervision serves as a central medium to foster engagement in transformational tasks of PID and support growth in intra- and interpersonal domains via a parallel process (Destler, 2017; Moss et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2014). In the next section, we explain how this parallel process can be used as a tool to promote CEIT and CIT PID during clinical supervision.

### **Application**

Professional identity development occurs over time and experience, and it continues to form and evolve throughout years of practice (Moss et al., 2014). Supervision during training programs can set the stage for continual development throughout a professional's career. However, CITs and CEITs face specific challenges at certain points of their development during training. Therefore, it is important to consider developmental level and readiness that aligns with the transformational tasks of professional identity (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010).

The following case study application details the beginning of PID for a CEIT and CIT in their first supervisory experience. Using the Discrimination Model of Supervision, the CEIT will attend to the CIT's personal attributes in her understanding of her professional identity. The case study will address the transformational tasks for both CEIT and CIT in their initial respective needs for external guidance and validation. The relational influence and supervisory methods that transpire to foster PID in this specific vignette are given within the context of a beginning

supervisory relationship. However, their ways of being and the relational and exploratory supervisory methods that attend to personal and professional integration of identity can be transferrable to other developmental points in a supervisory relationship (Koltz et al., 2012; Timm, 2015).

### **Case Study Vignette**

Elaine is a first-year CEIT with a background in clinical mental health counseling and specialty in college counseling. Elaine is a Caucasian, low to middle-class female striving to become a future counselor education faculty member. She is currently supervising Anne, a first-year clinical mental health CIT completing practicum at a community mental health agency with adult clients. Anne is a first-generation, multiracial, middle-class female who plans to counsel adolescents in an urban community following graduation.

Elaine (CEIT) identifies strongly as a counselor after spending ten years working as a mental health counselor in a University student counseling center. She has never provided clinical supervision before, but she feels confident in her knowledge of counseling because of her years of experience as a professional counselor. The transition into her supervisor role, however, is more difficult than she anticipated. Elaine is struggling to integrate her knowledge and present it in a way that is appropriate for what Anne needs to grow. Elaine is questioning her ability to supervise effectively even though she has years of experience as a professional counselor.

Anne (CIT) entered her practicum experience with some self-doubt and nervousness. She feels uncertain about applying the skills she has learned in the classroom with clients. She also is uncertain about what effective counseling actually looks like; she somewhat understands how to *do* counseling, but she is uncertain about how she will *be* a counselor.

This is the fourth supervision session for Elaine (CEIT) and Anne (CIT).

CEIT: What has been going on for you this week, Anne?

CIT: I am scheduled to meet the client I did an intake with last week in two days, and I have two intakes scheduled for next week. So, things are picking up.

CEIT: How are you feeling about getting more clients?

CIT: A little nervous, I guess. It's just all so new.

CEIT: Yeah, it feels like a lot happening at once.

CIT: It does. I know everyone says I have the knowledge to meet with clients, and I guess I theoretically know what to do—use my basic counseling skills. But, I'm not sure I really know what is right.

CEIT: Sounds like you are second guessing yourself. I'm wondering where the doubt is coming from?

CIT: I feel confident in what I have learned and am ready to practice using my skills, but I have doubts about how my clients will connect with me and if I am giving them what they need.

CEIT: I hear you. That sounds like it is more about you as a person and how you can connect with others rather than your ability to use counseling skills.

CIT: Maybe so. Connecting in a therapeutic way is still a little confusing to me.

CEIT: I see. Let's explore the therapeutic connection then. How would you define a therapeutic connection?

CIT: Okay. Well, I guess a therapeutic connection is having a relationship that is warm and understanding, the counselor accepts the client as they are, and the client feels comfortable exploring their troubles with the counselor.

CEIT: I like that. It seems like you have a pretty good idea of what a therapeutic connection is.

CIT: You think so? How would you define it?

CEIT: Hmm, I liked your definition a lot, especially the last part about the client feeling comfortable exploring. I would use the words trust and vulnerability to describe that comfort. And, to add to your definition, I think the counselor has to be vulnerable, too, in order to build a therapeutic connection.

CIT: That makes sense to me. I'm not sure I know how to let a client know they can trust me.

CEIT: What makes you say that?

CIT: Trusting someone you just met is not normal outside of counseling. Trust takes time. I mean I don't trust someone just because they say I should trust them.

CEIT: I agree, it does take more than a statement. I would say trust in counseling takes time, too.

CIT: I guess that is true.

CEIT: But, I am gathering that you still are feeling some pressure about who you are as a person going into a counseling relationship.

CIT: I think I am. I want to be a good counselor. I know what skills to use, and I just need time to practice them. But, I am not sure clients want to connect with me.

CEIT: That feels heavy. I wonder if we could talk about our relationship and ways that we connect? I imagine some qualities that enabled us to connect may be applicable to the ways you relate to your clients.

CIT: Sure, okay.

CEIT: In what ways do you feel connected to me?

CIT: Um, I guess I feel connected to you as a counselor. You are a counselor, and I am becoming one.

CEIT: That's a good start. What else?

CIT: I know you are here to help me grow, and I want to learn from you. I guess I also feel connected to you since we are both women.

CEIT: That is true, I do hope to help you grow and learn from you as well. It seems like some of our demographic similarities are points of connections for you. I wonder how our differences influence our connection.

CIT: Yeah, I have thought about our racial difference and wondered if you would understand where I was coming from with some things.

CEIT: I have thought about that, too. I think there will be things that I will not understand and will want to learn from you. But, we can explore our differences together and think about how those differences inform your growth and work with clients.

CIT: That sounds good to me. I'm glad you said that.

CEIT: That is good to hear. Thinking more about our connection, I wonder if there are more cognitive or emotional connections you could identify?

CIT: Let's see. I guess now after you just said that, I feel more open and comfortable with you. I know you will listen to me, and we can talk honestly with each other. That is pretty cool.

CEIT: That is pretty cool. I feel open and comfortable with you, too. I think it might be important to let you know what I am thinking right now. Going back to thinking about who you are as a person going into a therapeutic relationship, I wonder if you are concerned that you will not be as open with your client as we are here with each other. Does that sound right?

CIT: Yeah, it does actually. I am still trying to figure out how to be who I am and be a counselor that is open.



CEIT: It is a tough thing to figure out. But, I think you are on the right track by considering who you are and what you are bringing into the room, along with how it will impact your identity as a counselor and your ability to connect with clients.

CIT: Right. How did you figure it out?

CEIT: I think every counselor finds their way differently. For me, I spent time in my own personal counseling, and I spent time with professors and mentors who I thought were the types of counselors I wanted to be. I learned a lot by talking to them and watching them interact with others. I am still learning from them now in my role as your supervisor.

CIT: That's interesting. I guess I have to find my own way, too, even though it would be easier to just be shown the way.

CEIT: That would be easier, but I don't think it would be what is comfortable and true to who you are in the end.

CIT: That makes sense. Thanks for sharing that with me.

CEIT: You are very welcome. I appreciate your curiosity.

CIT: Thanks. Well, where do we go from here?

CEIT: Good question. You tell me.

### **Discussion**

The exploration that occurred between Elaine (CEIT) and Anne (CIT) highlights the importance of attending to personal attributes in order to holistically understand professional identity. Elaine and Anne confronted the counselor identity tasks of defining counseling and taking responsibility for growth through means of self-exploration and external validation and modeling—both of which are needed early in counselor development (Gibson et al., 2010). On the other hand, they also confronted the counselor educator identity tasks of integrating identities and

accepting responsibility for creating knowledge (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Elaine and Anne were simultaneously taking responsibility for their learning and growth by engaging in self-exploration and discussing their experiences in the supervisory relationship. As each individual confronted her respective tasks, they can be seen as experiencing a parallel process of intra- and inter-relational exploration.

The Discrimination Model of Supervision (Bernard, 1979) provides flexibility to adapt roles and foci to attend to both Elaine and Anne's personal and professional needs for growth. Elaine implemented counselor, teacher, and consultant roles to explore Anne's personalization and conceptualization of counseling. Through this process, Elaine was encouraged to expand her role and develop new understanding for her responsibility as a supervisor as Anne probed her for information and guidance.

There were multiple moments during Elaine and Anne's interaction that fostered mutual PID as they began a parallel process of gathering experience as a first-time supervisor and first-time clinician respectively. This parallel process of gathering experience allowed Elaine and Anne to explore intra- and inter-relational components from a similar developmental standpoint; namely, they were able to openly discuss their areas for growth and needs for external validation. During their interaction, there were three key instances that sparked engagement in their respective transformational, or PID, tasks.

First, as Anne struggled to articulate herself as a professional, Elaine guided her to explore how she connects with others. This exploration of self allowed Anne to build on her understanding of counseling and solidify a working definition of a therapeutic connection. Elaine also was able to build on her understanding of counseling and supervision by facilitating such self-exploration. This addressed Elaine's PID task to evolve her sense of legitimacy and Anne's PID task to define

counseling. Second, Elaine was asked to share her experience as a counselor, which challenged her to consider her own knowledge rather than that of an expert. Because Anne was actively developing new knowledge about her role as a counselor, Elaine was pressed to develop new knowledge about her role as a supervisor in addition to pulling from her current counselor identity. This addressed Elaine's PID task to integrate her counselor identity with her supervisory identity and Anne's PID task to transform her identity to mirror the professional community. Third, Elaine modeled a process of gathering new knowledge through her willingness to explore their supervisory relationship, and Anne was externally validated through their interaction. During this process, Elaine and Anne recognized the importance of reaching out to others to learn, even later in one's professional development. This addressed Elaine and Anne's similar PID tasks to take responsibility for their growth, and it supported their mutual need for modeling and validation in their respective roles. Overall, the relational focus, which is known to nurture professional growth through external modeling and validation, was evident throughout their interaction and attended to their growth on intra- and interpersonal levels (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Moss et al., 2014).

Elaine and Anne's development will continue in clinical supervision as they attend to their supervisory relationship and integrate their personal attributes into their professional beings. As they are developing from similar starting points—both seeking external validation and experience—the parallel process of growth is intensified. Elaine is more readily exploring self in relation to her professional identity, which will impact the ways she interacts with and guides Anne. This parallel process can be a catalyst for their PID, but it may also limit their process to only considering their immediate experiences as they develop alongside each other.

## **Implications**

Fostering PID in clinical supervision can be approached in many ways. The core element in effectively developing a professional identity is attention to the individual's personal and professional selves (Gibson et al., 2010). As a result, fostering PID is an exploration of how each aspect of self informs the other and becomes integrated into a genuine and congruent whole.

### **Clinical Supervision Practice**

The parallel process of development that transpires between a CEIT and CIT in clinical supervision can be used as an intentional teaching and learning mechanism for PID. The similar angst and uncertainty that both CEITs and CITs experience can be points of exploration throughout clinical supervision (Destler, 2017). CEITs are actively integrating their identities, so they can more readily approach CITs with understanding of their immediate experiences. The shared understanding and feelings create an amplified focus on emerging identity. Therefore, CEITs are charged with considering their own development in relation to CITs.

The Discrimination Model of Supervision (Bernard, 1979) is a flexible framework that facilitates the parallel process of developing identity through intra- and inter-personal dimensions (Moss et al., 2014). CEITs can consider developmental contexts of CITs' professional identities to appropriately utilize the Discrimination Model of Supervision and address the transformational tasks at hand. As CITs' needs shift from external validation and direct modeling towards self-validation and taking responsibility for growth, CEITs can adjust their roles to promote self-validation and responsibility. The teacher role may be more salient in the beginning of development, and as time and experiences progress, a consultant role will be more appropriate to foster growth and autonomy. The counseling role may be used throughout to facilitate needed self-exploration and integration of personal attributes. Areas of focus in clinical supervision may also

shift as CITs' professional identities develop; CEITs will spend time early in CITs' development exploring personalization and move towards more conceptual uses of clinical skills as CITs gather footing in their identities and roles as counselors.

### **Counselor Educators**

Counselor educators (CEs), faculty or instructors, are integral to the PID of CEITs and CITs (Calley & Hawley, 2008). They take on varying roles of model, instructor, encourager, and validator throughout students' time in their training programs and beyond once students become colleagues. Considering the transformational tasks at hand for both CEITs and CITs, CEs first serve as models of professional identity. The CEIT and CIT alike will look to CEs for external validation and instruction on effective practice of counseling and counselor education as they form their professional identities (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Consequently, CEs must be mindful of the impact their interactions have with students and provide adequate instruction on how PID develops and can be fostered in clinical supervision practice. CEs may emphasize the importance of attending to both personal and professional attributes in PID and encourage discussion between CEITs and CITs in clinical supervision in both domains. This instruction will shape the CEIT and CIT supervisory relationship and their PID processes during clinical supervision. As CEITs and CITs advance in their professional identities during clinical supervision, CEs may provide less direct instruction and validation as CEITs and CITs move towards increased self-validation of their knowledge, skills, and professional identities.

Counselor educators also serve a unique role as a supervisor to CEITs who are providing clinical supervision to CITs. Parallel process is not isolated to the CEIT/CIT supervisory relationship. Corey et al. (2014) suggested parallel process exists within all clinical supervisory relationships, including the CE/CEIT and CE/CIT supervisory relationships. CEs can directly

model supervisory methods for CEITs to mirror in their own practices with CITs. CEs may also explicitly discuss the parallel process of PID for CEITs and CITs in supervision meetings and supervision instructional courses. As CEITs grow in their own supervision and develop their professional identities with CEs as their supervisors, they will more readily be prepared to effectively meet the needs of CITs and further the mutual parallel process of PID.

### **Future Research**

Future research may be aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the CEIT/CIT pairing as it relates to promoting PID. Although parallel process can be drawn upon as a method to approach PID, there is no empirical evidence to date that supports parallel process as an effective tool for growth through the transformational tasks of PID. Furthermore, the most effective supervisory pairings have not been well documented or salient factors found. Further exploration in regard to successfully fostering PID in clinical supervision may consider the CEIT/CIT pairing in comparison to the faculty supervisor/CIT pairing.

Teaching methods can be explored regarding the process of fostering PID in clinical supervision. CEs may not be well prepared to instruct CEITs about specific methods of fostering PID, particularly with consideration of the parallel process of development. In addition, CEs serve as models of effective practice for CEITs, and their support and guidance may be incremental in fostering CEITs' PID outside of the supervisory relationship.

### **Conclusion**

Professional identity development is a lifelong process that requires commitment to learning and growth. Such commitment is first fostered in clinical supervision, and CITs often begin their supervision journeys with CEITs. They encounter a unique environment where development occurs through a parallel process. CEITs and CITs mutually influence each other

towards developing their respective professional identities. CEITs provide direct feedback for learning and methods of self-exploration, validation to continue the process of growth, and model confidence to build competence through practice and reflection. In return, CITs offer CEITs the opportunity to expand their identities and competency about the field of counselor education, provide meaningful relationship that promotes exploration, and challenge CEITs to create new knowledge through their new experiences as supervisors. The mutual influence and parallel process of development is a stimulus for growth and commitment to PID throughout the professional career. Future research may be directed toward evaluating the effectiveness of parallel process in its use as a tool to promote PID in clinical supervision, supervisor/supervisee pairings, and best practices in teaching to foster PID of both CEITs and CITs during clinical supervision.

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