

WHAT IS SUPERVISION?

With the closure of the Grandfather Clause APA membership applicants are now asked to fulfil the complete requirements of application.

One of these requirements is Supervision. I have received a number of queries in relation to Supervision and hopefully I can clarify here the nature of Supervision and its value to us as astrological practitioners.

Supervision is simply the process of the astrological counsellor bringing issues that arise out of consultation with clients to a Supervisor. We do not ask that practitioner, client and supervisor are all present in the room. Supervision focuses on issues that arise for the astrologer in consultations.

The purpose of astrological supervision is to improve our counselling expertise so we may do the very best we possibly can for our clients. It is essentially a 6th house requirement. The 6th house, as we know, represents the psychic sphere where access to one of the three great existential issues for us all is possible.. These issues are Power, Intimacy and Coherence. The 6th house promises coherence if we enter into the discipleship demanded of us here. We may view supervision in this way, as a discipline, which shapes our skills at imparting and sharing astrological insights. Without the 'super vision' (the third entity created between astrological counsellor and supervisor) we are constantly at risk of being drawn back into the chaos of the 12th house, where we are faced with our own unconscious familial stories and complexes. And these stories and complexes will be silent intruders to the consultation process.

Identification, transference, parataxic distortions and parallel processes, arising out of the unconscious, are probable when we are working with a person in consultation, or indeed in the classroom. You will recognise one possible scenario. We draw up the chart for a client and we register – hmm, this person has a Saturn/Mars theme – same as ours, perhaps Moon in Cancer square Neptune, same as ours. About this time there should be a giant red flag waving in front of our eyes! The possibility of identification with our client has been magnified.

Similarly in the classroom, as those of you who teach astrology will know, projection, projective identification etc. occurs. To teach in an ongoing classroom environment we need to understand group dynamics. With groups of over 15 there is a strong possibility of the group shadow emerging through one of the students in the group. Projections onto the educator will occur. Understanding the nature of these projections will allow effective and gentle management, which ensures the smooth running of the class and an optimum learning environment.

Supervision is not about the practitioner being judged as to their competence. We are ever vulnerable to the intrusions outlined above, however with the process of adequate supervision we have the opportunity to become more conscious of how these processes take place. This helps to create the best possible outcomes for our clients and our ourselves. Supervision is also of course an essential component of ongoing self care.

Currently APA approved accredited members, psychologists, social workers or psychotherapists will be accepted as supervisors. A prepared supervision plan, along with the name and qualifications of your preferred supervisor, need to be submitted to the APA **prior** to supervision commencing.

Please contact one of our committee members if you have further queries about supervision or how to access a supervisor. We are always very happy to assist in whatever way we can to smooth and demystify the process of application for membership.

Glennys Lawton