



Being Supervised: a guide for supervisees

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REVIEW

This book is written to guide the supervisee at three stages: prior to initial engagement with supervision, as a novice in supervision and as an experienced supervisee. The first edition of this book was written with 'students in higher professional education and experienced practitioners of helping professions . . . such as social work, psychotherapy, education, and consultancy [in mind]'. Since then, the joint authorial voice continues, 'we have realised that other people could . . . benefit from this guide', including facilitators, coaches, nurses and police. The focus, however, remains firmly on the supervisee, which is relatively unusual in literature on supervision.

The book's three main sections reflect the three stages referred to above. Part 1 asks the potential supervisee to consider why they might need a supervisor, the nature of the supervision contract – including the tripartite relationship between the sponsor, supervisee and supervisor – and how difficulties which might arise in supervision can be addressed. It also refers to different learning styles and finishes with a reflective exercise designed to prepare for the supervisory relationship.

Part 2 examines the supervisory 'journey', considering the relationship of supervisor

and supervisee, the function of an interim review and ongoing reflective language and writing, and preparing for the final stages of supervision, where the pair 'review, interpret and absorb the results of supervision'.

Part 3 is designed for 'advanced supervisees', and considers broader ethical and philosophical issues arising from within one's own professional environment.

This book offers a logical approach to an important topic. The copyright page of the current edition indicates that the original Dutch edition was written in 1991, but not that it was sole-authored by Regouin. Her obituary, on the website of the Dutch LVSC, or National Association for Supervision and Coaching, indicates she died in 2013 at the age of 83, and had been 'an authority in the world of supervision', so her English edition of the book was published posthumously with Erik de Haan, a highly experienced practitioner in organizational development, psychotherapy, coaching and supervision, and prolific author.

The English edition's publisher, Karnac, prides itself on being 'one of the few remaining independent mental health publishers in the UK', with a list 'dedicated to

related subjects'. It is therefore hardly surprising Karnac would welcome this title, as offering a distillation of key aspects of supervision, applicable across the board. Some might find it makes generalisations which raise more questions than they answer, given the diverse ways which supervision has developed in different disciplines, a subject dealt with in many recent publications¹. Others may find this book represents a well-established tradition of supervision in the Netherlands, 'where the method of supervision is not bound to one specific profession, working method or function' (as described on the LVSC website).

This book offers its greatest practical challenge in its translation, which is frequently unidiomatic. As one example, compare standard dictionary definitions of supervision with the glossary's as 'a didactic method focused on acquiring greater personal competence with a view to exercising a helping profession'.

A greater challenge for some might be an ideological one: there is a lack of transparency about the book's origins and balance of authorial contribution. Nothing in the edition under review indicates who translated it from the last, eighth Dutch edition, whether it is a revision or straight translation (which might imply the latter), what stage de Haan became involved or the extent of his contribution. A google translation of a flyer² in Dutch, containing an extract from the eighth edition, indicates that the Dutch publisher invited de Haan to update Regouin's work after her death, and that he added approximately ten percent to the length of her text in three distinct sections and a few extra references, but left the rest unchanged. Perhaps a second English

edition could clarify the book's history as well as improving the translation. Having said that, the book's focus on the supervisee is its special feature and for that reason it will be a useful purchase for some.

Reference

1. See, for example, Lane, D. Watts, M. Corrie, S. (2017) *Supervision in the Psychological Professions: Building your own personalized model*. London: McGraw-Hill

2. Pdf flyer for 8th edition, [internet] Accessed [18.2.2017:] Available from: <http://webwinkel.vangorcum.nl/Bestanden/97890232554034-inkijk-Supervisie.pdf>

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