

Review of Peter Hawkins workshop on Transformational Supervision at Engineers House in Bristol 28/11/2015

As a member of the organizing team of this workshop, I was quite apprehensive at the beginning of the day as I was focused on supporting the event and concerned about its success. Even though I had seen Peter Hawkins give an excellent keynote speech previously, I had forgotten what an excellent speaker and teacher he is. While I was hoping for an interesting, worthwhile day, I was surprised by the degree to which I engaged. I found Peter both challenging and inspiring.

Peter began the day by establishing a dynamic, engaging connection with the group as a whole. He initially gave us an outline of supervision as it is understood and practiced.

With the support of slides, he then gave us a very detailed and full outline of what he meant by Transformational Supervision. For me, his central theme on this was to challenge us on how we could place ourselves, as supervisors, in the context of the world we live in. Environmental crisis and dwindling natural resources mean we are now at a critical point in human history. Peter placed this issue at the heart of our work as supervisors.

His question was: What can you uniquely do that the world of tomorrow needs? He then went on to drive home how critical the context we work in now is by talking about how we are creating a VUCA world (volatile, unpredictable, complex, ambiguous) which has huge consequences for the next generation. How can we justify to later generations not making these issues central to our work? Peter reminded us that, compared to the majority of humans on the planet, we are massively privileged and therefore have even greater responsibility to awaken to the reality of the world we live in.

Peter shared his thinking in a highly interactive way by holding a conversation with the group as a whole. This greatly increased our engagement and learning.

He then shared in detail what Transformational Supervision is. This included working in partnership, four levels of engagement, moving beyond insight and good intention to an embodied shift in being and working systemically.

Peter then coached us through working in trios to explore live current client work. This helped to embed our learning and was also very energizing as it brought new queries and insights.

We returned to the group to discuss our experience. Peter then went on to share his thinking and learning on various issues and resources for working as supervisors, including working with trauma.

Writing this review, I am once again amazed at how much Peter managed to squeeze into a day's workshop which was truly of great value and worth engaging with. He was warm, highly articulate and learned and used stories and anecdotes of his own experience to excellent effect. A masterclass indeed!

By Sheila McCarthy-Dodd