

Seeking the Humanity in our Professions (In honour of Ken Evans)

Human service professionals are being drawn towards economic efficiency and defined practice standards. In supervision there is the potential of a subordinate/dominant binary relationship, if we get caught in an exclusively efficiency/competency paradigm. Recent events with the refugee crisis have shown that it is through sensitivity that we find our humanity.

In this workshop we will discuss these statements and discover the blocks and enabling factors to be sensitive with each other and explore what it means to be an empathic, compassionate human being (supervisor) in a turbulent world.

- One of the last conversations I had with Ken was his interest and passion for the issue of humanity in Psychotherapy. Being sensitive to human responses in struggles, psychotherapists as human beings working with clients as human beings
- What does humanity mean to you?

Some Definitions of Humanity

- The quality of being human
- Humaneness
- Compassion or consideration for others (people or animals)
- Humanity is the human race, which includes everyone on Earth. It's also a word for the qualities that make us human, such as the ability to love and have compassion, be creative, and not be a robot or alien.
- The word *humanity* is from the Latin *humanitas* for "human nature, kindness." *Humanity* includes all the humans, but it can also refer to the kind feelings humans often have for each other.
- A grouping of the animal kingdom called humans that live within a 'more than human world' called planet earth (new definition maybe? Karl Gregory 2015)
- Karl Jasper (existentialist 1883 - 1969) viewed death, suffering, struggle and guilt as continually confronting humanity

Humanity Brainstorm

(Ken Evans And What he Stood For)



'Recent economic and socially conservative trends have increased demands for accountability, which has put greater demands on practitioners for productivity and limited the ability to reflect critically on how practice is being conducted'.

Noble, C. & Irwin, J. (2009). Social work supervision: An exploration of the current challenges in a rapidly changing social, economic, and political environment. *Journal of Social Work*, 9 (3), 345-358.

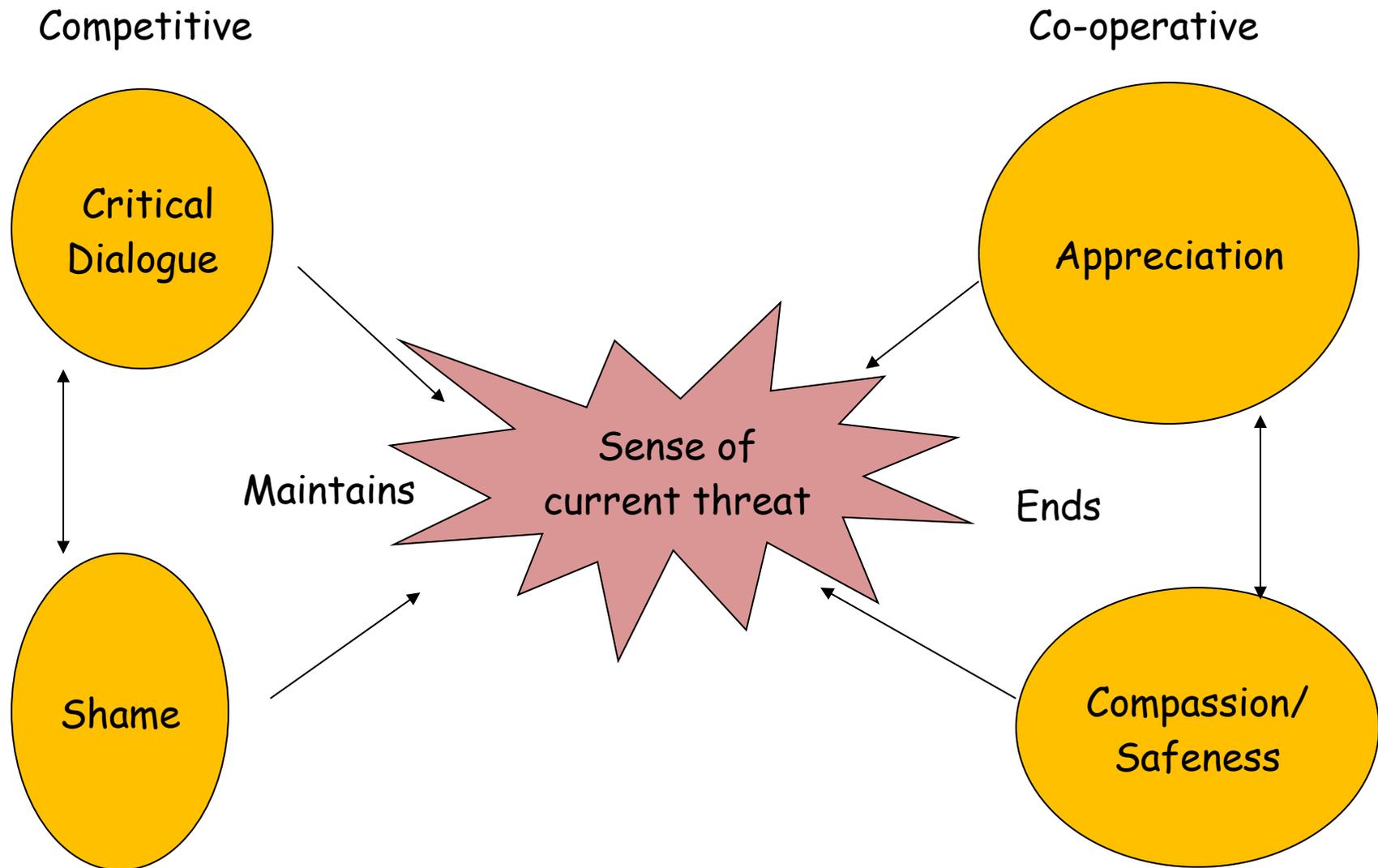
New Challenges

- Last 25 year radical changes - perpetual growth
- Economist Kenneth Boulding ' Anyone who believes exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist'
- Greater demand, higher expectations of quality of service, fewer resources, greater disruption
- The 'More than human' being objectified

Hawkins and Shohet (2012) - Supervision in the Helping Professions (4th Ed) OUPPages 7-11

Recently these concepts, ideas, research and practical experiences have been reviewed by Michael Carroll and Elizabeth Shaw (2013 - Ethical Maturity in the Helping Professions) and they challenge us not to just sit back on the codes and frameworks of our professions but to use them as a 'stepping stone' to a 'higher ethic of relational accountability'

Turning off the Threat System in Supervision



Adapted from Deborah Lee (2009)

Compassion

is a virtue — one in which the emotional capacities of empathy and sympathy (for the suffering of others - human and more than human world) are regarded as a part of love itself, and a cornerstone of greater social interconnection — foundational to the highest principles in philosophy, society, and personhood.

Compassion and the interconnectedness of all things

Compassion A Way of Being in the World

http://www.personaltransformation.com/sharon_salzberg.html

Compassion is the keen awareness of the interdependence of all things. --Thomas Merton

[Being a Counselling psychologist is] an ethical position, which demands something of its practitioners well beyond competence.....We must *profess* - in the original religious sense - these values in all that we do and we must put these values before the public, before they realise they have been mistreated by (health) technologies and then ask us why we did not do more to help (p. 680) Goldstein (2010):

Psychotherapy needs to be truthful. It really needs to take on the conditions of the world, the human psyche and consciousness. To do this we need to reframe psychotherapy and we need to reframe the notion of what and who a psychotherapist is. We need to shift the notion of the psychotherapist as being psychological, clinical and objective. Watson G, Batchelor S. Claxton G. (2012) *The Psychology Of Awakening* Pub: Random House

Some references and further reading for *Seeking Humanity in Our Professions*

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