

A Model of Group Supervision

The following describes a process for group supervision of prayer guides and spiritual directors. It is useful to have at least one experienced director in the group, and for one of the group to be facilitator & time-keeper.

PREPARATION

Where possible it is most fruitful to have spent some time preparing for the supervision session by prayerfully reflecting on your experiences accompanying others.

Some people like to bring a verbatim to supervision, a part of a session written out for others in the group to listen to, or role play. This can be a useful start, but the usual care should be taken to maintain confidentiality.

AS THE GROUP COMES TOGETHER.....

Whoever is facilitating the group invites people to spend some time in quiet, reflecting with God about 'Who is with you as you come to supervision?' remembering sessions of accompaniment

- perhaps someone they had already thought about, or maybe someone else.

Don't be too quick to choose, just let your heart and mind prompt you, then sit with that person or persons.

AFTER A SHORT TIME (PERHAPS 5 TO 10 MINUTES)

Each person in the group shares very briefly (1 or 2 minutes) something of what has come to them during the reflection. This is done most effectively by going round the group.

People may wish to pass at this stage.

AFTER ALL WHO WISH TO HAVE SPOKEN

The group sits with what they have heard and then once more each person is asked to contribute:-

- if they have someone in mind, do they still want to explore it further, or pass at this stage?
- was their attention particularly drawn to anyone else's sharing?

THE GROUP DECIDES WHO, AND HOW MANY TO SUPERVISE

This is only problematic if it has not arisen naturally during the second round.

If there are a few people who still wish to / are happy to share, then the group puts them in some order of priority and proceeds with the first, trying to move on later to the others if there is time.

THE SUPERVISION

The person being supervised shares more from their story of accompaniment

Some people may wish to ask clarifying questions

As the group listens they try to open up a little more what is happening in the relationship described by asking questions. REMEMBER: Notice the experience of the Director as well as of the directee.

For example:

- What are the dominant feelings in the Director?
- Is there clear consolation / desolation in them, is its cause obvious?
- Where and how does God seem to be moving in the Director?
- What is that God like?
- If God feels absent, what is that like?
- Are they trusting the counter movement more than the movement toward God in themselves or in the one being accompanied?

This exploration continues as long as it seems fruitful, or time allows.

It will not always lead to resolution or insight, but it does allow the Spirit of God to be present particularly through the others in the group.

AS THE MEETING COMES TO AN END

A moment for reflection ... for example 'Who is the God who is with me now?'

The members of the group respond as they wish.

OUTLINE OF GROUP SUPERVISION

1. STILLING AND PRAYER

2. WHO ARE YOU BRINGING?

Think on this for a few minutes

Each person (who wants to) briefly outlines situation they are bringing

3. 2nd round, each person says who they are interested in taking further group/facilitator decides who is first, how many they will try to do etc.

4. First to share gives longer description of situation followed by time for clarification

5. Supervision 'proper' - members of the group help person explore situation

- Try to notice the experience of the Director, as well as Directee
- Not problem solving, advice giving etc.
- Try to follow threads
- Also exploring Director's experience.
- How they felt?
- Their images of the person?
- Their sense of God during the direction session?
- How they feel now as they reflect?
- What do they want to say to God about this directee

This continues as long as helpful / time allows

(If there is time a second person can be supervised in the same way)

6. Towards the end: TIME FOR REFLECTION

for example: Who is the God who is with me now?

7. Brief sharing of this in the group

If desired – look back at the experience briefly

- **Did the group remain contemplative? In what way?**
- **Where was the focus?**
- **How was the group discerning movement and countermovement?**