**OUTSTANDING PRACTICE SUPERVISION POLICY**

*September 2022*

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# Outstanding Practice Supervision Policy

* The Outstanding Practice Supervision Policy is one of a suite of documents that sit within our Outstanding Practice Framework. It sets out our values, standards, and procedures for providing direction, support, and challenge to enable those who are working directly with children, young people, and families to maintain their wellbeing and resilience, fulfil their potential and practice to the highest standard.

# Wandsworth Outstanding Practice Framework

* Our Outstanding Practice Framework articulates a clear and straightforward vision of how we will work with families and the values underpinning our practice. We recognise families are resourceful and have strengths, and that by harnessing and building on these we will support their capacity to change without creating an overdependence on our services or unnecessary intervention in their lives.
* The values and skills of systemic practice and motivational interviewing are utilised by supervisors and model the outstanding quality of practice we aspire to with children, young people, and families.
* Supervision is a key component of practice delivery within the practice framework. It is one of the tools used to deliver outstanding practice through high quality reflexive, relationship-based conversations that make change happen.
* Supervision drives practice that supports our core value that a family is the best place for a child to thrive, develop and meet their potential.

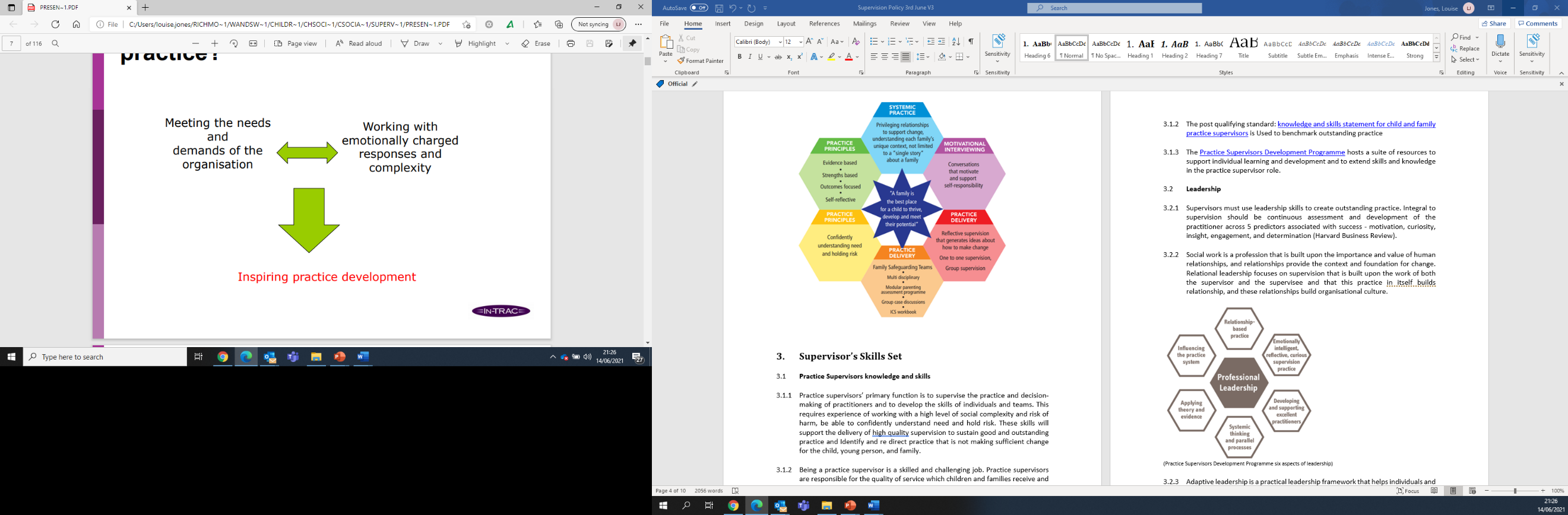
Diagram, shape

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# Supervisor’s Skills Set

## Practice Supervisors knowledge and skills

* Practice supervisors’ primary function is to supervise the practice and decision-making of practitioners and to develop the skills of individuals and teams. This requires experience of working with a high level of social complexity and risk of harm, be able to confidently understand need and hold risk. These skills will support the delivery of high-quality supervision to sustain good and outstanding practice and Identify and re direct practice that is not making sufficient change for the child, young person, and family.
* Being a practice supervisor is a skilled and challenging job. Practice supervisors are responsible for the quality of service which children and families receive and play a key role in supporting supervisees to become emotionally resilient practitioners. One of the principal tasks is to provide reflective supervision which guides ethical and proportionate state intervention in family life. The relationship which practice supervisors develop with their teams is critical in supporting and sustaining their ability, and motivation, to forge similar relationships with children and families.



* The post qualifying standard: [knowledge and skills statement for child and family practice supervisors](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/708705/Post-qualifying_standard-KSS_for_child_and_family_practice_supervisors.pdf) is used to benchmark outstanding practice.
* The [Practice Supervisors Development Programme](https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/supervisors-home/) hosts a suite of resources to support individual learning and development and to extend skills and knowledge in the practice supervisor role.

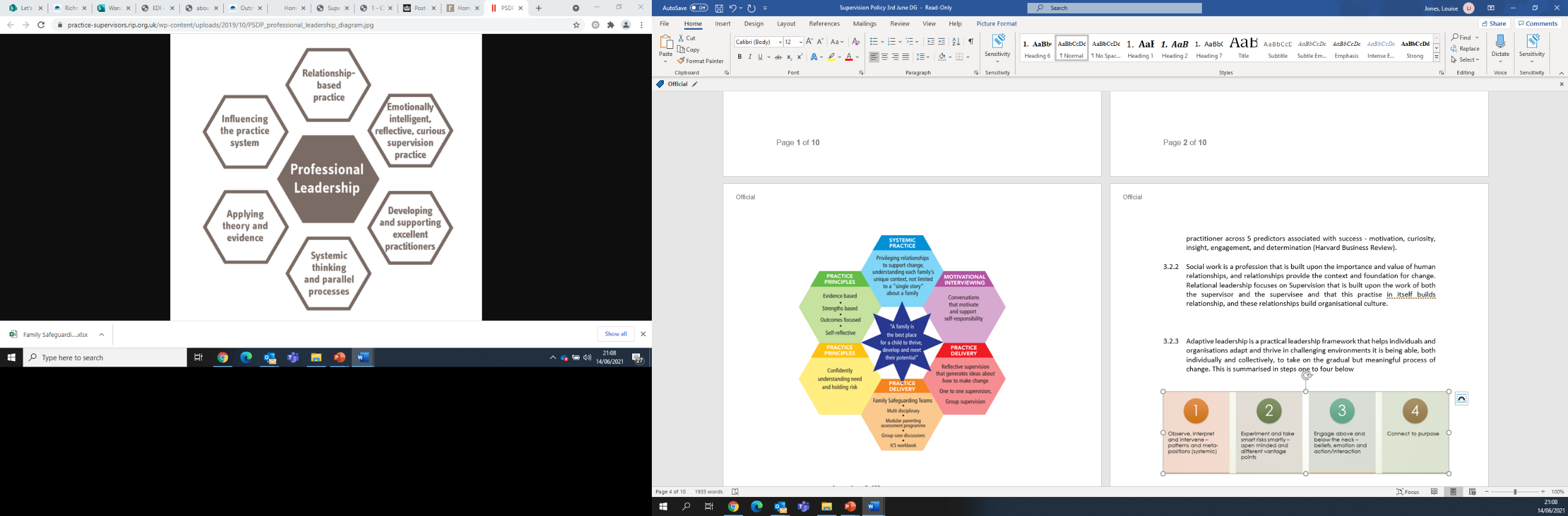
## **Leadership**

* Supervisors must use leadership skills to create outstanding practice. Integral to supervision should be continuous assessment and development of the practitioner across 5 predictors associated with success - motivation, curiosity, insight, engagement, and determination (Harvard Business Review).
* The supervisor as a leader of practice is:

1. Passionate about their work
2. Interested in creative solutions
3. Focused on positive outcomes for children and families
4. Work about at multiple - self, team, and organisation
5. Foster relationships through emotionally intelligent behaviour

* Social work is a profession that is built upon the importance and value of human relationships, and relationships provide the context and foundation for change. Relational leadership focuses on supervision that is built upon the work of both the supervisor and the supervisee and that this practice in itself builds relationship, and these relationships build organisational culture.

*(Practice Supervisors Development Programme six aspects of leadership)*



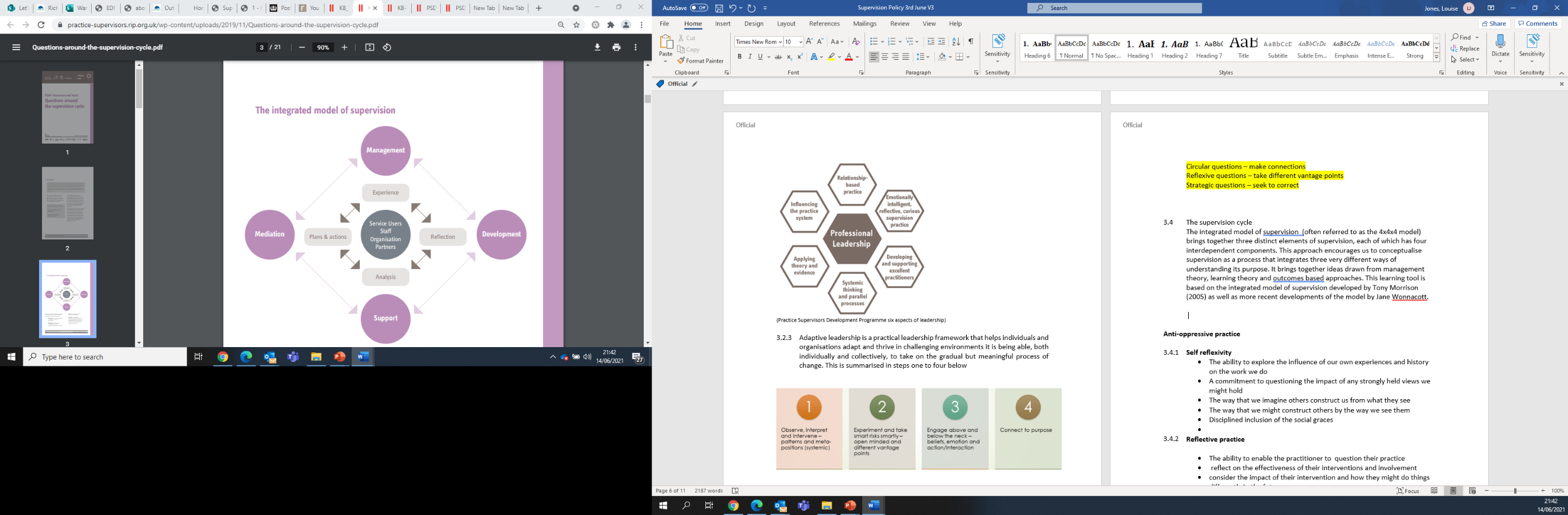
* Adaptive leadership is a practical leadership framework that helps individuals and organisations adapt and thrive in challenging environments it is being able, both individually and collectively, to take on the gradual but meaningful process of change. This is summarised in steps one to four below.



# The supervision cycle

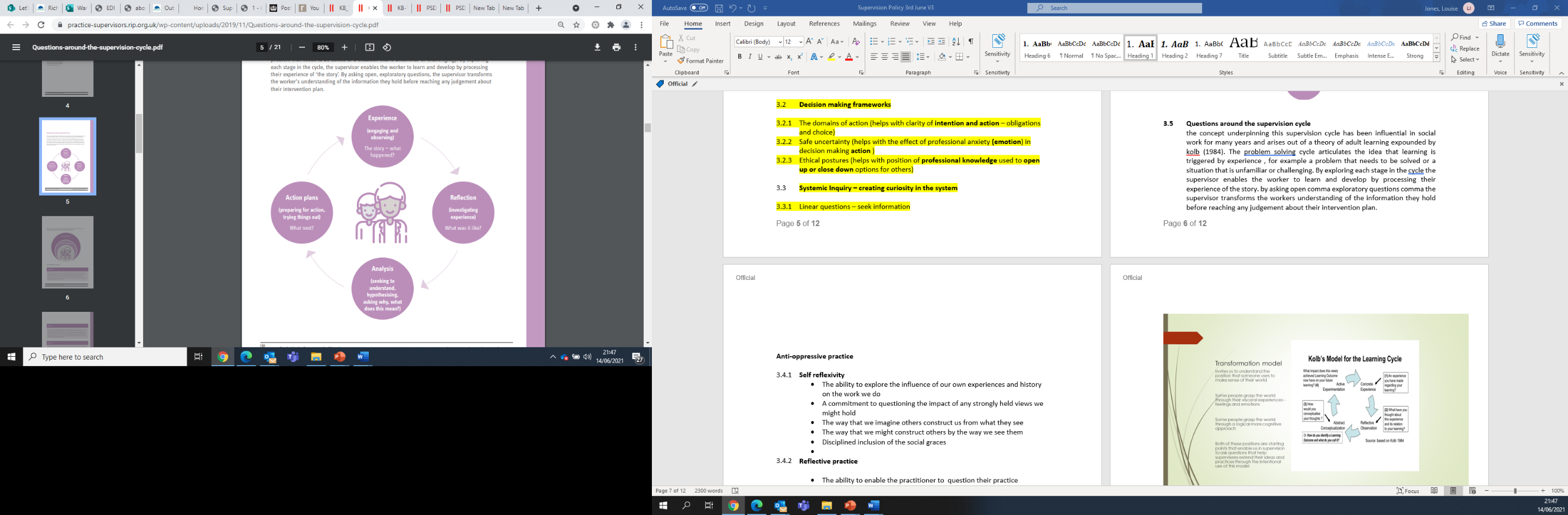
## The integrated model of supervision

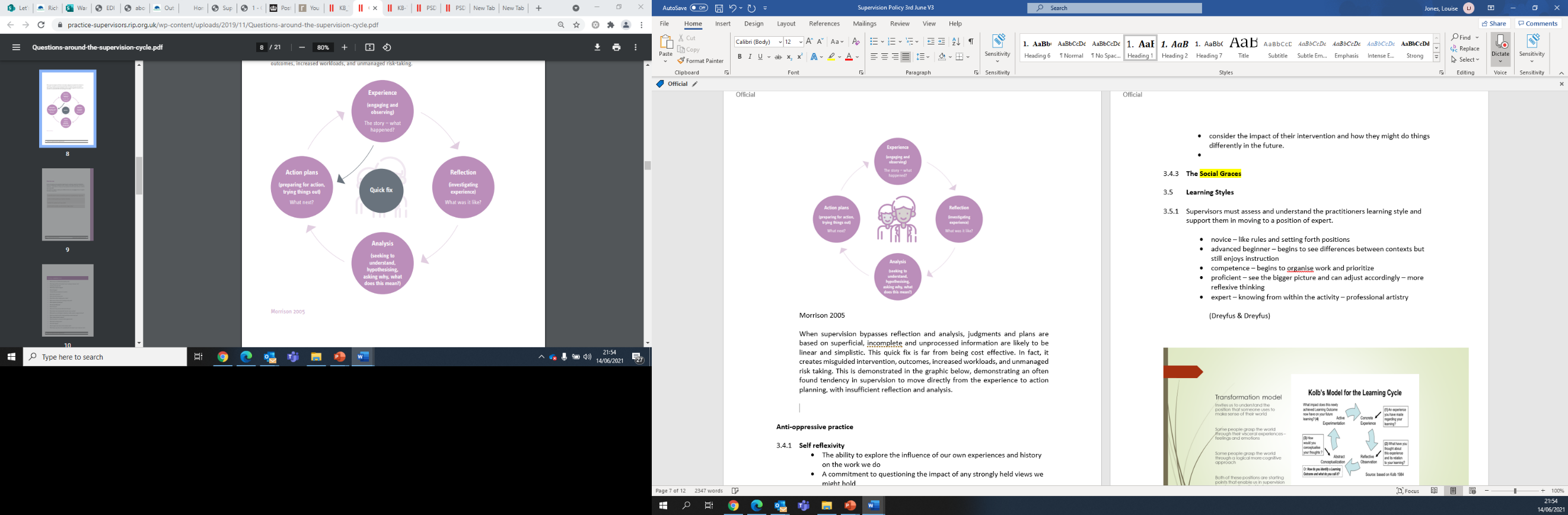
* The integrated model of supervision (often referred to as the 4x4x4 model) brings together three distinct elements of supervision, each of which has four interdependent components. This approach encourages us to conceptualise supervision as a process that integrates three very different ways of understanding its purpose. It brings together ideas drawn from management theory, learning theory and outcomes-based approaches. This learning tool is based on the integrated model of supervision developed by Tony Morrison (2005) as well as more recent developments of the model by Jane Wonacott.



Questions around the supervision cycle

* The concept underpinning this supervision cycle has been influential in social work for many years and arises out of a theory of adult learning expounded by Kolb (1984). The problem-solving cycle articulates the idea that learning is triggered by experience, for example a problem that needs to be solved or a situation that is unfamiliar or challenging. By exploring each stage in the cycle the supervisor enables the worker to learn and develop by processing their experience of ‘the story’. by asking open comma exploratory questions comma the supervisor transforms the workers understanding of the information they hold before reaching any judgement about their intervention plan.



* When supervision bypasses reflection and analysis, judgments and plans are based on superficial, incomplete and unprocessed information are likely to be linear and simplistic. This quick fix is far from being cost effective. In fact, it creates misguided intervention, outcomes, increased workloads, and unmanaged risk taking. This is demonstrated in the graphic below, demonstrating an often-found tendency in supervision to move directly from the experience to action planning, with insufficient reflection and analysis.

## Reflective practice

* Effective supervision supports practitioners to be able to

1. question their practice
2. Create a safe environment for supervisors to reflect on their personal and professional responses to practise in supervision
3. Reflect on the effectiveness of their interventions and involvement with families
4. Help social workers seek exceptions, challenge their thinking and consider a ride wide range of explanations and possibilities in their work with children families
5. Consider the impact of their intervention and how they might do things differently in the future
6. Work collaboratively with supervises to jointly review the impact and experience of supervision

* For further support see the [psdp guide to using the supervision relationship to promote reflection](https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/supervision/having-reflective-discussions-in-supervision/)

# Using a systemic lens in supervision

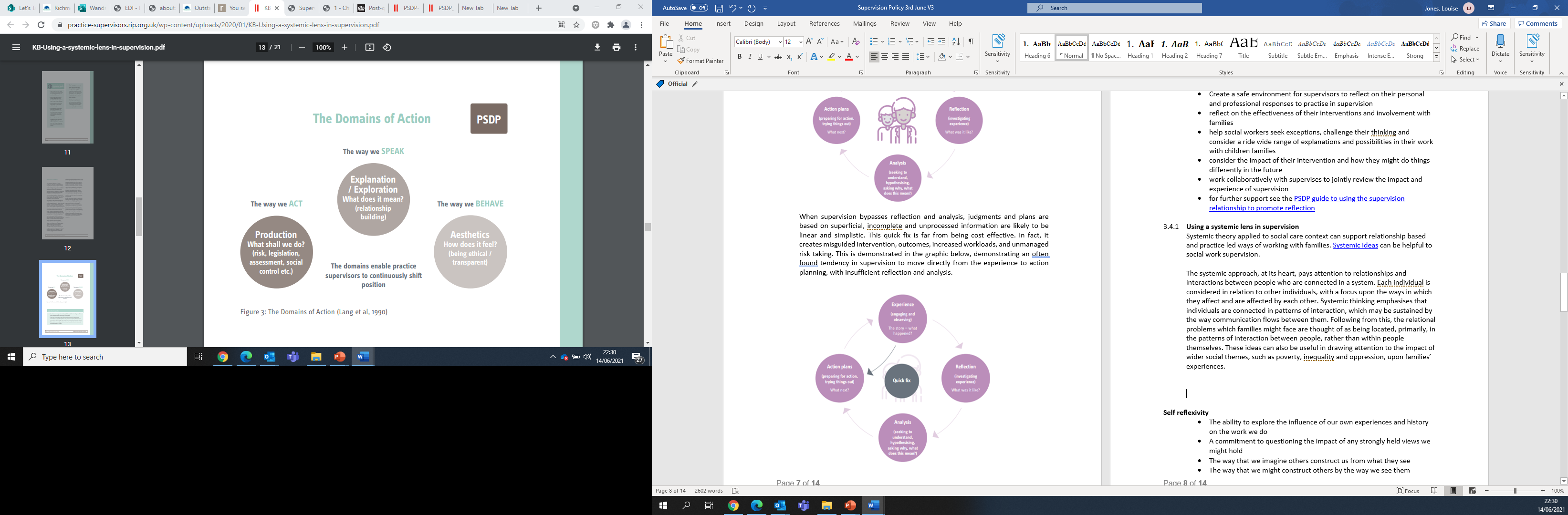
## Systemic theory

* Systemic theory applied to social care context can support relationship based and practice led ways of working with families. [Systemic ideas](https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/KB-Using-a-systemic-lens-in-supervision.pdf) can be helpful to social work supervision.
* The systemic approach, at its heart, pays attention to relationships and interactions between people who are connected in a system. Each individual is considered in relation to other individuals, with a focus upon the ways in which they affect and are affected by each other. Systemic thinking emphasises that individuals are connected in patterns of interaction, which may be sustained by the way communication flows between them. Following from this, the relational problems which families might face are thought of as being located, primarily, in the patterns of interaction between people, rather than within people themselves. These ideas can also be useful in drawing attention to the impact of wider social themes, such as poverty, inequality, and oppression, upon families’ experiences.

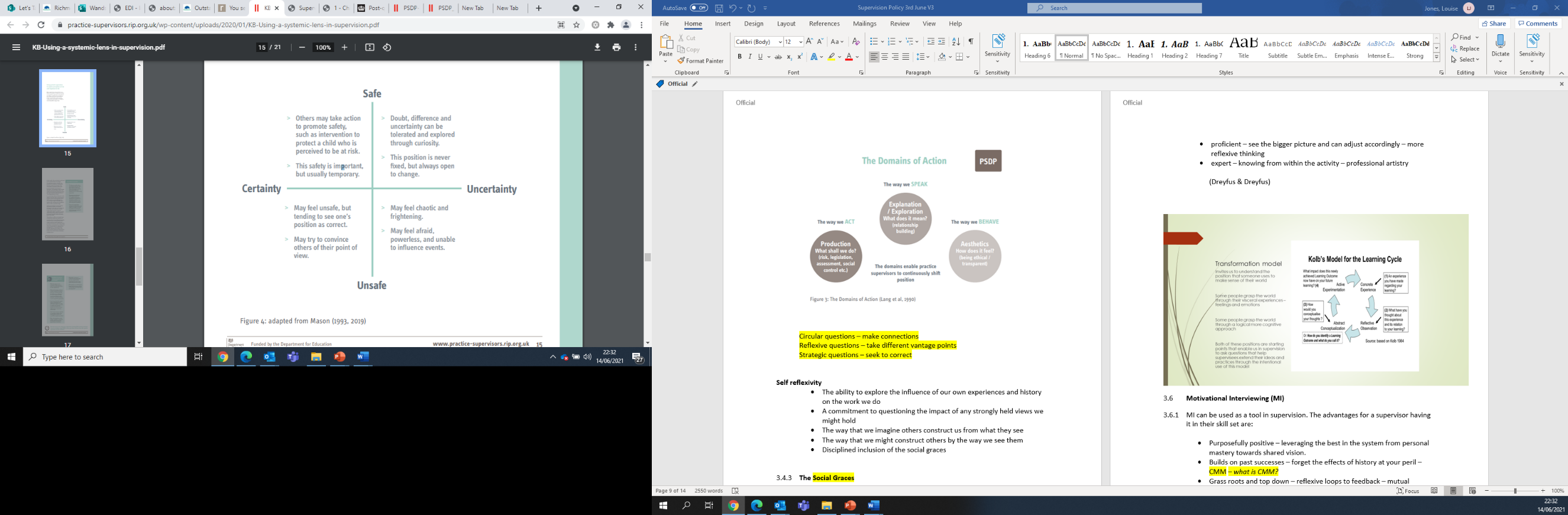
Some key terms in systemic theory:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Circular causality | Each person influences, and is influenced by, other people in the system. It is less important to understand ‘where the pattern began’ than to understand how it operates, and then to promote change by introducing difference. |
| Context | The setting in which interaction patterns take place. Understanding more about the families context can provide more information about the meaning of their actions and interactions. |
| Curiosity | A position of openness to each person's point of view, and to multiple ideas about the family’s situation. |
| Family scripts | Patterns of behaviour which are handed down through generations, through repeated sequences of interactions between family members, often based upon belief systems. They can influence individuals expectations about who they should be and how they should live based on their experiences of family life full stop individuals could accept them comma or rebel against them full stop and the scripts can change over time under the influence of an individual's behaviour and the changing social context. |
| Feedback | Information about the system which produces change. Positive feedback leads to change, and negative feedback leads to stability. |
| Hypothesising | Generating an idea about relational patterns which connect family members. The idea is held lightly and used as a guide for further questions or suggestions. |
| Linear causality | Communication occurs through a step by step sequence, which operates in one direction only. |
| Recursive patterns | All family members are connected to each other and a change in one person’s behaviour will lead to a change in them all, referred to as ‘the pattern that connects’. |
| Self-reflexivity | The ability to explore the influence of our own experiences and history on the work we do, a commitment to questioning the impact of any strongly held views we might hold, including how we imagine others construct us and how we might construct others. |
| Systemic questioning | Circular questions - make connections  Reflexive questions - take different vantage points  Strategic questions - seek to correct |

The domains of action

* The concepts of domains of action developed by Maturana (1985) can be very helpful in navigating the tension between working collaboratively with family, managing risk within the safeguarding context, and has a lot to offer supervision conversations.

## Perceptions of risk

* Mason’s (1993) framework of safety and certainty is a useful prompt for supervision conversations, as it offers a useful lens for considering ways of balancing the need to attend to risk, as well as the need to maintain collaborative relationships in a context one certainty.

1. The Social GGRRAACCEES

* The term social graces is an acronym that describes aspects of personal and social identity which afford people different levels of power and privilege. Developed by Burnham in 2012, it can be helpful to explore the social graces within teams in individual or group superficial discussions to help understand how we all have different experiences of power or powerlessness, and the abuse could be influenced by the social graces.
* The social graces include gender, geography, race, religion, age, and ability, appearance, culture, colour, class, education, employment, economics, ethnicity, spirituality, sexuality and sexual orientation. The value is in exploring positioning in terms of power and the social grocer's between supervisor and social worker, and social worker and family members. Power differentials may never be obliterated but making positions explicit and exploring their effects enables people to make better choices in their future actions.

# **Learning Styles**

* Supervisors must assess and understand the practitioner’s learning style and support them in moving to a position of expert.

1. Novice – like rules and setting forth positions
2. Advanced beginner – begins to see differences between contexts but still enjoys instruction
3. Competence – begins to organise work and prioritize
4. Proficient – see the bigger picture and can adjust accordingly – more reflexive thinking
5. Expert – knowing from within the activity – professional artistry

*(Dreyfus & Dreyfus)*

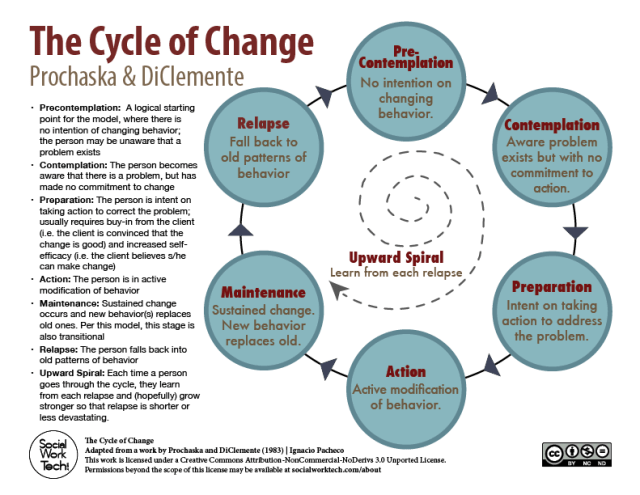
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## Motivational Interviewing (MI)

* MI is a collaborative, Goal oriented style of communication which pays particular attention to the language of change. It is designed to strengthen personal motivation for and commitment to a specific goal by eliciting and exploring the persons own reason for change within an atmosphere of acceptance and compassion. It is a useful tool with a simple set of concepts that can also be applied within the supervisory context.
* The essence of MI is that it is the client rather than the worker who makes the argument for change and a way to guide conversation to activate a person's own motivation and resources for change

The core skills of MI:

* **O** - Open questions to explore concerns, promote collaboration, and understand the client’s perspective
* **A** – Affirmations: to support strengths, convey respectful
* **R** - Reflective listening: To explore deeper, convey understanding, deflect discord, elicit change talk
* **S**- Summarise: to organise discussion, clarify motivation, provide contrast, focus the session and highlight change talk

*MI and Stages of Change Theory:*

## **The quality of the supervisory relationship**

* The quality of the supervisory relationship is paramount in making change happen for children and young people through high support and high challenge.
* The supervision agreement underpins the relationship and should be co-constructed between supervisor and practitioner and regularly reviewed as the relationship develops. A template for the supervision agreement can be found at [appendix 1](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16559/supervision-agreement-2022.docx).
* The practitioner has a responsibility to prepare for supervision and actively engage to achieve outstanding practice for the children, young people, and families they are working with. The template at [appendix 1](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16559/supervision-agreement-2022.docx) is designed to help them to think about the aspects of practice they would like to reflect on.
* If a supervisory relationship is not working effectively for either person it should be reflected on and, where possible, resolved between the supervisor and practitioner. Where it can’t be resolved a third party should be invited to facilitate resolution.

# Outcome focussed supervision

Outcome focused practice supervision clarifies:

1. What matters to the child, young person, family?
2. What do they want to achieve?
3. What does the agency need to achieve?
4. The plan constructed by the practitioner and child, young person, family to make change happen
5. How everyone involved will know when change has happened – what it will look like

Supervision focuses on the plan to make change for the child or young person and clarifies:

1. What the practitioner is going to do?
2. Why they are going to do it?
3. How they are going to do it?

* These are the actions for the practitioner to take forward from supervision. The actions should be carried forward for review at the next supervision to evaluate the impact they have had on practice and achieving the overall plan for the child.

# **Child or young person’s voice**

* The supervisor ensures the child’s voice is strong in outcome focused practice supervision. They make sure direct work and life story work is of the highest standard. They gain a clear picture of the child’s lived experience by actively listening to what they have said to the practitioner.
* The supervisor ensures the child or young person’s voice is present in their plan.
* The supervisor ensures there is a correlation between what the child or young person has said has an impact on the work done to make change happen for them.
* The supervisor makes change happen through effective supervision in the child or young person’s timescale.

# Types of Supervision

## Personal supervision

* Personal supervision is the bedrock of good practice. This is a supportive relationship between the supervisee and supervisor where personal and professional development and well-being is attended to.

## Practice supervision

* Practice supervision can take place in a variety of contexts. This could be a 1:1 meeting with the supervisor or a team or group working with the family coming together to reflect on, plan and review their work with the family. This can take the form of the practitioner bringing a dilemma for consideration and group reflections to generate ideas/hypotheses; or reviewing the previous supervision and updating progress against the child’s plan. Attention is paid to the social GRACES.
* In the Family Safeguarding Service group supervision is the standard form of supervision as they have co-located multi-disciplinary practitioners. In the ASH and CLA service there is a combination of 1:1 and group supervision used.
* We have one template for recording practice supervision regardless of whether it is held as a 1:1 or a group session.

*Informal supervision*

* Learning from practice tells us that informal supervision and management oversight takes place in conversations between supervisors and practitioners all the time. It is an important part of the supervisory relationship. Supervisors must recognise when the conversation is of significant importance to require recording on the child or young person’s social care record. An important conversation would be, for example, one that impacts on the plan to make change.

# Frequency of supervision

* Below is the minimum frequency of supervision for staff working with children and families. Given the complexity of work with families the frequency of supervision and informal supervision is likely to be more frequent than this. Group supervision is always in addition to and does not replace 1:1 supervision.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Which staff** | **Frequency and who supervises** |
| Early help practitioners | Monthly by the relevant line manager |
| Non-Social Work qualified/other qualified Practitioners | Monthly by the relevant line manager |
| Student social workers | Weekly then fortnightly at a point agreed by the educator and the student |
| Newly Qualified Social Workers in their assessment supported you and employment (ASYE) | Weekly for the first six weeks, fortnight fortnightly up to the six-month review and at least monthly thereafter by the line manager/assessor |
| Social Workers with more than 12 months experience | Monthly by Team Manager |
| Senior social workers | Monthly by team manager |
| Independent Reviewing Officers or Child Protection Coordinators | Monthly by Service Manager |
| Team managers | Monthly by service manager |
| Service managers | Monthly by head of service |
| Heads of Service | Monthly by Deputy Director |

* Supervisors meet with practitioners every 4 weeks to have a reflective conversation about the children and young people they are working with. The meeting should be planned in advance. It shouldn’t be cancelled without exceptional reason. If it has to be cancelled it should be immediately re-scheduled. The meeting should be protected from interruption and have the full attention of both supervisor and supervisee. Whilst recording practice is a requirement, it shouldn’t distract from the quality of conversation.

# **Recording supervision**

* Practice supervision is recorded in the child or young person’s electronic social care record known as Mosaic. The following naming convention must be used so supervision recording can be aggregated for management oversight.

*Title: “Name of Supervisor” supervising “Name of Supervisee” e.g. Carol Jones supervising Paul Smith*

*Type: Record of supervision from drop-down selection*

*Date: Date supervision took place*

* Practice supervision should be recorded using the template at [Appendix 1](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16559/supervision-agreement-2022.docx)
* Supervision should be recorded as soon as possible and no later than 5 working days after the meeting.
* Any discussion that is personal to the practitioner should be recorded on the template at [Appendix 3](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16545/record-of-personal-supervision-2022.docx) and stored in the practitioner’s personal supervision folder.
* Informal supervision should be recorded as a “management oversight” case note.
* In the Family Safeguarding Service supervision is recorded within the Family Safeguarding Workbook. Social workers and multi-disciplinary practitioners complete a monthly case summary which feeds into the supervision record. The supervision is led and facilitated by the team manager and recorded live by the business support officer.

# Practice Observation

* Supervisors should observe practice as a routine part of the supervisory process. For example, if practice is not making change happen the supervisor should go out on a visit with the practitioner to observe the relationship between the practitioner and the child, young person, family. Formal observation of practice should be recorded using the template in Appendix 5: Record of Practice Observation. The record should be used as a basis for discussion in supervision and filed in the practitioner’s personal supervision folder.
* Supervisors should invite observation of their supervision practice to ensure they are providing high support and high challenge to make change happen for children, young people, and families. This should happen at least once/twice a year. This should be recorded using Record of Observation of Supervision.

# Appendices

[Appendix 1: Children’s Services Supervision Agreement](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16559/supervision-agreement-2022.docx)

[Appendix 2: Record of Child and Family Supervision](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16544/record-of-child-family-supervision-2022.docx)

[Appendix 3: Record of Personal Supervision](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16545/record-of-personal-supervision-2022.docx)

[Appendix 4: Record of Practice Observation](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16546/record-of-practice-observation.docx)