

TABLE 4.1 Supervisee Characteristics and Supervisor Behavior for Each of the Four IDM-Specified Supervisee Developmental Levels

Level 1. These supervisees have limited training, or at least limited experience in the specific domain in which they are being supervised.

Motivation: Both motivation and anxiety are high; focused on acquiring skills. Want to know “the correct” or “best” approach with clients.

Autonomy: Dependent on supervisor. Needs structure, positive feedback, and little direct confrontation.

Awareness: High self-focus, but with limited self-awareness; apprehensive about evaluation.

Level 2. Supervisees at this level are “making the transition from being highly dependent, imitative, and unaware in responding to a highly structured, supportive, and largely instructional supervisory environment” (p. 64). Usually after two to three semesters of practicum.

Motivation: Fluctuating as the supervisee vacillates between being very confident to unconfident and confused.

Autonomy: Although functioning more independently, he or she experiences conflict between autonomy and dependency, much as an adolescent does. This can manifest as pronounced resistance to the supervisor.

Awareness: Greater ability to focus on and empathize with client. However, balance still is an issue. In this case, the problem can be veering into confusion and enmeshment with the client.

Stoltenberg et al. notes that this can be a turbulent stage and “supervision of the Level 2 therapist . . . [requires] considerable skill, flexibility, and perhaps a sense of humor” (p. 87).

Level 3. Supervisees at this level are focusing more on a personalized approach to practice and on using and understanding of “self” in therapy.

Motivation: Consistent; occasional doubts about one’s effectiveness will occur, but without being immobilizing.

Autonomy: A solid belief in one’s own professional judgment has developed as the supervisee moves into independent practice. Supervision tends to be collegial as differences between supervisor and supervisee expertise diminish.

Awareness: The supervisees return to being self-aware, but with a very different quality than at Level 1. Supervisees at this level are able to remain focused on the client while also stepping back to attend to their own personal reactions to the client and then to use this in decision making about the client.

Level 3i (Integrated). This level occurs as the supervisee reaches Level 3 across multiple domains (e.g., treatment, assessment, conceptualization). The supervisee’s task is one of integrating across domains. It is characterized by a personalized approach to professional practice across domains and the ability to move easily across them. This supervisee has strong awareness of his or her strengths and weaknesses.
