Reflective clinical supervision | Example

From Frustration to a Learning Question

Mental health professionals and supervisors | 5 to 8 minutes | Handout

Follow a fictional supervisee in checking an assumption and designing a specific rehearsal.

This is a fictional supervision example with no real client details. Noor is a counselor who noticed frustration after a person did not complete an agreed between-session activity.

How to use this page

Read the sequence. Notice what is observed, what is assumed, and how the supervisor helps define a skill to practice.

The first interpretation

Noor initially described the person as "not motivated." The supervisor asked for the observable detail: the person said the written activity had not been used. Noor could not yet explain why. They noticed that the original instruction assumed privacy, time, and comfort with writing.

A more useful question

Noor asked, "How can I explore what happened without turning this into a test of cooperation?" The supervisor modeled a brief invitation to discuss fit, then asked Noor to try different wording. In rehearsal, Noor practiced asking what was useful or difficult and offering a spoken alternative.

The learning agreement

They chose one observable target: invite the person's account before offering an explanation. Noor would review the attempt through approved supervision processes, including the person's feedback where available. The rehearsal did not establish why the activity was unused, and it did not replace broader clinical assessment or treatment planning.

1. Which assumption was checked, and what evidence would be useful next?

Original educational material. Not a validated assessment or treatment protocol.

PK10-02 | continued

Facilitator notes and adaptation

Use the example to model curiosity and accountability, not to imply that every missed activity is an access problem or that one phrase guarantees engagement.

About this resource

AI-assisted original draft for More Than Therapy. Version 1.0. Source and editorial checks: 27 October 2026. Independent clinical review pending; no human clinical reviewer is recorded. The references below inform concepts and do not validate or endorse this original page.

Conceptual references

PB10 | SAMHSA; official text hosted by NCBI Bookshelf | TIP 52, Chapter 1: Clinical Supervision and Professional Development of the Substance Abuse Counselor

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/books/NBK64848/

PB11 | American Counseling Association | 2014 ACA Code of Ethics

https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ethics/2014-aca-code-of-ethics.pdf

Original educational material. Not a validated assessment or treatment protocol.