

Episode 31 - RTI Series – Supervisor Orientation Part 2

In this podcast episode, looking at the role of the Residential Supervisor shifts to the perspective of the West cardinal direction in the Meta-Compass Model. The West is the direction of behaviors, physiology, and for this podcast, especially is concerned with setting behavioral goals for supervisees.

It's suggested that setting behavioral goals be based on encouraging Residential Counselors to develop their own executive skills. Focusing on executive skills, and using the language of executive skills, helps separate out asking supervisees to develop their professional skills, versus language that makes supervisees feel like their supervisor is judging their character or personal development.

Thus the supervisor encourages specific behaviors in staff members that correspond with exercising executive skills such as reaction inhibition and stress tolerance, crucial for maintaining emotional control during challenging situations. Likewise, the supervisor focuses on helping their supervisees improve their own planning, prioritizing, organizing, time management, initiation, and other cognitive executive skills.

This focus on executive skills development, and really breaking it down to the behaviors that demonstrate an exercising of these skills, continues with helping supervisees with their goal-directed persistence (highly relevant to the reality that a lot of residential interventions only work after hundreds of repetitions), their self-awareness (which is the foundation of self-directed development), and meta-cognition (which corresponds with understanding the “thinking” of the program – its philosophy, treatment approaches, etc.).

The podcast then shifts to the North cardinal position perspective on the Meta-Compass. The North, the domain of the Chief, is very concerned with teamwork and the well-being of their team-mates. Guidelines are presented for effectively encouraging the development of a high-functioning team.

The Chief also has to, sometimes, set limits. It falls on the supervisor to monitor staff interactions with both clients and colleagues to ensure safety and adherence to workplace laws and program policies, procedures, and practices.