

## Week 6: Self-Perception, Supervising at Different Ability Levels

### I. Highlights

- A. The “Johari Window” is a way of thinking about what we do and don’t know about ourselves, and what others do and don’t know about us.
- B. “Conscious competence” theory talks about whether or not we know what we don’t know. Part of our responsibility as supervisor is to meet teachers where they are and help them move along this continuum.
- C. Supervisory behavior is different depending on teachers’ experience and skill. New teachers need “directive” (telling, supervisor-controlled) style, intermediate stage needs “collaborative” (50/50 control, more problem-solving), and mature teachers need “non-directive” (more hands-off supervision, more teacher control) style.

### II. Homework

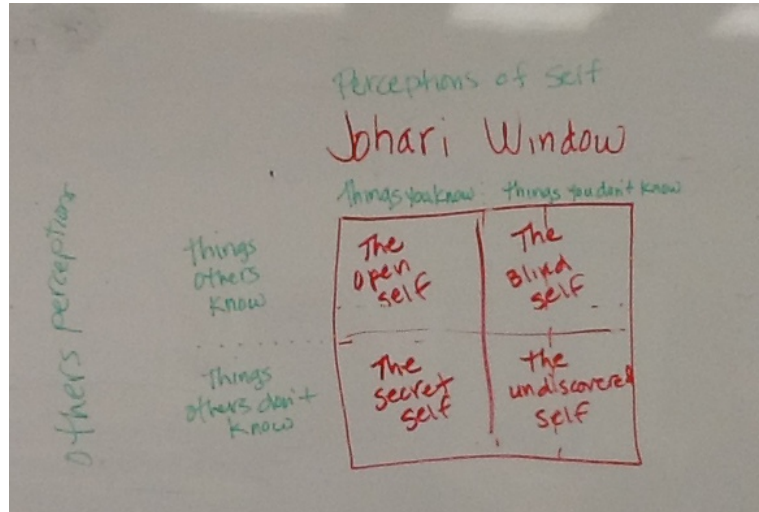
- A. None assigned. Keep reading the books.

### III. Getting started: community art project

- A. Community art projects can be a way of bringing people together:
  - 1. Build rapport and trust with the group
  - 2. Spend time together, have something to do with your hands
  - 3. Becomes part of the shared history of the group
- B. Use yarn with natural materials (sticks, pinecones, etc.) to create something
- C. Talk openly about a topic while

#### IV. Theory: The "Johari Window"

- A. Is a way of thinking about "perceptions of self" and others' perceptions of us
- B. "The open self" = what I know about myself and others know
- C. "The secret self" = what I know about myself but keep secret from others
- D. "The blind self" = what I don't know about myself yet, but others see
- E. "The undiscovered self" = what I don't see about myself yet and others don't see either (deeply buried)
- F. These are equal portions in the diagram. In reality, they're not necessarily the same size.
1. Some of us are very self-aware, so the "Things you know" column is wider and the "Things you don't know" is narrow.
  2. Some of us are very private, so the "Things others don't know" row is thicker and the "Things others know" part is smaller
  3. The relative sizes can change over time as we grow and develop
- G. Our job is very interpersonal connected all day long. A lot of people are perceiving us on some level all day, so as a good teacher, we have to be aware of how others perceive us, how much we share vs. keep private



H. The “blind self” is things you’re not aware of but other people see.

1. Our family culture / messages / values / labels from childhood follow us into adult life unless we choose to change them. Realize they’re different for different people and that’s okay.
2. What are you comfortable talking about with others? What’s too private?
3. Beware of race or class differences
4. Different expectations about gender (ex: men should go to work and protect you and kill the spiders, women should be stay-at-home-moms, etc. vs. “girl power” movement)
  - a) If you feel men and women are equal, but a coworker has to be home by 5:00 so she can make dinner for her husband every day so she never stays late or works extra.
  - b) Can cause resentment when others feel, “What makes you so important? We all have things we have to do after work...”
5. If you’re a very open and inquisitive person, can be hard to understand why others have such tight boundaries and don’t share anything about themselves. Can feel hard to connect with them, seems like they’re being secretive. To someone who is used to being more private, you can seem too open and personal, can be off-putting to them.
6. Our “blind self” often includes ways that our own norms bother other people who have different norms.
7. Simple example: friend doesn’t know that her constant (unconscious) hair-flipping bugs others.
8. In a classroom, teacher treats a handful of children differently based on personal bias. It becomes obvious to others, but the teacher doesn’t know she’s doing it. (Example: director’s son gets noticed more, given more time /

- attention, less strict discipline, etc. Is subtle, not conscious from the teacher, but it happens.)
9. Example: As a director, Terry didn't realize her teachers would perceive her as different from other parents while her son was there. They were more careful with her son, even though that wasn't Teri's intent. It didn't occur to her that it would even be an issue. (Thus blind spot.)
  10. Often this comes from our strengths getting carried too far. Something that's usually good/helpful can unintentionally hit someone's vulnerability, cause problems instead of helping. If we're not aware of this, it's part of the blind self.
  11. Task-oriented director may have a harder time listening to relationship-oriented teacher's emotional conversation, may seem cold or non-listening because she's not as interested in the emotional piece. Good to know this about herself. If she's not aware of this difference in focus, is part of her blind side.
- I. The "secret self" (private, what I know but others don't know) can be big or small. Some of us have a pretty firm line of what's private and what's public.
1. Traumatic experiences from the past
  2. Depression, anxiety, medical issues
  3. Criminal records, even a juvenile record
  4. Religion
  5. Feelings about certain people in a group
  6. Vulnerabilities, insecurities, self-doubts (such as feeling uncomfortable as the only girl in a room full of men, or fears of having the boss judge your competence/skills)

7. As teachers, there SHOULD be a line here! Some things are better left private. Don't go talk about your drunk driving arrest in front of two-year-olds please!
  8. Can cause problems if the wall is too solid, if your personal secret stress is impacting work but you refuse to talk about it or let anyone help.
- J. How to discover that undiscovered self?
1. Some experience you have suddenly brings your skill sets together, helps you see that you're good at something or enjoy something new
  2. Get asked to be a mentor for a new teacher, the older teacher discovers she likes being a mentor and the director discovers she's good at it
  3. Sometimes helps if the supervisor sees a little glimmer of possibility in someone, encourages them to pursue it. Can open up undiscovered possibilities.
- K. "Open self" requires us to know what we look/sound like when we're working and communicating with others
1. Personality shape exercise, Meyers-Briggs types, etc. help us define ourselves for this
  2. Need to learn more about ourselves, be very reflective, to increase the "open self" and reduce the "blind self"
  3. When someone reacts to me in a way that's confusing, it may be because I'm reacting from my "blind self." There's something I'm doing/saying/assuming that they see that I'm not aware of.

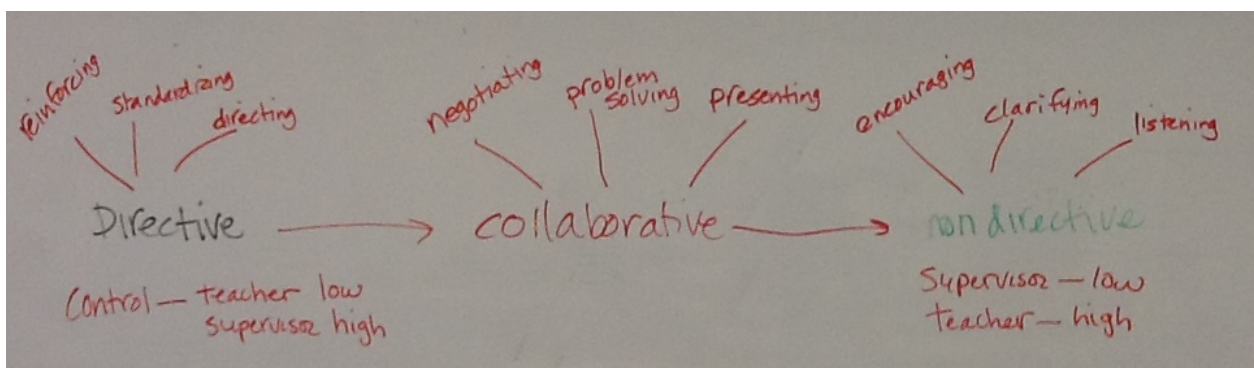
## V. **Related theory: conscious competence**

- A. "Unconscious incompetence" = I don't know that I don't know. Totally unaware of it. Blind self + undiscovered self could fit this (we're oblivious).

- B. "Conscious incompetence" = I know that I don't know it, or that I don't do it well, or that I'm still learning it. The secret self could fit this (fear, insecurity, discomfort).
- C. "Conscious competence" = I know that I know this well. The open self could fit this (confident and open about it).
- D. "Unconscious competence" = the last step, when we do it automatically because it's so familiar and mastered. Example: driving a car, walking, etc. Teachers get to this point with some things (such as diaper changes), but new teacher in "survival mode" won't have much at this level yet.
- E. Part of our responsibility as a supervisor includes meeting teachers where they are and helping them move along this continuum.
  1. Supervisor is responsible for maintaining a competent (skilled, aware) group of people to carry out the work.
  2. At least help new people move quickly from "unconscious incompetence" to "conscious incompetence" so they know what they don't know and can work toward learning it or asking for help.

**VI. Supervisory behavior: directive ---> collaborative ---> non-directive**

- A. New teachers really need a different supervisory style than more experienced teachers.



B. This is a continuum, not black-and-white stair steps.

C. Directive

1. Supervisor has most of the control. Teacher has only a little control.
2. Supervisor is telling the teacher what to do (still in a nice way)
3. Reinforcing correct behavior
4. Standardizing (telling this is what we expect at a minimum to be a teacher here, this is how things are done)
5. Necessary for people new to the field or new to the center
6. Can be uncomfortable for us as “nice women” to create this power over someone else, but it matters.

D. Collaborative

1. As teachers get more experienced, move along the developmental scale, don't need as much direction/ telling. Have figured out the expected standards.
2. Supervisor begins to share some of the control with the teacher. More 50/50 split.
3. Less telling, more negotiating and problem-solving. “How do you think you need to handle that?” “What might be another way you could approach that situation?”
4. Presenting as, “How about this idea? What do you think about this? Would that work?” instead of “Here's how this is going to happen...”
5. More comfortable for us as directors, but only works when teachers are ready.

E. Non-directive

1. Mature, more competent teacher acquires more control and autonomy
2. Less give-and-take 50/50 collaboration, moves into a higher level of relationship/ rapport
3. Supportive, encouraging, listening, clarifying

4. Director is part of the conversation about what to do, goals to set, etc. but the teacher takes the lead in the conversation, director is there to support
5. Feels really rewarding for teacher and director when we get to this level (never get here if the center has a lot of turnover; requires a group that fits together well and has been together for a while)
6. This is something worth working toward. Takes time but is really great.

## VII. Case studies

A. New teacher, new to the center, 1.5 years of experience elsewhere, has her units, has been at school one month with a good orientation. One afternoon, a parent approaches you (director) over a fight with this new teacher. The teacher called a conference, didn't get off to a good start, parent said something harsh, the teacher cried and left, parent goes to the director's office.

1. Director gathers information, finds out the teacher has been doing well so far, but was very anxious about the meeting, and has been floundering with her lesson plans in the last week. What do I do as director?
2. First, ask her what's up.
  - a) May be a family emergency or personal stress. Can offer her some personal support during that time.
  - b) Maybe psyching herself out about the conference all week
  - c) Maybe the "dip" after the initial "adrenaline burst" when first starting a job
3. Encourage her, point out the strengths we've seen so far, things that have gone well
4. Let her know that someone is always available to sit in on meetings with her, she's not alone. If they want to do it alone, offer to role play before.



5. Talking to the parent, see if they have other concerns, or if they're just wondering what kind of crazy people we're hiring because of this one incident
6. Director needs more information from both sides!
7. Look at our orientation process. How did the teacher not know to ask for help with the conference? Did I assume she felt comfortable with conferences because she has some experience already, when maybe she never ran one?
8. Director can be the go-between, check out the situation with the teacher, calm the parent down, then support the teacher moving forward. Sometimes it doesn't help to put those two back together in a meeting to solve it (too much vulnerability). Supervisor needs to be in between to facilitate for both, with 1:1 meetings with each.
9. Build a relationship with the teacher. The parent came to me, not the teacher, so obviously the teacher didn't feel comfortable enough running to me for support instead of running away. (Maybe her last director wasn't approachable, or her last center wasn't a safe place to ask for help.)
10. This teacher needs the director to be at the "Directive" (first step) end of the continuum. Need specific directions and expectations and training. Is new to the center and relatively new to the field.
11. Because her first parent conference encounter was so negative, be very careful with the next several conferences so she can build confidence. Maybe do some role play. Maybe conduct the next one for her while she sits in. Co-lead the one after that, then be there to support her for several more afterward. Emphasize that you trust her and you know she's able to do this, but you don't want her to feel "thrown under the bus," so you're there to support her.

12. Important to remember that building relationships with teachers is a lot like building relationships with children. If we want them to come to us when they're feeling stressed or vulnerable, there has to be trust established already.
13. Did the teacher have a relationship with the parents beforehand? If not, maybe need more work in building relationships before approaching touchy subjects.
- B. If this same situation happened with a teacher with 10 years of experience and lots of parent conference experience, it would be different. Then maybe bringing the parent and teacher back together with the director as mediator/facilitator could help. The teacher is known to be competent, has a foundation of success, so this was probably a clash with an individual parent. Conflict-resolution may be all that's needed.
- C. Case study #2: 10-year experienced teacher, has been great, been with the center for a long time, but the last couple months has been slipping. Poor attendance, classroom management slipping, taking phone calls during class, is in the office/workroom instead of being in ratio often, not as prepared, so more burden is falling on co-teacher. Parent notices the classroom isn't as positive of an experience as it used to be for their child, comes to you as director to ask what's wrong.
1. Maybe she's burned out on the routine, needs new challenges
  2. Maybe personal life issues, can ask her about it. Can't make her tell you, but can ask her if she'd like to share. If she doesn't share, can let her know it's affecting her work and how others are seeing her.
  3. Have to address it, don't beat around the bush (have an established relationship and trust because she's been there so long)
  4. If she acknowledges it and says she'll work on it, maybe give her the space to work on it. If she denies anything is happening, may need to push it harder.

5. More problem-solving approach, offering support and empathy and concern, less directive.
6. Teacher may be at the non-directive stage in general, but supervisor can't ignore this situation. Step back to the collaborative stage. More 50/50 problem-solving. Don't have to go all the way back to directing/telling, do give the employee some choices, but can't stay hands-off if she's not able to function independently right now.
7. Maybe she thinks she's hiding it (secret self), so it can help to let her know that others are noticing.
8. Co-teacher has a responsibility to talk to the teacher about it first (assuming they have a relationship already), try to problem-solve and support each other first, then go to director if they can't fix it themselves. If regularly out of ratio/licensing compliance, is co-teacher's responsibility to let director know.
9. With ratios, expectation has to be that it's corrected immediately. We don't mess with licensing regulations. This may need to be a direct limit set by the supervisor. The stuff outside of that, check in regularly for a few weeks to see if things are getting better and what we can do to help.