

## BALANCING SUPPORT & CHALLENGE

01.

### Why it's Important

Supervision is most effective when it provides both reassurance and constructive feedback. Striking this balance helps supervisees feel safe while also stretching their practice, ensuring growth without overwhelm.



### Supervision Checklist

#### Support

- Do I feel listened to and understood in supervision?
- Am I receiving reassurance and validation for my efforts?
- Does supervision acknowledge my strengths and successes?
- Is there space to discuss wellbeing and emotional impact of work?
- Do I leave sessions feeling more confident and supported?

#### Challenge

- Am I encouraged to critically reflect on my practice decisions?
- Do I receive constructive feedback that stretches my thinking?
- Are gaps or risks in my practice identified and explored?
- Am I pushed to consider new perspectives or alternative approaches?
- Do I leave sessions with clear action points for growth?

#### Balance Indicators

- Is there a mix of affirmation and constructive questioning in each session?
- Do I feel safe enough to be stretched, and stretched enough to grow?
- Are both immediate support needs and long-term development goals addressed?
- Does supervision feel collaborative rather than one-sided?
- Am I progressing without feeling overwhelmed or under-challenged?

02.

**Practical Activity**  
**Comfort vs Stretch Zone Mapping in Supervision**  
on the last page

03.

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03.

Support builds confidence, reduces stress, & validates professional identity.



Challenge encourages critical thinking, skill development, & resilience.

Together, they create a dynamic supervision space that is both nurturing and developmental.

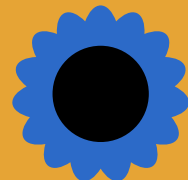
### ! Warnings List: Over-Supported & Under-Challenged Supervision

#### 🚧 When I'm Over-Supported

- I notice I leave sessions feeling comfortable but not really progressing.
- I realise difficult issues are being avoided or glossed over.
- I'm only hearing positive feedback, without constructive critique.
- I find myself relying too much on reassurance instead of building my own confidence.
- My sessions feel repetitive, with little new learning or skill development.

#### 🌟 When I'm Under-Challenged

- I feel like I'm stagnating in my professional growth.
- I'm not being pushed to address blind spots or risky practice.
- My critical thinking and reflective skills aren't being stretched.
- I sometimes feel disengaged or unmotivated in supervision.
- I'm not building the resilience I'll need for long-term practice.



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### Comfort vs Stretch Zone Mapping in Supervision

**Purpose:** Supervision should empower supervisees to grow without overwhelming them. The Comfort vs Stretch Zone model helps supervisors and supervisees identify where learning sits, ensuring sessions balance safety, challenge, and development.

#### Zone Mapping Exercise

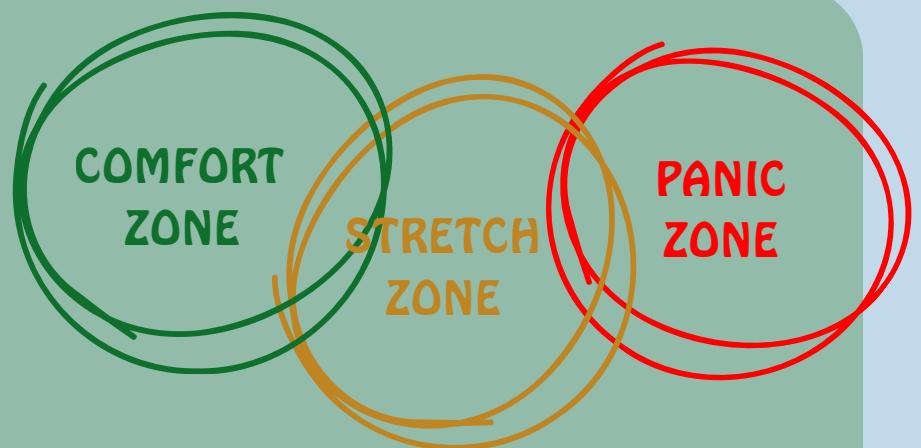
1. List recent tasks or cases.
2. Place each into Comfort, Stretch, or Panic zones.
3. Discuss how supervision can support movement from Comfort → Stretch.

#### The Visual Reflection Tool

1. Use a diagram during sessions.

#### Action Planning

1. Identify one Comfort Zone task to stretch further.
2. Identify one Panic Zone task to scale back or add supports.
3. Agree on supervision strategies to maintain balance.



#### Why It Matters?

**Comfort Zone:** Tasks that feel familiar and safe. Supervisees are confident but may not be learning new skills.

**Stretch Zone:** Tasks that are challenging yet achievable. This is the optimal learning space where growth occurs.

**Panic Zone:** Tasks that feel overwhelming, unsafe, or unmanageable. These can cause anxiety and hinder progress.

By mapping current practice issues into these zones, supervisors can strategically plan development that is both supportive and challenging.

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