



TRANSCRIPT

Change Starts Within: Strengthening Services Through Supervision

Visual: Change Starts Within: Strengthening Services Through Supervision

Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative: Enhancing Sexual Assault services logo with tree.

Cat Fribley: Hi there, welcome to Change Starts Within: Strengthening services through supervision, which is a conversation of the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative. The Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative is a project aimed at increasing and enhancing services for sexual assault survivors at dual and multi-service organizations, and it is a joint project of the Resource Sharing Project of the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault, of the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, of the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, and of the National Organization of Asian Pacific Islanders Ending Sexual Violence.

We are thrilled today to be able to offer you an opportunity to have a conversation with us about supervision. Supervision, and especially trauma-informed supervision, is just one part of... That winds through many of the lessons that were learned during the Demonstration Initiative. And you can find more information on the lessons of the project at nsvrc.org, and you can just type in or search SADI, and you'll find lots of resources that are available, including an overview of the lessons that we learned. We're excited that the Office on Violence Against Women continues to support this work, and grateful to have a chance to spend today talking about the ways that trauma-informed supervision supports sexual assault services.

My name is Cat Fribley, and I'm the Director of the Resource Sharing Project for the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault and have been a part of the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative team and learning these lessons and growing new resources to be able to assist folks who are in the field in order to continue to enhance and grow their sexual assault-specific services. And I'm grateful to be joined today by one of my colleagues and SADI partners, Nicole. Nicole, do you wanna introduce yourself and get us started, my friend?

Nicole Matthews: Yes, thank you. My name's Nicole Matthews. I'm the Executive Director of the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, and I'm an Anishinaabe from the wider reservation here in Minnesota. I am also part of the SADI team, and through the project, we worked very closely with Gila River, and so worked as the tribal TA provider with them. And I'm very excited to start this conversation and talking about trauma-informed supervision and looking at what is trauma-informed supervision? And when we're thinking about advocacy and advocacy work being both beautiful and difficult, having a parallel process for supervisors of supporting staff, while their staff are also supporting advocates, right, or...

Cat Fribley: Supporting survivors. Yeah, absolutely, friend.

Nicole Matthews: Supporting survivors, right. Well, advocates are supporting survivors. And so, and shouldn't our supervision also mirror that work that they are doing in community with survivors? Now we're also thinking about spaciousness, and how spaciousness comes into play for our programs and for our advocates, and what does that look like for supervision, and how do we care for each other, and how do we care for our staff and for the advocates who are doing really difficult work, and also thinking about supervision being rooted in resiliency and honesty and trust, and that we're giving advocates support and tools that they need to do this work.

Visual: Photo of a tree. Text: Supervision is rooted in resiliency

Cat Fribley: Absolutely. It makes me think about, Nicole, some of the pieces that we learned in the Demonstration Initiative about how important and valuable it is for staff to be supported, in order, as you said, to then support survivors in our communities. And I know that some of the lessons that we learned really showed us, right, how when there wasn't that supervision in place, advocates often felt unrooted, exhausted, or unclear about how to get support to know what their role was, was my sense.

Nicole Matthew: That's right, that's right. And the work of advocacy is challenging and hard enough; we certainly don't want to add to that stress that the advocates are already feeling, so they need that – a supportive environment.

Cat Fribley: Absolutely. It makes me think about the ways that we think about and know that supervision is valuable, right? Some of the things that we have certainly talked about, in terms of the purpose of supervision, are things about communicating the values and culture of the program. I think so much back to some of my supervisors that I had when I was doing work directly with sexual assault survivors and about the ways that supervision helps me to sort of get grounded in the values that they held to really learn about things like empowerment and self-determination, to have a distinct sense of the ways that the organization embedded those values in how we did our work, right?

Image: Photo of a tree.

Text: Leaders use supervision to:

- o Communicate the values and culture of the program
- o Empower project management and achieving goals
- o Demonstrate how feedback is given and open communication
- o Incorporate anti-oppression framework in daily activities

Nicole Matthews: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Cat Fribley: I know that as we think about supervision, that the other piece of that is about empowerment of our own staff.

Nicole Matthews: Yeah. Absolutely, which is... And I think it's so critical when we think about how people feel not only rooted in advocacy and the support with survivors, but that they feel that empowerment from within, so they feel like they have a home there, right?

Cat Fribley: Absolutely.

Nicole Matthews: And that they are valued. And that what they have to say is important and they're empowered to make decisions that they don't always have to check in with someone.

Cat Fribley: Right. Right. And that they also have access to someone to check in with when they need to, right? Because that's also I think a part of leadership development. And I think so much about the ways that trauma-informed or reflective supervision is also really about developing leaders in this movement and in this sort of work to end violence in our communities. And for me, that piece around recognizing that we can help people grow their leadership skills by being good supervisors, answering their questions and being available when they need us, and stepping back and allowing them to step into their own power and leadership where we can, right?

Nicole Matthews: That's right. That's right.

Cat Fribley: Yeah. As we... I know think about the ways that leaders can use supervision, we know... I think sometimes when people think about supervision, they think about supervision as a once-a-week sit-down or once-a-week connection with their staff, but in reality, supervision really happens all day every day, in our work. And when we think of supervision as that one discrete hour that we've set aside to sort of check in with folks – that is super important, do not get me wrong – but it's only really one part of a much larger role that supervision plays. In terms of giving feedback, for example, and doing that pretty immediately, right? If you see somebody do an amazing job, that you are able to say right off, "Hey, I saw the way you handled that discussion, and I was just blown away by both your compassion and your knowledge. And here's what I felt like

really specifically you did well.”

Nicole Matthews: Yeah.

Cat Fribley: Alternatively, it’s an opportunity for us to provide immediate feedback if there are course corrections that need to happen, right? So to be able to say to someone exactly what it is that you are hoping might change in order to grow their advocacy and their support of survivors and this work. And I think that demonstrating how feedback is given and demonstrating that sort of gratitude for feedback is such a key place that supervisors can help grow leadership through supervision.

Nicole Matthews: I agree, and I also think... A part of that for me is also when we think about modeling also how to accept feedback, because I think as supervisors, we are [09:31] _____ open to receiving feedback. And the ways in which we model in accepting feedback will also help set a tone for the way others will receive feedback.

Cat Fribley: Absolutely. And I would say even... We could even take that probably a step further. I think that setting that tone of how to receive feedback, but more than that, as a supervisor, asking for feedback, engaging with staff in a way that is not sort of an immediate power imbalance, which sets up like, “I give the feedback, you receive the feedback,” right? But rather that is really about, “How am I doing? What do you need from me? What are the places that you see me struggling or that you need something different?” and really finding ways to invite a two-way conversation, right? That modeling of open, ethical communication that’s happening, and not only that, but modeling that partnership, really, about thinking about and talking about feedback, that I – it’s just as valuable that I’m able to receive your feedback as the person that I’m supervising as it is for me to be able to provide feedback to you.

Nicole Matthews: Yeah, absolutely. And also then being... Also owning our stuff when we... Not always needing the feedback, but saying, “You know what, I know I really screwed up,” or “Maybe I shouldn’t have said it that way,” but also we’re human, you know, we’re all human.

Cat Fribley: Right. Absolutely.

Nicole Matthews: Yeah, to be real transparent about that.

Cat Fribley: And I think that is such an important piece of incorporating anti-oppression frameworks into all of our work, too. Because the reality is that as we do this work, and me especially as a white woman who is doing this work, there are places where I hopefully am going to risk making mistakes, and risk saying the wrong thing, and risk not knowing, right, the correct way or the right way forward, but I’m doing that in an attempt to continually practice my anti-racist values. And that part of what that means is that when we are able to just acknowledge, like, we don’t always know and

we're not always gonna get it right, and that is a part of this beautiful ongoing work that we need to do, both in interrupting sexual violence and serving survivors, and in continually working on issues of anti-racism and anti-oppression in our services and in our organizations.

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely. And so incredibly important and it's... And the more we ignore the importance of that, the more harmful and more toxic our environments become.

Image: photo of wheat. Text "Supervision supports the art of advocacy"

Cat Fribley: Absolutely, and part of... I think seriously that is a big part of this conversation around really wanting folks to think about and have skills around reflective and trauma-informed supervision, because the reality is that that is a part of stable and empowering leadership. And that one of the things that we found during the Demonstration Initiative was that stable and empowering leadership is key to being able to grow services and have a culture that supports advocacy and services for sexual assault survivors. So supervision ultimately supports the art of advocacy, right? And it does it by creating this environment of stable and empowering leadership by facilitating smooth program administration, by helping advocates, too, to manage and alleviate vicarious trauma, and I think that is such an important one. And really, it also speaks to our ability to create cultures of care, right? So, caring for the well-being of our staff allows them to care deeply about survivors. And one I don't think can happen really without the other.

Nicole Matthews: I totally agree. Yeah.

Image: Photo of wheat.

Text: Supervision supports advocates by:

- Developing their skills
 - Exploring the art of advocacy
 - Managing vicarious and primary trauma
 - Ensuring high-quality, trauma informed services
-

Cat Fribley: Yeah. So when we think about the ways that supervision supports advocates, there are all of these different pieces, right? The making sure that folks are... Learn – doing that leadership development, that they're able to have support in acknowledging and addressing vicarious and primary trauma. And we know that supervision also supports advocates in providing good services, right, to survivors who are looking for healing and support, for advocacy, for accompaniment, for all of those things that our programs provide for survivors in our community.

Image: Photo of trees: Text: Supervision through brave and beautiful work.

Nicole Matthews: Mm-hmm.

Cat Fribley: I know that, Nicole, you and I have over the years talked a lot about the ways that this work in general is both brave and beautiful. [chuckle]

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely, yeah.

Cat Fribley: That it is hard to imagine ways that this sort of charge that we take on of interrupting rape culture, interrupting violence, interrupting racism and oppression, and supporting the ongoing healing of folks who have experienced sexual violence and sexual abuse and sexual assault in our communities, requires us to show up in really brave ways, right? And part of what we have come to think of, I think as a framework for that, is trauma-informed services, is the acknowledgement of the ways that trauma-informed care is critical to making sure that our services are relevant to our communities in terms of addressing historical trauma and generational trauma, as well as the sexual trauma that they might bring with them, and recognizing it as just a part of a whole person's life, right?

Visual: 6 aspects of trauma informed supervision

- Cultural relevance
 - Safety
 - Trust
 - Choice
 - Collaboration
 - Empowerment
-

Nicole Matthews: That's right.

Cat Fribley: And it makes me think about then the way is that our same concepts of trauma-informed care apply to supervision in really huge ways.

Nicole Matthews: Yes, and I think thinking about the cultural relevance in trauma-informed supervision, and you were talking about anti-oppression framework, and also when you talk about brave and beautiful, thinking about what that looks like in distinct cultural communities and what that means for supervision, particularly because we have a number of programs that have communities of color that are staffed but maybe not all have supervisors who are a person of color or a woman of color.

And so what does that mean in our supervision? And looking at how personal histories of privilege and oppression shape our approach to supervision. And I think having an understanding, having an understanding, one, of what that means for our staff, but also having an understanding of the habits of white supremacy and how that plays out in our...

Oftentimes in our program and in our community. And so, when we're supervising, to just be really clear and be really informed and looking at how that plays out in our organization, that we're having... Providing support and dialogue around our supervisee's identity and relationship to the survivors they serve. And so what does that look like? Are they working in communities?

In my background, I worked specifically in... Primarily in tribal communities. And so, was really fortunate to get to work within my own community, which is a huge benefit, and also was supervised by someone who was not. And so, looking at those dynamics and how important it is to be in constant communication and dialogue with each other, and that we're also drawing... Not only drawing on cultural strength, but we're celebrating the cultural strength and the resilience around survival, right? We talk about, for tribal communities, like we're survivors of genocide. We're still here. We're not gone.

Ca Fribley: Mm-hmm.

Nicole Matthews: And then also having that understanding of safety and vicarious trauma risk particularly for staff of color. And for the... There is additional safety and vicarious trauma risk when we look at communities of color and the work they're doing and the racism that they're gonna encounter in community.

Cat Fribley: Absolutely, yeah. It makes me think about the ways that... If you are an anti-racist supervisor, whether you are a person of color or whether you're white, that you are sort of required to attend to the specific emotional and physical safety needs of advocates of color, and that ultimately, you also really have to build in support for staff members who identify as white in deeply understanding how racism and privilege affect their work, right, and their lives. So it's that parallel piece of acknowledging and building safety for advocates of color while also addressing and working sort of consistently as an anti-racist supervisor on lifting up our white staff in understanding racism and oppression, and the ways that then that plays out in our work and how we can continually be addressing it. I love that, that concept of making sure that we're understanding the different work that needs to happen for different staff.

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely. And it plays out in so many ways, right? And it plays out in ways that maybe we are not conscious or aware of or haven't thought about, but it also plays out in how we're hiring people and the requirements and the ways... The hurdles that we put to get to hire staff. And so to really take a deeper look at our organizational culture, and not only supervision but also how are we bringing people in?

Cat Fribley: Absolutely. And orienting them, right, to all what we expect in terms of deep commitment to anti-oppression and anti-racism as a key, integral part of anti-sexual violence work.

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely, absolutely. And then again, the continuous dialogue not

only with the supervisor and the supervisee but also the entire group dynamic with staff, peers, and having challenges maybe with white and communities of color, on both communities of color and white advocates. And having those conversations as well, because that's gonna change the dynamic in the organization. It's gonna change the way people are feeling supported or not supported in the organization, which also...

Cat Fribley: And it asks us to bring our brave selves, right? Again and again, to bring our brave selves, and I think that's something we just keep coming back to, is the way this work is embedded in both bravery and beauty. And that being able to see the beautifulness, the resilience, the commitment, that survivors have and that advocates have, and the ways that we as supervisors can support that. But also that bravery piece, that embedding things into that culture around supervision, around support, around hiring, around orienting staff you know? All of that requires a lot of presence by us as supervisors, doesn't it?

Nicole Matthews: It sure does – it sure does. Which also leads into this piece around safety, right?

Cat Fribley: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Nicole Matthews: Because in order for all of that to happen or for any of that to happen, there has to be safety in the organization. And in order to create that safety, there has to be, obviously, like you said, the bravery, but there's also... There should be clear guidelines and expectations. And that's what...

Cat Fribley: Nobody likes to not know what's expected of them, right? Or have... Like boundaries are, I think, one of the things that as a survivor, I had to work really hard to learn and I think many of us who do this work can really lift up the value and importance of boundaries. And it seems like that's such a beautiful sort of parallel to what you were just saying, Nicole, about supervision.

Nicole Matthews: Yeah. And how many times have I been guilty of being angry with someone for not meeting an expectation that I didn't tell them I had of them.

Cat Fribley: [chuckle] Right.

Nicole Matthews: Right? And so, looking at when you're in a supervisory role, really being clear and transparent about what are your expectations, what are the guidelines, what are the norms that are set up in your culture, your organizational culture? And then what are the steps for addressing when an expectation is not that clear? So being really clear about that one, because when people feel like they're... They don't know those things and then something comes up when we have to provide feedback, and then our staff is like, "But I don't even know what you're talking about; I didn't even know that was an expectation of me." And then we don't... We have staff who are not feeling safe.

Cat Fribley: Absolutely, absolutely. And I think when folks don't have a sense of what's expected of them or about what the process of supervision is, even up to and including something like corrective action, which is never our first choice, and yet sometimes is necessary, that knowing in a really specific way, what is – how would this happen? What will this look like? Means that nobody is confused about whether or not their job, for example, is in danger. So this is something that I've heard and I just wanna sort of raise up as an issue, is that in organizations where that culture of trust isn't there, sometimes people have, for whatever reason, whether it is as a part of what they've learned of that organization or whether it is something they bring with them from other work environments, they have a deep fear that being in conflict or disagreeing, for example, with a supervisor or other kinds of things would put them in danger of being fired.

And so, sometimes we hear really specifically folks talk about a fear of being fired without a process, if you will. And so, being able to really reassure people that there is a process in place to go through and that those policies are there to help grow their skills, not to punish them, seems like such a key piece to me in terms of shifting the culture to trauma-informed.

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely. And also being... And you brought up a good point that sometimes they're coming in with those beliefs, and they may not be part of our guidelines and expectations, but they may be bringing it in from another organization, right? So that may be their own trauma from a past unhealthy situation. And so, also to make space for having those conversations and reassurance that this is what our guidelines are, and these are what our expectations, and this is what corrective action looks like here. And again, that is about growth and learning, that it's not... This is our process, and it's not going from nothing to "You're gonna be terminated," which also means you have to have clear and frequent communication. And...

Cat Fribley: That to me, like that sentence in and of itself, is an entire meal. [chuckle] You have to have clear and frequent communication. Like, just how much is held right there, you know?

Nicole Matthews: Right. Absolutely. And about everything, right? Like about changes in the program, and about things that are coming up with staff, about... Going back to cultural relevance, just having clear and frequent communication is vital. And it's what we...

Cat Fribley: Absolutely.

Nicole Matthews: We know how to do that as an advocates, right?

Cat Fribley: Right.

Nicole Matthews: And so to bring that to our supervisory role I think is really important.

Cat Fribley: So it makes me think of the ways that those underlying components of safety and supervision lead right into the concept of trust, and the ways that trust shows up in trauma-informed supervision. And some of them are, I think, really just so similar in terms of thinking about setting appropriate boundaries and expectations, but also that piece around listening and truth-telling that I think is exactly what we were just talking about. Clear communication all the time for me is partly about approaching any work that we do from a place of trying to make sure that everybody has the information that they need, and that makes them feel safe and grounded in the work that's happening, right? That nobody feels super disconnected from what's happening in the organization.

And that within that, then, we are building those open and ethical communication skills that we talked about, of listening whenever possible, approaching questions or approaching struggles from a place of curiosity, and really asking about, "Hey, it seems like you are – you have been really struggling," for example, "to get to some of your appointments on time, and we've been hearing from survivors that they're waiting for a while. Can you tell me about what's going on for you?" What a different approach that is in supervision, to approach from a place of curiosity, and yet certainly not pretend that there isn't an issue to be addressed, right? But rather to say, "Hey, tell me about what's happening for you. Tell me about why this might be occurring," and approaching it from, then, a place of joint solving, if you will, which is part of what I think really builds that trust in supervision, that this isn't, Nicole, as we were talking about sort of like a punishment or a punitive conversation, but rather it's a place where we're trying to approach with curiosity about how we do our work better all the time.

Nicole Matthews: Right. And I think about... I always think about in a movement that is anti-oppression-based and looking at the imbalance of power that we should not be adopting a power over supervision. That's not what trauma-informed supervision is.

Cat Fribley: Absolutely. No. And that in fact, that showing a deep commitment, I think, to developing shared meanings. I'm just jumping around here now, moving from trust to collaboration to choice, and all over the place.

But when we think about it, I mean, they are also intertwined. There's not really a way to say, "Look, and here's exactly how you develop trust-based supervision practices versus collaborative supervision practices," because they support each other, right? And so, it makes me think about the ways that certainly acknowledging, where appropriate, positional power and being able to think through what that means, but also having a real sense of collaboration in supervision and in our work together that is not about a power over, right? But that's about, how do we develop shared meanings around supervision and around what we think is good advocacy practice? And how are we involving the folks that we supervise in sort of developing our expectations?

Like earlier, when you were talking about how many times have you been like, “Oh, my gosh, I’m so angry because this person didn’t do this thing,” and then you realize, “Oh, I never actually even talked to them about that,” it made me think about the ways that not only do we as supervisors need to have clear expectations, but we need to develop them with the people that we work with. That that is such a key part of approaching supervision as an opportunity to learn together and explore together, and to develop expectations jointly so that everybody is on the same page, and everybody has a distinct sense of what their goals are, for this year, this month, this week, this advocacy appointment with a survivor. That there’s a way that we can approach supervision in an open and curious and emotionally available way that makes it feel collaborative, if that makes sense.

Nicole Matthews: Yeah, absolutely. Totally agree with you.

Cat Fribley: I feel like one of the things that good supervisors that I have had have done is to ask me what I need, right, as a supervisee, to not just to have this immediate expectation that the way that they supervise every other staff person is exactly the way that I would most benefit from supervision. And so I’m really always appreciative of the ways that, again, a collaborative approach allows us to build trust, build safety, build in cultural relevance, build in that commitment to open and ethical communication by asking people, “What would be most useful to you in supervision? How can I support you in this brave and beautiful work that we do?”

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely, ‘cause just like the survivors that we work with, our staff, our entire teams, we’re all different people and we need different things. And so, one person might need something very detailed and more structured, where someone might just need a little bit of guidance and support to be able to get what they need. And so, I think it’s incredibly... And we’ll never know, we’ll never know if we don’t have ask them. It’s incredibly important.

Cat Fribley: [chuckle] Right. It makes me think of then the ways that choice play out, right? Because when you’re asking somebody, “Tell me how I can best support you and what it is that you need,” we’re giving them options and we’re really supporting choice in supervision in many ways. We need to be doing that in how we support their advocacy practice as well. Certainly, I think that it’s there for us to have expectations that we’ve sort of come together and developed, but then whenever possible, letting our staff figure out how best to meet those expectations can be again a huge component of leadership development and a way for us to be clear that there are lots of choices that advocates have, and that the ones that we might make or... Yeah, the ones that we might make as supervisors aren’t necessarily the ones that makes sense for them, either in supervision or in their work with survivors, and that we need to really honor that, right?

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely.

Cat Fribley: And honor also the ways that supervisees can make their jobs work for them in a way that makes sense. So I think about some of those practical pieces, because oftentimes when we think about supervision, I think the default is to think about it from that practical place, like case management or project management, or are you showing up on time, are you... The very practical kinds of things, when in reality, I think, Nicole, what you and I are saying is that supervision requires that, no doubt about it, but that there is a much larger piece of it which is about connection and support and conversation and curiosity, right? And that the practical aspects of it, like schedules and office decor and those kinds of things, are pieces that we can have conversations about, but that's not really all of what supervision is, despite the fact that I think many of us end up prioritizing that just for the smooth day-to-day operational management of an organization, right?

Nicole Matthews: Yeah. Yes, and when I think about choice, I think, again, every single one of these, I think about that parallel process, right? Because our work as advocates is about providing options and different choices for survivors, and so also bringing that to a supervisory role is those choices and working with, again, always working with.

Cat Fribley: You bet, you bet. And one of the things we can also do – it is again very similar to the work that we do with survivors as advocates – is also being clear about constraints. So, one of the things, for example, that I know... That I think about is that it is so much more supportive of someone that I am working with to be able to tell them, like, "Here are all the places where you can just make decisions about how you wanna move forward, and here's the one place where we don't have that option," for whatever reason, whether it is because of organizational policy or whether it is because of cultural expectation or whether it is because of funding, that there is great value in being able to also be clear about where those constraints on choices live. Right?

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely.

Cat Fribley: And that through that, we can then tackle some of the big-picture stuff. We haven't talked a whole lot about trauma in terms of vicarious trauma and the ways that staff who we work with at advocacy organizations are holding both vicarious trauma from the work that they're doing as well as often the primary trauma of lived violence in their lives – whether that's sexual violence, domestic violence, state violence – that we are really clear about the ways that our commitment to choice and supervision supports staff in managing that trauma, whether that's about appropriate boundaries, or whether it's about things like helping them set reasonable work hours, helping them unpack some of the... And prioritize some of the tasks perhaps that are creating an overwhelmed-ness and not allowing them to move from that place of spaciousness. So really acknowledging, talking, thinking about how trauma plays out in the lives of staff at advocacy organizations I think is a huge conversation that certainly belongs here

and probably belongs in almost all of the other lessons that we'll be talking about.

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely. And it's also I think important for supervisors to sometimes... 'Cause I think advocates don't always come to us and say, "I'm really burned out," or "I'm really having some issues with vicarious trauma." They may just call in sick a lot, or there may be other signs. And so, I think as supervisors, it's important that we're connected with our staff and that we're checking in, and that when we see something, going back to the curiosity, like, "Hey, I've noticed that you haven't been feeling very well," or "I've noticed you haven't been as joyful. I'm curious, what kind of help do you need right now?"

Cat Fribley: Yeah, I think...

Nicole Matthews: And I think that leads... Go ahead.

Cat Fribley: No, you go.

Nicole Matthews: And I think that leads right into empowerment and how we also have a role of empowerment supervision in that we're communicating respect for their abilities and appreciation for their performance, but that we're also validating their resilience. And going back to celebrating the whole person, when we're talking about vicarious trauma and the impact on our whole person, that we're not just employees or advocates – that we're a whole person, we're mothers and we're sisters, and we bring all of that...

Cat Fribley: Absolutely. And we're trauma survivors. And we're... Talk about parallel process when you were saying we validate our staff's resilience and we celebrate them as whole people, it makes me think that is exactly what we are doing with survivors in our work. And many of us are survivors who are doing this work. And so to be able to continually acknowledge the ways that sometimes that trauma can affect us while also acknowledging the ways that that trauma builds our resilience, right, and makes us uniquely able oftentimes to do this work from that resilient perspective and from that recognition that trauma doesn't define survivors, trauma doesn't define us as advocates, and it shouldn't define us as organizations. And that there are ways that I think that empowerment that you're talking about and celebrating really sort of the whole person, that that is a key piece of it – that parallel process.

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely. And also providing realistic challenges that will support their growth, right?

Cat Fribley: Mm-hmm. Talk about leadership development. [chuckle]

Nicole Matthews: Right. Right. And along with that is providing the training or access to it, that training on advocacy skills and empathy practice, vicarious trauma, that we're

also growing in that leadership development and also growing in our knowledge, in our vulnerabilities. And then, again, back to transparency, which I think we've said over and over and over again, in transparency on many things, and also transparency on grants and budgets, which I think we don't always see transparency on. I have talked to many people who have told me they have no idea, they've never seen the budget, and so, when you don't know what your budget is, you're kind of working and you feel a little unstable, right? It doesn't give you solid ground for, "What can I do and what can't I do?"

Cat Fribley: Mm-hmm. Absolutely. I think you're so right that a part of empowerment but also part of safety and collaboration and really of that leadership development within our staff is also about making them partners in how we do this work and helping grow their skills. So not only making sure that they have the information that's really applicable for them in terms of grants and budgets, but also that they have opportunities to begin to develop budgets. What does that look like? How do we begin to think about how many miles you might need to travel to see survivors in our rural community, right? And how do we begin to put together a budget? What are the things that we prioritize as an agency to go into that budget, including things like the training you were talking about?

I feel like all of that plays so deeply into the ways that we support trauma-informed supervision through empowerment, through that really crucial aspect of empowerment. I often think back and I wanna make sure that folks are aware that we do have a document, a publication through the Demonstration Initiative, on building cultures of care, which is a much bigger sort of conversation or publication about trauma-informed care and cultures and services overall, which includes some about supervision, but where we wanted to, during this conversation, sort of pull out, what are the six core concepts of trauma-informed care, and how do they apply to supervision? And if you're interested in learning more about how they apply overarchingly to your organization and to the work that you do, you can go back and access that Building Cultures of Care again at nsvrc.org, and just search for SADI and you will find it. Because I think trauma-informed and anti-oppressive frameworks are what underlie all of what we believe right now to be best practice. Right?

Nicole Matthews: Mm-hmm.

Image: Hand with a bird sitting on it.

Text: Quick tips:

- Hold regular, scheduled meetings and demonstrate they are your priority during this time
- Be available for urgent/pressing needs
- Share information and updates in a timely manner
- Realize areas where they may need additional supervision/support
- Seek out your own supervision and personal growth

- Set aside additional time for evaluating job performance, planning, and goal setting
-

Cat Fribley: Nicole, the sort of quick tips that I see on our screen, I have to tell you, I feel like we've really, for the most part, covered almost all of this in the conversation that we've had today.

Nicole Matthews: Yeah, I think so.

Cat Fribley: I think this was meant to be more of the sort of practical piece of it, and to add to and weave throughout the ways that we've been talking about and thinking about showing up and being fully present for supervision, right?

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely.

Cat Fribley: Yeah. I know that we are interested in making sure that folks have a distinct sense of the ways that trauma-informed supervision supports services to sexual assault survivors. We are so clear in what we saw in terms of not only our own organizations, but organizations that we worked with through the Demonstration Initiative. When they were able to really distinctly show care and support and provide trauma-informed supervision for their staff, it was absolutely reflected in the ways that they provided services, don't you think?

Nicole Matthews: Absolutely, absolutely. And I think we've seen... I've seen in my work over the years the ways that it's played out on either end when people are not supported and what happened with our staff then. And when they're supported and they feel empowered to be able to really do their work, and they feel like they're seen and they're heard, which I think is incredible.

Cat Fribley: Absolutely.

Nicole Matthews: That's what we want for victims and survivors, and that should be what we want for our staff as well.

Cat Fribley: Absolutely. And the ways that they are then able to give their full selves really to their work, knowing that they can come back and have support and replenishment and an opportunity to process and a safe spot, really, in many ways to land, that is part of what, to me, allows that work, allows them to go out and keep bringing their full selves to their work with survivors and their work in communities, is knowing that they have that organizational support, that trauma-informed and anti-oppressive framework, and that really key piece of present, loving, honest, open, and ethical supervision that will be available to them, both in that really regularly scheduled way but also when they need it, to be able to continue supporting their work.

Nicole Matthews: Definitely.

Cat Fribley: Well, Nicole, I am so grateful. Thank you for joining me today for this conversation. I love our work together. I love seeing the ways that our knowledge has grown in collaboration as we've done this work, the ways that we've been able to develop new sorts of lessons, but often more than that, just new ways of talking about work that we've been doing for a long time, right?

Nicole Matthews: Right, exactly.

Image: A publication of the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative Co-created and issued by the Resource Sharing Project, National Sexual Violence Resource Center, National Organization of Asians and Pacific Islanders Ending Sexual Violence, and the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault.

Cat Fribley: And I wanna thank you deeply. I wanna thank certainly everyone at the Resource Sharing Project, everyone at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, at the National Organization of Asians and Pacific Islanders Ending Sexual Violence, and of course, Nicole, your organization, Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, for being a part of this work.

Image: This publication is supported by Grant Number 2009-TA-AX-K011, awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, US Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflective views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

©Resource Sharing Project & National Sexual Violence Resource Center 2018. All rights reserved. The content of this publication may be reprinted with the following acknowledgement: This material was reprinted, with permission, from the Resource Sharing Project and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center's Publication titled Comprehensive Services for Survivors of Sexual Violence.

Cat Fribley: And I definitely wanna let you know that this publication is supported by grant number 2009-TAAX-K011, which was awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice, and that the findings, opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and Nicole and I delivering them, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

We are thrilled that you took the time today to engage with us in this conversation about trauma-informed supervision, and we look forward to continuing, really, to learn together with you all through the Demonstration Initiative tools, resources, and publications that you'll find on the nsvrc.org website by searching SADI, through

our ongoing work, and through conversations that you are able to have in your organizations that build so much on the trauma-informed and anti-oppressive frameworks that we are trying to work and build together to best serve survivors.

Nicole Matthews: Yes, this has been great. Thank you.

Cat Fribley: Thank you, Nicole.

Nicole Matthews: All right, bye.

Cat Fribley: Bye!