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PasShe

Professional Association of Specific Learning Difference Specialists in Higher Education

Professional Peer Supervision® (PPS) Guidance for Professional QA Tutors

(last updated September 2024)

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This Handbook provides information about Professional Peer Supervision® (PPS).

Professional Peer Supervision® has been developed specifically for PASSHE members. It is based on the peer supervision undertaken by our colleagues in professions like counselling or educational psychology in order to help align the professionalism of specialist tutors with these professional colleagues.

PPS has been specifically adapted to meet the needs of specialist tutors in our unique educational and academic setting and is based on the Action Learning Model. Professor Reg Revans introduced the concept of Action Learning in the business world in the 1940s.

All PASSHE members can take part in a PPS session but it is **a requirement** for all Professional QA members.

For each PPS session in your Portfolio, you are required to enter:

- The date of the session
- Your role in the session (as Presenter, Facilitator or Group Member – see appendices for information about these roles). Please note: you must take the role of either presenter or facilitator for two out of three of your annual PPS sessions.
- One or two brief reflections on what you have learned from the session and how you will apply your chosen actions to your professional practice.

***Note:** Each year, you are required to take the role of 'Presenter' or 'Facilitator' in two out of your three PPS sessions.

PASSHE's Action Learning Approach

Presenter presents their issue

Agree the details of session (roles/timings etc.)

Supportive space to air professional concerns

Stay with the issue presented

Help the presenter clarify the situation by asking open questions; not offering advice

Experiential learning to encourage action and reflection

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Section 1: What is Professional Peer Supervision® (PPS)?

Professional Peer Supervision® (PPS) is the term PASSHE has developed and trademarked to capture the activity that facilitates opportunities for our members t**o reflect on their practice**. PPS provides time for practitioners to reflect on their work with their professional peers in a non-judgemental environment. Engaging in PPS can give you a fresh perspective on your working practices and ensure your ongoing professional development.

Engaging regularly in PPS helps protect the professional nature and status of specialist tutors.

Peer groups can also help you focus on what is important, as well as provide a safe place to discharge your emotions when times are tough.

PPS is an integral part of PASSHE's quality assurance procedure and forms part of the requirement for continuing professional development mandatory to being a Professional QA Member of PASSHE. PASSHE strives to be the gold standard in the profession.

Understanding PPS

Clinical supervision has long been regarded as a core component of professional practice in aligned fields - for example, counsellors, educational psychologists, mental health advisors and medical practitioners. PASSHE members are educators, and primarily work 1:1 with students. We are, therefore, a part of a unique profession and, as such, should have high professional standards, including for supervision. The supervision models that suit other professions are not an exact fit for Specialist SpLD professionals and PASSHE has adapted models used by other professions to formulate our own professional supervision model.

The principal aim of PPS is to be a resource for practitioners **to reflect on their practice** in a supportive manner. It is non-hierarchical and takes place between professional peers who are giving each other the opportunity to reflect and talk about their work with a view to looking at it from a fresh angle and making changes or trying new techniques. This is different from a team meeting where each member of the group may provide ideas or advice. PPS is time for you, as an individual, to reflect on an issue of your choice with the support of your peers.

PASSHE has based its PPS® model on the action learning approach to reflective practice. See Section 4 for further information on action learning.

The Benefits of PPS

- core part of professional development
- maintains professional status
- taps into a network of peer resources
- provides dedicated time for learning through reflection

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PASSHE members attending the Professional Development Day in September 2018 said this about the benefits of PPS:

- *It will allow me time for self-evaluation.*
- *As I work remotely, it is very important to have professional peer supervision to retain standards.*
- *I'd like to use PPS to explore ways of developing my practice.*
- *It is good for sharing experiences and good practice.*
- *It will enable SpLD tutors to support and discuss issues with one another in a structured way.*
- *It will help me with tricky students.*
- *It will allow tutors who work in a group or on their own to feedback and discuss issues and put their minds at rest…….*

Choosing the right approach

There are a variety of approaches to PPS. Specialist tutors often work in a range of settings and sometimes in isolation, so it is important to consider how to use PPS to suit individual needs.

- Group PPS (4-6 people are good number)
- Individual 1:1 PPS
- In-person PPS
- Remotely accessed PPS
- Phone PPS

Professional Peer Supervision® Vs Team Meeting or Discussion

Professional Peer Supervision® (PPS) is **different** from a team meeting where information and ideas are exchanged and discussed and advice can be sought and offered.

One of the main differences is that PPS® is not about giving advice! This can be challenging for specialist 1:1 tutors.

There are 3 roles in a traditional PPS session:

- Presenter
- Facilitator
- Group Member

PPS is about the **Presenter** having the opportunity in a safe, confidential, supportive environment among peers to reflect deeply on the issue/idea they raise.

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PPS	**Team meeting / Peer discussion support group**
	
Dig deeper into the Presenter's own experience	Share experiences (*That happened to me last year and I ….)*
Encourage Presenter to examine their own thoughts and make their own suggestions for action	Offer thoughts and suggestions for action (*Why don't you try* …?)
Group members listen	Group members contribute
Only the Presenter talks aloud about the issue while others ask helpful questions to encourage reflection when the Presenter has finished sharing the scenario selected for the PPS® session	Discussion about the issue with everyone contributing
Only open questions are asked – questions beginning with: Why? How? What? *Why do you think you/your student reacted like that?* How did it make you feel? What kind of support network do you think your student has? Encourage the Presenter to reflect on the issue themselves to come up with their own actions: "*What do you think you can do about that?"*	A range of questions are asked – closed questions are those which can be answered with a 'yes' or 'no': Do you think …? Have you tried …? *Do you think your student was lacking in confidence?* I would have been really upset by that – I bet you were too. Do you think your student has a good support network? Give advice about possible actions: *"Why don't you contact the disability office about that?"*

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Each member has their own individual reflections on the issue presented	Everyone has a shared reflection on the meeting and outcomes
The Facilitator's role is to manage the session and make a note of any possible actions the Presenter may come up with. At the end of the session, the Facilitator reflects these actions back to the Presenter and asks which, if any, they want to take forward	Everyone has made their suggestions and an agreed action plan is developed among the group

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Section 2: Practical Considerations for PPS

Groups or pairs need to agree to a set of ground-rules before they start regular PPS meetings. It is important to explore each Group Member's expectations so that a 'contract' is formed. It is rare that members have the opportunity to meet the same group of people for each PPS session. Often pairs can meet, but it is increasingly common for people to have different PPS partners over time. The points below will help you to establish the most effective kind of session for you and are important to consider at the start of each meeting.

Membership

- Decide on the number of group members.
- We have found that 6-8 group members work well – if possible.
- Will members be part of your Regional Group?

Confidentiality and Boundaries

- Agree on how this is to be maintained and recorded.

Responsibilities

- Agree on the domain of the Facilitator role; should this rotate or remain for a set period of time?
- Who takes notes (of agreed 'actions') of the meetings?

Venue

- Suitable private venue; will this be a constant, or will it change with each meeting? Or a remote PPS session. How will confidentiality be maintained?

Timing

- Decide on frequency of the PPS meetings and set agreed dates when you can. We recommend one PPS session each term. Do you need to set reminders in your calendar to arrange these?

Agenda

- Decide how to set the content of the sessions – a prior agreed agenda or set on the day.

Recording

- Agree how the meetings are going to be recorded. Don't forget that reflections are personal.

Evaluation

- How will the session be evaluated? Build in periodic review periods to ascertain the changes needed?
- When you have agreed to the above issues, you can record them in a Contract for the Group Members.

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An example of ground rules set up by an PASSHE regional group:

1. Confidentiality about students' and tutors' work should stay within the group. This keeps it safe to bring up any issues without fear of external discussions.
2. Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking.
3. Participate to the fullest of your ability.
4. Stay on topic.
5. Refrain from personal attacks, but do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions -- focus on ideas.
6. We are all responsible for the meeting.
7. The goal is not to agree or give advice -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.
8. No negative comments about people.
9. Emotions are OK – aggression is not.
10. Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses - they can be as disrespectful as words.
11. Facilitator manages the process – presenter manages their reflection - group manages open questioning exploration.

This list of Ground Rules can be kept and referred back to when it is sensed that participants are failing to follow one or more of the items.

Participants should be challenged on the ground rules early in the process so that bad habits are not formed.

It needs to be decided if participants should raise their hands when they wish to speak or if people should be allowed to speak freely.

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Section 3: Writing Up Your PPS

There is space in your Portfolio to document your PPS sessions.

The purpose of PPS is to develop reflective thinking about your practice.

Remember to record:

1. date; place (live or remote); who was taking part (this can be kept to initials if members want to retain anonymity);

2. which role **you** took during the session;

3. briefly explain the issue brought to the session. For example: "I [the presenter] really procrastinate[s] about doing PPS and end up doing it late or having problems finding someone to do it with at the last minute. I [they] don't know why."

4. your reflections and if you have any actions to take away. These could be bullet points. For example: * I have learned that I procrastinate because .... x, y, z; * the action/s I have decided to take in response to this is/are …

5. If you are reflecting on someone else's PPS - state briefly what their issue was and then reflect on what YOU have learned from the process of being a facilitator or group member. Everyone in the group will have their own, different, reflections.

Any questions – ask your Regional Group Coordinator or get in touch with PASSHE's administrator: admin@passhe.org.uk and ask to get in touch with the QA Officer.

Attend any training offered at regional group meetings or conferences.

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Section 4: Action Learning

Action learning offers you:

- A 'safe' environment to explore new ways of thinking and practising
- Space for individual, reflective learning which can lead to *action*
- A fresh perspective on your working practices and time to think about creative ideas which you can incorporate in your regular work
- Insight into how others achieve different solutions
- Support and challenge from peers.

A Summary of the Action Learning Process

- Small groups (sets) of professionals work together on real life issues/situations to examine and challenge current ways of working.

- One person acts as the **Presenter**. The Presenter describes, and reflects on, a situation, problem or challenge that they are currently working with. At the end of the session, they decide on which actions to take and report back to the group at the next session.

- The **Facilitator** holds the agreed timing of the session, keeps the focus on the Presenter's issue, and at the end of the session, summarises the range of possible actions that have emerged from the process.

- The **Group Members** help the Presenter review their options by asking open questions. This helps the Presenter reflect and come to a deeper or different understanding of the issue presented and helps them decide on any future actions intended to help her manage/solve the issues at hand.

Structuring an Action Learning Approach

Set the scene: The Facilitator asks the Presenter what they wish to bring to the group; what outcome they want; how they know when they have reached the outcome. This is the ***Contract***.

Present the issue: The Presenter talks for an agreed amount of time (5-10 minutes is suggested).

Listening: Group Members ask questions, reflect back to the Presenter in order to facilitate the Presenter's learning – these questions are *not* for the Group Members' benefit.

Importance of silence: It is important to allow the Presenter time to reflect on anything that has been said and to consider their own ideas. As dyslexia tutors, we are often uncomfortable with silences, but this is important in an Action Learning PPS session.

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Making observations: Group Members can make observations in order to help the Presenter focus. *I notice that …… You seem to be saying …..*

Results: Facilitator sums up what the Presenter has been reflecting on; feeds back on possible actions the Presenter has mentioned and prompts the Presenter to decide which actions to take forward and ask what they have learned. The Presenter takes what they have learnt back to the workplace, initiating changes in practice or trying out new ideas.

Review: The Presenter reports back to Group Members at the next session (where possible) on what happened as a result of their action/s.

PASSHE's Principles for Action Learning

1. Active Listening
2. Reflective Practice
3. Facilitative Questioning
4. Professionalism: confidentiality; mutual respect; valuing difference
5. Confidentiality
6. Mutual Respect
7. Valuing Difference
8. Taking responsibility for own learning
9. Belief in the individual's capacity to find their own solutions
10. Belief that the listener's role is not to advise or problem solve (counter to specialist-tutor position)
11. Non-judgemental
12. Non-supervisory (in traditional sense)
13. Not offering advice!

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Section 5: Further Reading

Action Learning Associates. http://www.actionlearningassociates.co.uk/ (accessed 3/7/2024)

Bernard, J. & Goodyear, R. (1992) *Fundamentals of Clinical Supervision.* Boston, Allyn & Bacon cited in Psychiatric Services Online by Robert Walker 1999

Cox, E., Bachkirova, T. & Clutterbuck, D. (2013) The Complete Handbook of Coaching London: Sage

Changing Minds. Socratic Questions, http://changingminds.org/techniques/questioning/socratic_questions.htm (accessed 3/7/2024)

Hawkins, P. & Shohet, R. (2011) *Supervision in the Helping Professions.* 4 ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

McGill, I. & Brockbank, A. (2004) *The Action Learning Handbook.* Oxford: Routledge

Palmer, S. (2008) *The PRACTICE model of coaching: towards a solution-focused approach.* Coaching Psychology International,**1**: 4-8

Revans, R. (2011) *ABC of Action Learning.* Surrey: Gower

Thomson, B. (2009) *Don't just do something, sit there*. Oxford: Chandos

Weinstein, K. (1998) *Action Learning; A Practical Guide.* Hampshire: Gow

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Appendix 1: The role of the Facilitator

- The Facilitator initiates the meeting by asking the Presenter what they want to share and reflect on and what they hope to gain from the meeting (This is the *Contract*).

- The Facilitator leads the questioning by example. They ensure that the questioning is ***focussed***, ***specific*** **and** ***relevant*** to the Presenter and *not* the Group Members.

- The Facilitator ensures that the group follows the agreed ground rules to create a safe place for the Presenter to share and reflect on their issue.

- The Facilitator is there to support and encourage. They need to be aware of creating the right balance between being supportive and challenging assumptions.

- The Facilitator is responsible for 'monitoring' the Group Members' reactions as well as the Presenter's. This can be more challenging when PPS is done on-line.

- The Facilitator needs to be observant about the Presenter's non-verbal behaviour

- The Facilitator needs to have empathy and understanding of the Presenter's point of view, to be accepting and affirmative. This does not necessarily mean agreeing with the Presenter.

- The Facilitator notes down the possible actions for the Presenter to consider at the end of the PPS session. It is up to the Presenter to decide which actions they wish to pursue.

A good Facilitator should:

- Have good listening skills
- Be reflective
- Be questioning
- Have an awareness of group dynamics
- Be aware of the impact of emotions on learning
- Have empathy

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Appendix 2: The role of the Presenter

The Presenter needs to think about what they want from the PPS session. The Presenter begins by describing what they want to explore or think about. In PASSHE's Action Learning Professional Peer Supervision, the issue needs to be work-related, but the issue does not necessarily need to be a 'problem'. Some examples of issues might be: *How to tackle tricky situations at work*; *how to learn more effectively by using action and reflection on daily work practice; exploring the role and boundaries of the SpLD tutor.*

- The Presenter should be prepared to have their ideas and assumptions challenged and extended; sometimes this can feel uncomfortable.

- The Presenter will receive support from the Group Members to come up with a different way of looking at their issue. Support from the Group Members can help the Presenter gain confidence to try out any actions that arise.

- It is often difficult to accept other ways of doing things. The Presenter needs to keep an open mind and reflect and respond thoughtfully to questions posed by Group Members.

- The Presenter needs to take responsibility for their own issues, learning and intended actions as a key to professional development.

- By the end of the session the Presenter will be able to begin to think of an action plan for what they intend to do next. This is entirely their choice.

- The Presenter should be prepared to feed back the results of any *action* to the group at the next PPS session where possible.

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Appendix 3: The role of the Group Members

- The primary role of a Group Member is to ask the Presenter questions in order for the Presenter to explore their issue more deeply; it takes time to develop this skill.

- Group Members should focus solely on listening to the Presenter and what they are saying, helping them to gain clarity, not on how they themselves would react in a similar situation.

- Group members should be listening for what is *not* said as well as what is said and for any ambiguities. Body language observations may be shared in a supportive way.

- Before posing questions, it is helpful to think how useful the question is to the Presenter.

- Questions should be short, for example they should avoid using the word /and/. If you need to have an /and/, in your question, break it up into 2 questions!

- Group Members do not offer advice, or pass judgement. They do not tell anecdotes and talk about their own situation. Their task is to stay focussed on the Presenter and the issue at hand.

- Group Members should aim to be comfortable with silences when they occur within the PPS session.

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Appendix 4: Developing the art of effective listening and questioning

Active Listening

The point of questioning is to *enable a Presenter to learn and develop, to reflect upon her actions, generate her own plans, and implement her own solutions* (McGill & Brockbank, 2004:180). What the listener should not do is jump in with solutions or an account of their own interpretation of what has been said or even with an account of their own similar experiences.

Careful Questioning

Open questions, i.e. those which cannot be answered by a simple yes or no, are the most useful type, as they encourage the respondent to think and reflect.

Developing the art of Effective Listening and Questioning
Janet Skinner & Tanya Zybutz, June 2018

Effective listening
McGill and Brockbank (2004) consider that ***really listening*** is a key skill of Action Learning. Effective listening skills are also central in any form of PASSHE Professional Peer Supervision®. They point out, however, that we often do not listen properly to other people. They cite Abraham Maslow (1969) and agree that his remarks are still very relevant today.

To be able to listen … really wholly, passively, self-effacingly listen – without presupposing, classifying, improving, controverting, evaluating, approving or disapproving, without duelling with what is being said, without rehearsing the rebuttal in advance, without free-associating to portions of what is being said so that succeeding portions are not heard at all – such listening is rare. (McGill & Brockbank, 2004:164)

As we can see from the quotes above, being an active, focused listener can be hard. It is important that we acknowledge this. We might need to reframe the way we think and our attitudes to a certain extent to be effective group members/facilitators in PPS sessions.

It takes a lot of effort to be a good listener and involves practise

Paying attention in a non-judgemental way is an important aspect of effective listening skills. McGill and Brockbank (2004) also cite Egan who emphasises the importance of body posture to enhance attention and listening. Egan uses the mnemonic SOLER to remind us of this:

S – face the Presenter **SQUARELY**, in a positive manner which shows you are giving your full attention.

O – Adopt an **OPEN** posture to show that you are ready to listen and engage with what the Presenter is saying.

L – If appropriate, **LEAN** towards the Presenter to show that you are engaging fully.

E – Maintain **EYE** contact.

R – Keep a **RELAXED** attitude i.e. not fidgeting or distracting the Presenter in any way and showing that you are comfortable with the Presenter.

The individual or the rest of the group should demonstrate understanding of what the Presenter has said as well as empathy. Sometimes, reflecting back to the Presenter a summary of what s/he has just said is useful.

If you're wanting to be a better listener, the difference between a half-hearted attempt and deliberate deep practice on listening is immense…… you might focus on the first 60 seconds after you ask a question; you might experiment with different ways of sitting, of breathing, of moving or holding still or of managing eye contact. And you'll begin to get 'in your bones' what complete focussed listening looks like.

Effective questioning
When thinking about helping the group understand the importance of questioning, you might find it helpful to share the ideas of **Michael Bungay Stanier (2016)**. He is writing mainly for coaching for managers, but don't be put off, as we have found that many of his ideas about questioning can easily apply to us in our PPS sessions.

Some of his YouTube videos are very useful. (Some are less relevant to PPS®as they are more business orientated).

Try on YouTube: *Michael Bungay-Stanier: How to get unstuck & How to ask a great question. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9tnGaieJ2o (accessed 3/7/24)*

Here are a few ideas which we have found helpful and might be useful in your discussions with your groups.

"A great question reveals new paths, creates new connections and opens up new worlds."

When you are thinking of a challenge you are experiencing, consider:

1. What is the easiest thing to do?
2. What would have the most impact?
3. What do you want to do?
4. The "And what else" question?

The other downloadable document, *4 Surprising Phrases,* also provides some useful information for you to share with your group. Bungay-Stanier considers here that the best coaching question in the world is: '**And what else?'** This is because it creates more options for thinking around the issues which can lead to better choices to

resolve the situation and more positive outcomes. This question also stops you from 'leaping in to start fixing things'.

We are creatures of judgement. When we're listening to someone, we almost immediately leap to agreement or disagreement….. We often start listening simply for the opportunity to interrupt, rather than to what the person is saying.

In his YouTube video, *How to ask a great question*, Bungay-Stanier emphasises the importance of the *way* we ask questions. He considers that it is better to ask an 'ok' question well rather than a 'great' question badly. He considers the following to help in focussing on asking questions well.

Concentrate on simplifying the question. Get straight to the question in as few words as possible. *Tip:* If your question has different levels (often the clue is the word *and* in a question; break it down!)

Ask questions that are important to the Presenter. Don't try to ask questions which you think are relevant from your point of view. Think about whether the question you are formulating has direct relevance to the Presenter.

Value silence. It is important to create space to allow the Presenter to think through his/her issues and put their ideas into words. Silence is a powerful tool here. Bungay-Stanier acknowledges that silence can sometimes be uncomfortable, but believes that we need to learn to accept this. We agree wholeheartedly with him. Silence gives the Presenter time to think and implies *Are you sure about that? Do you know any more?*

Active listening Bungay-Stanier emphasises the importance of really listening and focussing on what the other person is saying. He warns against the tendency to not listen properly because you are thinking about the next question you are going to ask or how to respond to what the presenter is saying. Take your time...

Don't stop at one answer. It is important to encourage the Presenter to think more deeply about his/her responses and focus on what matters most. Suggested structuring of questioning might be:

What is the real challenge here for you?

And what else? And what else?

Finishing with, ***Is*** *there anything else?*

There are also a series of podcasts on his website where he interviews a variety of different people involved with coaching and asks them for their 'best' question.

Examples of questions that you might find helpful:

- *How else could you see this?*
- *What else could you come up with?*
- *What might be different?*
- *What do you want to see change?*

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- *If you could wave a magic wand and change the situation, what would you like to happen?*

There are a couple of downloadable pdf documents available under the **Report section** on Bungay-Stanier's website. *Habit Gurus* and *4 Surprising Phrases.* Not all of this is relevant to the aDShe PPS® context, but some of it is extremely helpful. We found the following quotes very apt!

> *We love to give advice …. Staying curious and asking questions is often so difficult.*
>
> *When you're giving the answer – even if it's solving the wrong problem, even if it's wrong – you get to be in control. PPS® ® is not about 'being in control'!*
>
> *When you ask a question, you're in a less comfortable place. It's a place of ambiguity.*
>
> *Asking a question is an empowering act for the person you're asking but it's a disempowering act for you. Now they've got control of the conversation. (*Taken from *Habit Gurus* by Nir Eyal*: Ka-Ching!www.boxofcrayons.biz)*

Careful Questioning

Open questions
Contracting questions
Clarifying questions
Challenging questions
Catalytic questions

Open questions

Open questions, i.e. those which cannot be answered by a simple yes or no, are the most useful type as they encourage the respondent to think and reflect.

Useful words to begin open questions:

What?
How?
Who?
Where?
When?
Why?
(Need to treat 'why' questions with care as often they can feel intrusive).

Contracting questions

Starting with an end in mind and agreeing how you are going to get there
Agree what to talk about; limits of discussion; what the presenter wants from the discussion.

This is perhaps best to do at the start of setting up a PPS group

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How do you want to use your time?
What do you most need to achieve in this session?
What do you want most to focus on?

Clarifying
Help the Presenter to clarify his/her topic or issue and gain insight.

Can you say a bit more about that?
Are there any people involved here that you have not mentioned?
How do other people see the situation?
Let us see if I can summarise the issue.
What do you mean by ...?
How does ... relate to …?
What do you think is the main issue here?
Do you mean …? or ….?
Could you expand on that?

Challenging questions
Encourage deeper thinking thus challenging the Presenter to create new possibilities for future action in resolving their situation

How are you feeling right now?
Are there any feelings that you have not expressed?
What pattern might you be repeating in this situation?
Is there anything you would like to have done differently?
You seem to have three themes/ideas here … what do you think?
What do you think these ideas have in common?
If you asked someone you trust what they would do in your situation, what do you think they'd say?
Why are you saying that?
What exactly does this mean?
How does this relate to what we have been talking about?
What is the nature of ...?
What do we already know about this?
Can you give me an example?
Are you saying ... or ... ?
Why is that happening?
How do you know this?
Can you give an example of that?
What do you think causes ... ?
Why is ... happening?
What evidence is there to support what you are saying?
On what are you basing your argument?

Catalytic questions
Trigger new ideas

What outcomes do you (and others) want?

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What behaviours need to be different in you or your team members to achieve the outcome?
Who might be of help to you whom you have not yet consulted?
Can you think of (four) different ways of tackling the situation
What alternative ways of looking at this are there?
Why it is ... necessary?
Who benefits from this?
What is the difference between... and...?
Why is it better than ...?
What are the strengths and weaknesses of...?
How are ... and ... similar?
What if you compared ... and ... ?
How could you look another way at this?
What are the consequences of that assumption?
How could ... be used to ... ?
What are the implications of ... ?
How does ... affect ... ?
Why is ... important?
What is the best ... ? Why?

Questions about action
Supporting the Presenter in committing to a way ahead and creating the next step.

What are the pros and cons of each possible strategy?
What is your long-term objective?
What is the first step you need to take?
When precisely are you going to do that?
Is your plan realistic? What is the percentage chance of your succeeding?
How might you approach the situation?
How will you say this?

Reviewing questions
What have you decided to do next?
What do you need to know you have succeeded / reached your goal?
What have you learned from the session?
In what ways have you increased your own ability to handle similar situations?
What did you find helpful about this session?
What could be better next time in the Action Learning PPS process?

Questions at next sessions
How did what you planned work out?
What feedback did you receive?
What did you do well, and what could have been even better?
What can you learn from what happened?

References
Hawkins P, Shohet R: *Supervision in the Helping Professions*. Berkshire, McGraw Hill Education 3rd edition (2011)

Link: https://bit.ly/3AyoADh

McGill I, Brockbank A: *The Action Learning Handbook*. Oxon, Routledge (2004)

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www.boxofcrayons.biz

Link: https://bit.ly/3AyoADh

Appendix 5: Tips on asking open questions

Useful words to begin **Open Questions:**
What ....?
How ....?
Who ....?
Where ...?
When ....?
Why ....? (treat 'Why' questions with care as they can feel intrusive)

Here are some examples of different types of open questions:

1. Contracting Questions: starting with an end in mind and agreeing how you are going to get there. Limits what **Presenter** wants from the discussion

- How do you want to use your time?
- What do you most need to achieve in this session?
- What do you want most to focus on?
- How could I (or other Group Members) be most valuable to you?
- What challenges are you facing?

2. **Clarifying Questions**: help the **Presenter** to clarify his/her topic or issue and gain insight.

- Can you say more about that?
- Are there any people involved that you have not mentioned?
- How do you think other people see the situation?
- Let us see if I can summarise the issue.
- What do you mean b**y ...?**
- **What do you think is** the main issue here?
- Could you give me an example?
- Could you expand on that?

3. **Challenging Questions**: encourage deeper thinking. Challenging the **Presenter** to create new possibilities for future action in resolving the situation

- How are you feeling right now?
- Are there any feelings that you have not expressed?
- Is there anything you would like to have done differently?
- You seem to have three themes here … what do you think?
- If you asked someone you trust what they would do in your situation, what do you think they would say?
- Why are you saying that?
- What do you think causes ... ?
- How does this relate to what we have been talking about?
- Can you rephrase that, please?
- What evidence is there to support what you are saying?

4. Catalytic questions: trigger new ideas

- What outcomes do you (and others) want?
- What behaviours need to be different in you or your team members to achieve the outcome?
- Who might be of help to you?
- Can you think of different ways of tackling the situation

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• What are the strengths and weaknesses of...? • How could you look another way at this? • What are the implications of ... ? • Why is ... important? • What is the best ... ? Why?
5. Questions about action: supporting the Presenter to commit to a way ahead and creating the next step • What are the pros and cons of each possible strategy? • What is your long-term objective? • What is the first step you need to take? • When are you going to do that? • Is your plan realistic? What is the percentage chance of your succeeding? • How might you approach the situation?
6. Reviewing questions • What have you decided to do next? • What do you need to know you have succeeded/reached your goal? • What have you learned from the session? • What did you find helpful about this session? • What could be better next time in the Action Learning process?
7. Questions at next sessions • How did what you planned work out? • What feedback did you receive? • What did you do well, and what could have been even better? • What can you learn from what happened?

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PASSHE's Principles for Action Learning

1. Active Listening
2. Reflective Practice
3. Facilitative Questioning
4. Professionalism: confidentiality; mutual respect; valuing difference
5. Taking responsibility for own learning
6. Belief in the individual's capacity to find their own solutions
7. Belief that the listener's role is not to advise or problem solve (counter- dyslexia-tutor position)
8. Non-judgemental
9. Non-supervisory (in traditional sense)
10. Refraining from offering advice

Tips

- Listen for meaning behind what is said
- Acknowledge the feelings presented to help the Presenter uncover what is at the heart of the issue
- Ask questions in order to enable the Presenter to create action points
- Remember: there are no right or wrong solutions

Active Listening

The point of questioning is to *enable a Presenter to learn and develop, to reflect upon her actions, generate her own plans, and implement her own solutions* (McGill & Brockbank, 2004, p180). What the listener should not do is jump in with solutions or an account of their own interpretation of what has been said or even with an account of their own similar experiences.

Careful Questioning

Open questions, i.e. those which cannot be answered by a simple yes or no, are the most useful type, as they encourage the respondent to think and reflect.