❖ CONTENTS

Preface vii
Acknowledgments xi

CHAPTER 1
History, Definition, and Significance 1

CHAPTER 2
Administrative Supervision 27

CHAPTER 3
Administrative Supervision:
Problems in Implementation 54

CHAPTER 4
Educational Supervision:
Definition, Differentiation,
Content, and Process 90

CHAPTER 5
Principles and Problems in
Implementing Educational Supervision 127

CHAPTER 6
Supportive Supervision 159

CHAPTER 7
Problems and Stresses in Becoming
and Being a Supervisor 206

CHAPTER 8
Evaluation 246

CHAPTER 9
Group Supervision 275

CHAPTER 10
Problems and Innovations 300

Bibliography 351
Index 399

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❖ PREFACE

The first edition of this book was published in 1976. A second edition was published in 1985, a third edition was published in 1992, and a fourth edition was published in 2002. A fifth edition at this time seems necessary, given the continued concern with supervision and the sizable number of books and articles related to social work supervision published since 2002. Some older concerns have become archaic, and some new concerns have become increasingly visible.

This book provides an overview of the state of the art of social work supervision. It is addressed to supervisors and those preparing to do supervision, whatever their formal educational background. It is also useful to social work supervisees, students, and workers in enabling them to make more productive use of supervision.

The book is designed to help the reader understand the place of supervision in the social agency, the functions it performs, the process of supervision, and the problems with which it is currently concerned. Although no book can directly further the development of skills, it provides the knowledge base that is a necessary prerequisite to learning how to supervise. The book frees the course instructor from the burden of presenting the general background of supervision so that more time can be devoted to consideration of clinical material and controversial points of view.

Developments in health and social welfare policy and practice during the past decade have intensified concerns about the preparation and size of the workforce and, given the key role that supervisors play in workforce training and retention, the diminishing availability of social work supervision. Against the backdrop of a fragile and stagnant economy, with political gridlock and widespread

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