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KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Education, Health, and Human Services

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION DEFENSE

of

Emily Louise Edmison Ribnik

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Counselor Education & Supervision

**HOW COUNSELOR SUPERVISORS EXPERIENCE
CLIENT SUICIDE**

FRIDAY OCTOBER 27, 2023

2:30-4:30 PM

ROOM 313 WHITE HALL

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

**Emily Louise
Edmison Ribnik**

M. Ed. Community Counseling
Kent State University, 2007

B.S. Psychology
Kent State University, 2003

Emily is a licensed professional clinical counselor and supervisor (LPCC-S). Her career began while in graduate school as an employee of Kent State University's Residence Services for seven years. She worked in emergency psychiatric services for 5 years working directly with the severely mentally ill and individuals of all demographics struggling with suicidality, psychosis, and experiencing mental health crises. During this time, she also participated in Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training and assisted with providing training and coordination with the county's CIT program for law enforcement. She then began a decade long position as a mental health counselor at Kent State University at Stark. Currently, she is the Director of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence at Northeast Ohio Medical University. Additionally, she is the Training, CE, and Certification Coordinator for Light After Loss, a non-profit focused on supporting those bereaved by suicide loss and educating mental health clinicians about this work. Her inspiration for this study is her own experiences, both professionally and personally, of suicide loss.

**HOW COUNSELOR SUPERVISORS
EXPERIENCE CLIENT SUICIDE**

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the experiences of counselor supervisors who had a supervisee lose a client to suicide while under their supervision. As this was a phenomenological study to do an initial exploration of a new phenomenon of study, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, or IPA, was utilized. The analysis process allowed the researcher to identify emergent themes from the participants and find meaning in those themes. The research question was: *How do counselor supervisors experience the suicide death of a client?*

Participants were recruited from states that identify counselor supervisors with an "S" based on the counselor board rules and regulations for supervisor designation, license, and endorsement. Participants engaged in one, two-hour interview and one follow-up email to explore their experiences after a client of a supervisee had died by suicide. The resulting data was analyzed using guidelines for IPA.

The emergent themes of participant experiences are presented from the study. Implications and a model of supervision for after a client suicide are also presented.