The Developmental Stages of an Internship

Stage	Interns Associated feelings, behaviors and thoughts	Interns Suggested Response Strategies
Anticipation	Positive Expectations Anxiety about self, supervisor, co-workers, field site, clients, life context	Be realistic, clear, specific goals Clarify and assess expectations Make an informed commitment
Disillusionment	Unexpected emotions Questioning adequacy of skills Understanding Breadth of demands Reality of relationships with clients Understanding/potentially conflicting operating values of organization Disappointment with supervisor/coworkers or tasks	Acknowledge gap between expectations and reality Normalize feelings and behaviors Acknowledge and clarify specific issues Acknowledge and clarify feelings
Confrontation	Achieve independence Gain confidence Experience effectiveness Changes in opportunities There can be interpersonal issues There can be intrapersonal blocks	Reassess goals and expectations Reassess support systems Develop specific strategies
Competence	High accomplishment Investment in work Quality supervision Understanding of ethical issues Worthwhile tasks Home/self /career issues	Share concerns openly Develop coping strategies
Culmination	Termination with clients Case management issues Redefine relationship with supervisors, coworkers, faculty, peers Ending studies Post internship plans	Identify feelings Recognize unfinished business Meet with supervisor Gather with colleagues Write final reflection

The Successful Internship: Transformation and Empowerment in Experiential Learning; H.F. Sweiter, & M.A. King: Second Edition, Brooks/Cole, Belmont, CA.