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FILED WITH THE BOARD OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS
ON May 12, 1997

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS
DOCKET NO.

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUSPENSION	:	Administrative Action
OR REVOCATION OF THE LICENSE OF	:	
	:	CONSENT ORDER
MARIA R. VALDES. PH.D.	:	
	:	
TO PRACTICE PSYCHOLOGY IN THE	:	
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Psychological Examiners (hereinafter "Board") on receipt of two separate complaints from C.B. and M.B. concerning the rendering of psychological services by Dr. Valdes in the course of their involvement in "family interactions" as part of the treatment of their adult son, J.B., who is Dr. Valdes' patient. In response to the complaints, the Board conducted an investigative inquiry in which Dr. Valdes, personally and by and through her legal counsel, William E. Mariano, Esq., participated in the Board's inquiry by providing documents and testimony. The Board reviewed the entire record concerning this case, including testimony obtained during investigative inquiries attended by Dr. Valdes, J.B., as well as the testimony of C.B. and M.B. Of specific concern to the Board was Dr. Valdes' management of the therapeutic needs of J.B.'s parents as the two non-patient complainants involved in J.B.'s treatment over extended periods of time, and further the Board had concerns about the role of the therapist in the treatment process vis-a-vis the non-patient participants in the "family interactions". The Board has further concerns regarding the need for Dr. Valdes to have a professional distance from the non-patient complainants and for her to make clear

regarding the need for Dr. Valdes to have a professional distance from the non-patient complainants and for her to make clear to all participants in the "family interactions" the goals and purpose of the therapeutic interaction.

Respondent has voluntarily indicated a willingness to participate in an educational program for a period of two (2) years, on the terms and conditions set forth in this Order. It appears that the Board and Respondent wish to resolve this matter in order to avoid the initiation of formal disciplinary proceedings and the pursuit of expert opinions and without admission or findings of wrongdoing or any findings with respect to Respondent's assertions that Respondent was following the protocol developed by Dr. Christine Courtois, and the Board finding this Order adequately addresses its concerns, and for good cause shown,

IT IS THEREFORE, ON THIS 12TH DAY OF MAY, 1997

HEREBY ORDERED AND AGREED THAT:

1. For a period of two (2) years, commencing on the entry date of this Order, Respondent agrees to meet on a regular basis with a licensed psychologist who is a senior clinician in this State to discuss Respondent's management of her pending cases. The licensed psychologist who shall serve as the supervisor (hereinafter "Supervisor") shall be approved by the Board prior to the commencement of these conferences. The Supervisor shall be a psychologist whose practice focuses on working with individuals and with individuals in different types of groups, including family conferences, family group dynamics and group psychotherapy. The Supervisor shall have an understanding of issues related to human sexuality, sex abuse, incest, and knowledge and sensitivity to ethical and practice related issues. The Supervisor shall recommend additional training for Respondent, as appropriate, and Respondent shall be required to comply with the Supervisor's recommendations for additional education and training. The content of the additional training and education shall include boundary issues, family interactions and the appropriate structuring of the therapeutic sessions. Respondent shall maintain supervision of her patient treatment cases, at her expense, by one or more supervisors approved by the Board. All patient cases

shall continue to be supervised, with one hour of supervision for each ~~five~~^{ten} patient cases, weekly or as otherwise directed by the Board, for one year or until further Order of the Board.

2. Respondent shall be responsible to request and assure that the Supervisor submits to the Board quarterly reports regularly assessing the quality of professional care being provided by Dr. Valdes. No earlier than one year from the entry date of this Order, Dr. Valdes may petition the Board to reduce the frequency of the Supervisor reporting, which petition shall be accompanied by a comprehensive report by the Supervisor summarizing the nature and range of Dr. Valdes' professional practice, the number of patients under treatment, the quality of care provided, and Dr. Valdes' fitness to practice without supervision.

3. Respondent shall pay investigative costs of \$9037.29 , within thirty (30) days of the entry date of this Order. Installment payments may be arranged with the Board office, if necessary, and a Certificate of Debt shall be filed. Payment shall be made at the rate of \$~~283~~^{283⁰⁰} per month, on the first day of each month commencing June 1997. Interest shall accrue at the rate of 8% per year. For any month in which payment is not received at the Board office within five (5) days of the due date, a late charge of 10% of the monthly installment shall become due and owing. In the event of non-payment of any installment by the end of the due month, the entire balance shall become due and owing, and the Board may file for collection, costs and attorney fees. It is further agreed that pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §523, the sum due for costs constitutes a non-dischargeable debt in the event of bankruptcy by Dr. Valdes.

4. Respondent shall have the opportunity to appear before the Board with counsel on May 19, 1997 at 1:00 P.M. for the sole purpose of addressing the Board in mitigation of the sanctions set forth above. Respondent, however, agrees to be bound to the terms set forth in this Consent Order in the event the Board does not modify or reduce any provision of the within Order after hearing Respondent's arguments.

This Order is effective upon entry.

STATE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS

By:

Kenneth G. Roy, Ed.D.
Kenneth G. Roy, Ed.D., Chair

I have read and understand the terms and conditions of this Order. I hereby consent to the terms and entry of the Order.

Maria R. Valdes, Ph.D.
Maria R. Valdes, Ph.D.

I hereby consent to the form and entry of the within Consent Order by the Board.

William E. Mariano
William E. Mariano, Esq.
Attorney for Maria R. Valdes, Ph.D.