

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNSELORS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

STATE OF IDAHO

In the Matter of the License of:)
Case No. COU-2010-18
NIKOLE AHNER-BROWN,)
License No. LMFT-3085) STIPULATION AND
Respondent.) CONSENT ORDER

WHEREAS, information has been received by the Idaho State Board of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists (the "Board") that constitutes sufficient grounds for the initiation of an administrative action against Nikole Ahner-Brown ("Respondent"); and

WHEREAS, the parties mutually agree to settle the matter in an expeditious manner in lieu of administrative hearings before the Board; now, therefore,

IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED between the undersigned parties that this matter shall be settled and resolved upon the following terms:

A. Stipulated Facts and Law

A.1. The Board regulates the practice of marriage and family counseling in the State of Idaho in accordance with title 54, chapter 34, Idaho Code.

A.2. The Board has issued License No. LMFT-3085 to Respondent. Respondent's license is subject to the provisions of title 54, chapter 34, Idaho Code and the Board's rules at IDAPA 24.15.01, et seq. Respondent obtained her license on July 23, 2003 and the license remains current.

A.3. Respondent established a relationship with a former client which was not in the client's best interest. The relationship included co-ownership of a vehicle, payment of the former client's phone bill, a landlord tenant relationship and a personal relationship.



A.4. The allegations of Paragraphs A.3, if proven, would violate the laws and rules governing the practice of counseling, specifically Idaho Code §54-3407(5) and IDAPA 24.15.01.004.02 and 350, Sections 1.3 and 1.7 of the AAMFT Code of Ethics. Violations of these laws and rules constitute grounds for disciplinary action against Respondent's license to practice as a family and marriage therapist in the State of Idaho.

B. Waiver of Procedural Rights

I, Nikole Ahner-Brown, by affixing my signature hereto, acknowledge that:

B.1. I have read, understand and admit the allegations pending before the Board, as stated in Section A, Paragraphs A.1 through A.4. I further understand that these allegations constitute cause for disciplinary action upon my license to practice as a family and marriage therapist in the State of Idaho.

B.2. I understand that I have the right to a full and complete hearing; the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses; the right to present evidence or to call witnesses, or to testify myself; the right to reconsideration of the Board's orders; the right to judicial review of the Board's orders; and all rights accorded by the Administrative Procedure Act of the State of Idaho and the laws and rules governing the practice of counseling in the State of Idaho. I hereby freely and voluntarily waive these rights in order to enter into this Stipulation as a resolution of the pending allegations.

B.3. I understand that in signing this Stipulation I am enabling the Board to impose disciplinary action upon my license without further process.

C. Stipulated Discipline

C.1. Respondent's license is currently active. In order to maintain her license Respondent shall be placed on two years of supervised probation beginning as soon as Respondent finds new employment. The conditions of probation are as follows:

a. Both the supervisor and the site of the supervised practice must receive preapproval by the Board. Successful completion of this two year program of supervised practice will be a prerequisite to reinstatement of Respondent's license

without restriction.

b. The supervisor shall provide a report to the Board at the end of six months and at the end of two years.

c. Respondent shall participate in two years of therapy with a pre-approved LCPC, LMFT or PSY to address the situation.

d. Respondent shall maintain her continuing education credits during the period of probation and shall also complete an additional three (3) hours of an ethics course.

e. Respondent shall pay a \$1,000 fine and pay to the Board investigative costs and attorney fees in the amount of Three Thousand Six Hundred Forty Three Dollars (\$3,643.00) within two (2) years of entry of the Board's Order.

f. In the event Respondent should leave Idaho for three (3) continuous months, or to reside or practice outside of the state, Respondent must provide written notification to the Board of the dates of departure, address of intended residence or place of business, and indicate whether Respondent intends to return. Periods of time spent outside Idaho will not apply to the reduction of this period or excuse compliance with the terms of this Stipulation.

g. Respondent shall comply with all state, federal and local laws, rules and regulations governing the practice of counseling in the State of Idaho.

h. Respondent shall inform the Board in writing of any change of place of practice or place of business within fifteen (15) days of such change.

i. Respondent shall fully cooperate with the Board and its agents, and submit any documents or other information within a reasonable time after a request is made for such documents or information.

j. Respondent shall make all files, records, correspondence or other documents available immediately upon the demand of any member of the Board's staff or its agents.

k. At the conclusion of the two year probationary period, Respondent may request from the Board reinstatement of her license without restriction. Any request for reinstatement must be accompanied by written proof of compliance with the terms of this Stipulation. The Board retains discretion to grant reinstatement of Respondent's license or to deny reinstatement and continue the period of probation.

C.4. The violation of any of the terms of this Stipulation by Respondent may warrant further Board action. The Board therefore retains jurisdiction over this proceeding until all matters are finally resolved as set forth in this Stipulation.

C.5. All costs associated with compliance with the terms of this Stipulation are the sole responsibility of Respondent.

D. Presentation of Stipulation to Board

D.1. The Board's prosecutor shall present this Stipulation to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

D.2. The Board may accept, modify with Respondent's approval, or reject this Stipulation. If the Board rejects the Stipulation, an administrative Complaint may be filed with the Board. Respondent waives any right Respondent may have to challenge the Board's impartiality to hear the allegations in the administrative Complaint based on the fact that the Board has considered and rejected this Stipulation. Respondent does not waive any other rights regarding challenges to Board members.

D.3. If the Board rejects this Stipulation then, except for Respondent's waiver set forth in Paragraph D.2., this Stipulation shall be regarded as null and void, and admissions in this Stipulation and negotiations preceding the signing of this Stipulation will not be admissible at any subsequent disciplinary hearing.

D.4. Except for Paragraph D.2. which becomes effective when Respondent signs this Stipulation, this Stipulation shall not become effective until it has been approved by a majority of the Board and a Board member signs the attached Order.

E. Violation of Stipulation and Consent Order

E.1. If Respondent violates this Stipulation and Consent Order, the violation shall be considered grounds for additional discipline and the Board may impose additional discipline pursuant to the following procedure:

a. The Chief of the Bureau of Occupational Licenses shall schedule a hearing before the Board to assess whether Respondent has violated this Stipulation and Consent Order. The Chief shall also serve notice of the hearing and charges to Respondent and to Respondent's attorney, if any. Within twenty-one (21) days after the notice of the hearing and charges is served, Respondent may submit a response to the allegations. If Respondent does not submit a timely response to the Board, the alleged violations will be deemed admitted.

b. At the hearing, the Board and Respondent may submit evidence and present oral argument based upon the record in support of their positions. Unless otherwise ordered by the Board, the evidentiary record before the Board shall be limited to evidence relevant to whether Respondent has violated this Stipulation and Consent Order. At the hearing the facts and substantive matters related to the violations described in Section A shall not be at issue.

c. At the hearing, the Board may impose additional discipline for a violation of this Stipulation, which may include the suspension or revocation of Respondent's license, the imposition of fines, the recovery of costs and attorney fees incurred by the Board and/or other conditions or limitations upon Respondent's practice.

d. The stipulated procedure shall not preclude or limit the Board's authority to proceed against Respondent at any time in a contested case proceeding pursuant to the Idaho Administrative Procedure Act, title 67, chapter 52, Idaho Code.

E.2. This Stipulation and Consent Order is the resolution of a contested case and is a public record.

E.3. This Stipulation contains the entire agreement between the parties, and Respondent is not relying on any other agreement or representation of any kind, verbal or otherwise.

I have read the above Stipulation fully and have had the opportunity to discuss it with legal counsel. I understand that by its terms I am waiving certain rights accorded me under Idaho law. I understand that the Board may either approve this Stipulation as proposed, approve it subject to specified changes, or reject it. I understand that, if approved as proposed, the Board will issue an Order on this Stipulation according to the aforementioned terms, and I hereby agree to the above Stipulation for settlement. I understand that if the Board approves this Stipulation subject to changes, and the changes are acceptable to me, the Stipulation will take effect and an order modifying the terms of the Stipulation will be issued. If the changes are unacceptable to me or the Board rejects this Stipulation, it will be of no effect.

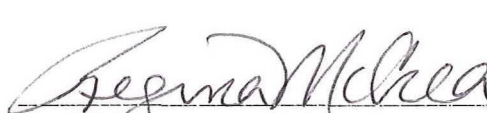
DATED this 23 day of Sept, 2011.



NIKOLE AHNER-BROWN
Respondent

DATED this 3 day of Oct, 2011.

^{Owens}
~~OLSEN~~ & CRANDALL

 ^{ISB}
^{#6845}
REGINA M. McCREA, Of the Firm
Attorney for Respondent

I recommend that the Board enter an Order based upon this Stipulation.


DATED this 6th day of October, 2011.

By 
JEAN R. URANGA
Attorney at Law

ORDER

Pursuant to Idaho Code § 54-3207, the foregoing is adopted as the decision of the Board of Social Work Examiners in this matter and shall be effective on the 21st day of October, 2011. It is so ORDERED.

IDAHO STATE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL
COUNSELORS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY
THERAPISTS

By 
JON W. GLICK, M. ED., Chair

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

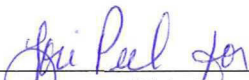
I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 21st day of October, 2011, I caused to be served a true and correct copy of the foregoing by the following method to:

Regina M. McCrea
Attorney at Law
Owens & Crandall
8596 N. Wayne Drive, Suite A
Hayden, Idaho 83835

- U.S. Mail
- Hand Delivery
- Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested
- Overnight Mail
- Facsimile: _____
- Statehouse Mail

Jean R. Uranga
Uranga & Uranga
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 1678
Boise, ID 83701

- U.S. Mail
- Hand Delivery
- Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested
- Overnight Mail
- Facsimile: _____
- Statehouse Mail



Tana Cory, Chief
Bureau of Occupational Licenses