

IN THE MATTER OF
JONATHAN LASSON, PSY.D.
PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATE
Registration No. A0073

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BEFORE THE MARYLAND
BOARD OF EXAMINERS
OF PSYCHOLOGISTS
Case No. 2016-014

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CONSENT ORDER

HISTORY

On or about November 13, 2015, the Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists (the “Board”) received a complaint concerning the practice of Dr. Jonathan Lasson, psychology associate, Registration No. A0073. The complaint was made by a patient, Patient A, who alleged, among other things, that Dr. Lasson took advantage of her vulnerabilities, engaged in multiple relationships with her, failed to maintain confidentiality, and did not obtain her informed consent before beginning treatment. Patient A also alleged that Dr. Lasson hugged her on a number of occasions, violating the norms of their Orthodox Jewish community regarding physical contact between unrelated men and women.

In lieu of instituting formal proceedings against Dr. Lasson, in accordance with the Maryland Psychologists Act, Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 18-101 *et seq.*, and Board regulations, COMAR 10.36.01, a Pre-charge Case Resolution Conference (“CRC”) was held with members of the Board, Board Counsel, Dr. Lasson, and Dr. Lasson’s counsel on November 4, 2016. Thereafter, the Board and Dr. Lasson agreed to resolve this matter as set forth in this Consent Order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, Dr. Lasson was authorized by the Board to practice as a psychology associate in Maryland. Dr. Lasson was first authorized to practice as a psychology associate on June 9, 2000. Dr. Lasson received his registration, Registration No. A0073, on December 16, 2015.¹ His registration is currently active and is set to expire on March 31, 2019.
2. In or around 2011, Dr. Lasson became acquainted with Patient A as a student in a course he taught at a college in Baltimore. After beginning treatment, Dr. Lasson learned that Patient A also had a family member with a personal relationship with one of Dr. Lasson's family members. Shortly after the end of the course, Dr. Lasson began treating Patient A. According to Patient A, Dr. Lasson did a number of things that made her uncomfortable during the course of treatment, including: asking personal questions about Patient A that made Patient A uncomfortable; sharing inappropriate personal information about himself; sitting very close to her on a couch during sessions; holding sessions late at night, sometimes lasting past midnight; and hugging her on more than one occasion.
3. At some point during the course of treatment, Patient A moved out of Maryland for a period of time. While Patient A lived outside of Maryland, she and Dr. Lasson continued to communicate via email and text message, about treatment-related matters and personal matters. During this time, Dr. Lasson also communicated with Patient A's mother without Patient A's consent, in order to get her phone number and inquire as to whether Patient A had returned home. Dr. Lasson also provided her medical record and personal journals to a rabbi in the community with whom she had filed a complaint regarding Dr. Lasson.
4. In late January or early February 2013, based on Patient A's complaint, Dr. Lasson was

¹ The Board began issuing registrations to psychology associates after October 1, 2014. Prior to October 1, 2014, psychology associates practiced on an exemption under the direct supervision of a licensed psychologist.

asked to meet with community leaders – including the rabbi, the executive director of a Jewish non-profit, and his supervising psychologist – to discuss his practice of psychology in the community. Based on this meeting, Dr. Lasson was placed on a community-imposed probation of sorts, under which certain restrictions were placed on Dr. Lasson’s practice. According to Dr. Lasson, he has complied with these community-imposed conditions.

5. On or about November 13, 2015, the Board received a complaint from Patient A regarding the treatment she received from Dr. Lasson.

6. On November 4, 2016, the Board held a CRC with Dr. Lasson. At the CRC, Dr. Lasson admitted to a number of deficiencies in his treatment of Patient A. Dr. Lasson admitted that he failed to date session notes and did not have sufficient billing records. Dr. Lasson acknowledged in hindsight that he should not have communicated with Patient A when she was out of the state via email because of security and confidentiality concerns, and that he should not have called Patient A’s mother without her explicit consent. Dr. Lasson also stated that he did have signed, informed consent from Patient A, but that he didn’t know where the document was. Dr. Lasson also admitted that their sessions took place late at night, and could not rule out sessions lasting until midnight.

7. At the CRC, Dr. Lasson admitted that he hugged Patient A on more than one occasion. Dr. Lasson, however, stated he only did so because Patient A asked him to “hug the pain away.” He also said he did sometimes sit close to Patient A, when he thought she was in danger of “hyperventilating.” Dr. Lasson also noted that discussions of personal issues were crucial components of the treatment, and Patient A refused his numerous offers to refer her to a female therapist. Dr. Lasson also said that he intentionally declined to treat Patient A until their student-teacher relationship was terminated, although he did not deny that he began treating Patient A

shortly after the course concluded. Dr. Lasson also denied any knowledge of a relationship between Patient A's family member and his own until much later, at which point he stopped seeing Patient A in his home office. Nevertheless, Dr. Lasson conceded that he perhaps never should have taken Patient A on as a patient, and only did so because of limited options in their small community.

8. Finally, Dr. Lasson stated at the CRC that the community-imposed conditions on his practice were still in effect, and that he continued to abide by them. Dr. Lasson stated that he currently only had one patient, in addition to teaching, due in large part to his community-imposed probation.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Board concludes that Dr. Lasson is subject to discipline pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. §§ 18-313(7), (12), (17), and (20), and COMAR 10.36.05.04B(2)(a)(ii), 10.36.05.05B(1)(a), 10.36.05.07B(1)-(4), and 10.36.05.08A(1) and C(2), .

ORDER

It is this 3rd day of February, 2017, by an affirmative vote of the Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists, hereby:

ORDERED that Dr. Lasson's registration be placed on immediate PROBATION for at least TWO (2) YEARS (with credit of ONE (1) YEAR for his community-imposed probation) during which he shall:

1. Sign up for and complete an ethics tutorial with a Board-approved psychologist ethics tutor, with terms and conditions of the tutorial (including the length of the tutorial and frequency of tutoring sessions) to be determined by the tutor, and ensure that his ethics tutor provides a

report to the Board at the conclusion of the tutorial;

2. Obtain ongoing clinical supervision from a Board-approved psychologist supervisor, with terms and conditions of the supervision to be determined by the supervisor, and ensure that his supervisor provides quarterly reports to the Board;
3. Complete a graduate-level, academic training course in sex therapy, provided he intends to and does provide sex therapy; and
4. Sign up for and complete a minimum THREE (3) HOUR continuing education course on documentation, which may not count towards CE requirements for renewal of his registration; and be it further,

ORDERED that after serving one (1) year of probation, Dr. Lasson may petition the Board to terminate probation, provided that he has been fully compliant with the terms of probation and does not have any pending complaints filed against him; and be it further,

ORDERED that Dr. Lasson shall agree and consent to the release by the Board, to his ethics tutor and psychologist supervisor, the complete investigative file in this case; and be it further,

ORDERED that Dr. Lasson shall at all times cooperate with the Board in the monitoring, supervision, and investigation of his compliance with the terms and conditions of this Order; and be it further,

ORDERED that Dr. Lasson's failure to fully cooperate with the Board shall be deemed a violation of the probationary terms and a violation of this Order; and be it further,

ORDERED that in the event the Board finds in good faith that Dr. Lasson has violated any of the conditions of probation herein, or in the event the Board finds in good faith that Dr. Lasson has committed a violation of Title 18 of the Health Occupations Article or regulations

adopted thereunder, the Board may impose further disciplinary action against his registration, including suspension or revocation, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing; and be it further,

ORDERED that Dr. Lasson shall bear the expenses associated with this Order; and be it further,

ORDERED that this is a formal order of the Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists and as such is a public document pursuant to Maryland Code Ann., Gen. Provisions § 4-333(b).

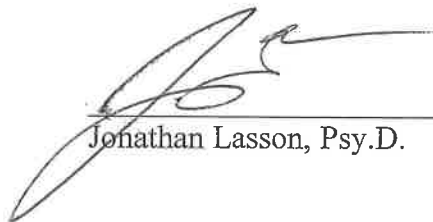
October 3, 2017
Date

Neal R. Morris, Ed.D., MS, CBSM, ABPP
Chair, MD Board of Examiners of Psychologists

CONSENT

1. By signing this Consent, I hereby affirm the findings of fact contained herein and agree to be bound by the foregoing Consent Order and its conditions.
2. By this Consent, I submit to the foregoing Consent Order as a resolution of this matter. By signing this Consent, I waive any rights I may have had to contest the findings and determinations contained in this Consent Order.
3. I acknowledge that this is a formal order of the Board and as such is a public document.
4. I acknowledge the legal authority and the jurisdiction of the Board to enter and enforce this Consent Order.
5. I sign this Consent Order freely and voluntarily, after having had the opportunity to consult with counsel. I fully understand the language, meaning, and effect of this Consent Order.

9/07/2017
Date


Jonathan Lasson, Psy.D.

STATE OF MARYLAND
COUNTY/CITY OF Baltimore :

I hereby certify that on this 7th day of Sept, 2017, before me, a Notary Public of the State of Maryland and County/City aforesaid, personally appeared JONATHAN LASSON, and made an oath in due form that the foregoing Consent was his voluntary act and deed.




Notary Public
My commission expires: 3/18/2020