

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS PSYCHOLOGY BOARD**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**LESLIE A. BLANCHARD, Ph.D.  
RESPONDENT**

**CASE C-13-03**

**CONSENT ORDER, RESOLUTION AGREEMENT  
&  
LETTER OF CAUTION**

Comes the Arkansas Psychology Board ("APB"), in agreement with Leslie A. Blanchard, Ph.D. ("Respondent"), and states as grounds for this Consent Order the following:

**HISTORY OF CASE**

1. Respondent is a Psychologist licensed by APB (# 09-16P) and therefore is subject to APB's licensing law and regulations (including the American Psychological Association's *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (2002 Edition, as amended in 2010) and APB's disciplinary jurisdiction.
2. This case was initiated by a mother who had her visitation privileges with her minor child suspended by a circuit court order. In 2012 that circuit court ordered the complainant, the father, and the minor into family therapy, specifically naming the Respondent as the psychological provider and directing the Respondent to render recommendations to the parties' attorneys within sixty (60) days, presumably about visitation rights for the mother (phone and in-person). Respondent commenced those family therapy services on January 18, 2012 and initially saw the court's order at the second session on February 15, 2012. The claimant mother was permitted to tape record the sessions until the final one on May 17, 2012 (although nevertheless still recorded on that date by complainant). There occurred a total of seven (7) therapy sessions. Complainant became increasingly frustrated at the delay in Respondent's recommendation that visitation rights be restored.
3. Respondent had previously provided psychological services to the minor (and therefore the custodial father) commencing on October 18, 2011, with a diagnostic evaluation of the minor and subsequent seven (7) individual therapy sessions with the minor prior to the court-ordered family therapy commencing January 18, 2012.
4. During May 2012, Respondent consulted with an APA (American Psychology Association) official identified by Respondent as Mr. (Dr.) \_\_\_\_\_, about the circumstances in which she was involved, including the increasing complainant's dissatisfaction with the length of time it was taking for positive and unqualified recommendations to be made. According to Respondent's written response of August 25, 2013, Dr. Younggren advised her to terminate her services to the parties, whereupon Respondent advised the parties by letter of May 17, 2012, that recommendations (originally ordered by the court in January 2012) should henceforth be made by a forensic psychologist. No further psychological services were provided, although referrals

were appropriately provided regarding other potential forensic psychologists.

5. In her complaint of May 13, 2013, complainant cited a number of potential ethical violations involved in this situation. Several of them were dismissed by the APB's Screening Committee as inapplicable, but the violations of APA Ethical Standards regarding multiple relationships and avoiding harm were deemed implicated by the facts presented.

6. To achieve APB's goals of ensuring competent practice within Arkansas by licensed individuals and for the protection of consumers of such services (including those undergoing forensic services), the parties have mutually agreed that this Consent Order should suffice to conclude this matter, even though Respondent is fully aware that she is entitled to an evidentiary hearing concerning these purported violations.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT and CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. There is probable cause to believe that the following violations have been committed by Respondent in case # C-13-03: APA Standards 3.05 (a) [Multiple Relationships] and 3.04 [Avoiding Harm]. The violation committed under Standard 3.04 was mitigated by Respondent's "relatively early" termination of the multiple relationships without completing it in its entirety.

2. Entry into this Order is acknowledged by APB not to be an admission by Dr. Blanchard that she had violated any APA ethical provisions in this matter. Instead, this Order memorializes her current awareness of the ethical problems in accepting court-ordered provision of services after already having delivered prior professional psychological services. She is now also aware that such legal/professional and ethical conflicts need to be raised with the legal entity as soon as possible and appointment for forensic services is declined unless a contempt citation and legal sanction(s) might result from continued refusal.

### **ORDER**

For the purported violations, the following are the mutually-acceptable sanctions to be applied:

1. Respondent is issued herein and hereby a Letter of Caution regarding ensuring that avoidance of multiple relationships violations are henceforth avoided and dealt with in a timely manner. That caution includes the admonishment that a psychological practitioner providing psychological services should not accept court appointments or attorney requests to thereafter provide expert opinions/recommendations in litigation or otherwise (except under extremely limited circumstances such as first confronting the requesting/appointing authority about the ethical conundrum that the practitioner is being subjected to under Standard 3.05 with an immediate declination to be so engaged as being unethical and only thereafter performing such expert opinionating when nevertheless court-ordered to provide such services. [That same Standard 3.05 would also be violated if the provider accepted a request for professional services (e.g., therapy) after having served as an expert witness.]

2. Respondent shall pay a fine of \$500.00 to APB within sixty (60) day of the effective date of this Order (as subsequently defined herein).

3. Respondent shall participate in a "continuing education" course that is specifically focused on multiple relationships ethical issues. That course may be APA-approved or not, in-person or on-line, but it must be approved by APB prior to its engagement to be satisfactory. Sufficient proof of participation (and satisfactory completion of same, if applicable) in this CE endeavor shall be subsequently supplied to APB. This CE requirement is in addition to the normal twenty (20) hours of CE required of all licensees annually. The multiple relationships CE shall be completed by the next annual licensure renewal deadline (i.e., June 30, 2014).

4. A copy of this Consent Order, Resolution Agreement, & Letter of Caution shall be placed in Respondent's general licensure file, as well as the maintained specific complaint file. Both files are subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

5. Failure to comply with the Consent Order's terms and conditions may result in further disciplinary proceedings, including, but not limited to, further disciplinary sanctions. Such failure and/or additional violations may consider the nature and results of this complaint in terms of subsequent violations and sanctions.

6. The effective date of this Order shall be the latter date by which both signatories have executed it.

7. It is acknowledged by the parties to this Consent Order that APB shall report it, as required, to any necessary national disciplinary data-base due to the sanction(s) imposed.

**RESPONDENT:**

**ARKANSAS PSYCHOLOGY BOARD:**

Leslie A. Blanchard  
Leslie A. Blanchard, Ph.D.

**BY:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Chairman*

21 MAR 2014

3/4/14

**DATED**

**DATED**