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STATE OF WISCONSIN
BEFORE THE SOCIAL WORKER SECTION
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY, PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING
AND SOCIAL WORK EXAMINING BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF THE DISCIPLINARY	:	
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST	:	
	:	LS0404213SOC
SHIRLEY A. LIMBERG, LCSW,	:	
RESPONDENT.	:	

FINAL DECISION AND ORDER

The parties to this action for the purposes of § 227.53, Stats. are:

Shirley A. Limberg, LCSW
1315 Arrowhead Drive
Woodruff, WI 54568

Social Worker Section
Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling
& Social Work Examining Board
PO Box 8935
Madison, WI 53708-8935

Department of Regulation and Licensing
Division of Enforcement
P.O. Box 8935
Madison, WI 53708-8935

The parties in this matter agree to the terms and conditions of the attached Stipulation as the final decision of this matter subject to the approval of the Social Worker Section. The Section has reviewed this Stipulation and considers it acceptable.

Accordingly, the Section adopts the attached Stipulation and makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Shirley A. Limberg, LCSW, Respondent, date of birth October 2, 1945, is licensed by the Social Worker Section as a clinical social worker in the state of Wisconsin pursuant to certificate number 2773, which was first granted July 2, 1994. (Prior to a statutory change effective 11/01/02, Respondent's credential was a certificate as an independent clinical social worker.)
2. Respondent's last address reported to the Department of Regulation and Licensing is 1315 Arrowhead Dr., Woodruff, WI 54568.
3. During the events of this matter, Respondent practiced as a clinical social worker at Elmergreen Associates Counseling Service located in Minocqua, Wisconsin. Respondent has subsequently left employment at that entity.
4. Respondent provided psychotherapy to Ms. A on numerous occasions from April 21, 1993 until May 22, 1998. Respondent diagnosed Ms. A as having Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
5. In a therapy session during the spring of 1998, Ms. A told Respondent she was considering returning to school to obtain an MSW. Ms. A asked Respondent if it would be possible for her to do a student field placement with

Respondent in the Minocqua and Park Falls offices of Elmergreen Associates, if Ms. A did go to graduate school. Respondent told Ms. A that it was possible.

6. In the fall of 1998, Ms. A was admitted as a graduate student in the school of social work at Augsburg College (College) in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

7. From November 1998 to February 1999, Ms. A called Respondent several times seeking to discuss the possibility of a field placement with Respondent. Respondent did not return Ms. A's calls and Ms. A made an appointment for a therapy session with Respondent with the intention of discussing the internship.

8. At the March 12, 1999 therapy session, Ms. A disclosed she was having difficulties with ongoing personal issues and they resumed the therapeutic relationship. At the end of the therapy session, Ms. A raised the issue of a field placement with Respondent and Respondent agreed to supervise such a placement.

9. On March 27, 1999, Ms. A attended her practicum orientation at the College and requested Respondent as her field instructor for Field Work III & IV – Family Practice.

10. Ms. A continued in therapy with Respondent and sessions were held on the following dates: April 16 and 23; June 11 and 18; July 2, 9 and 21; August 6 and 28. Respondent's August 28, 1999 discharge summary noted "will come back if need to."

11. Among the notes of those sessions were:

- a. 7/09/99: "Lots of talk about MSW program and practicum."
- b. 8/28/99: "School is overwhelming. I wanted to be the first to get my MSW from Mt. Scenario."

12. During the summer of 1999, the MSW Field Director at the College contacted Respondent about setting up a field placement at Elmergreen Associates to begin in September 1999. The Field Director spoke to Respondent about the possibility of a placement for Ms. A, the roles and responsibilities for the student as well as the expectations of the field instructors, including compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics.

13. Neither Respondent nor Ms. A told the Field Director that Ms. A had been in psychotherapy with Respondent or that they were still in a therapeutic relationship at the time of the Field Director's discussion with Respondent. Ms. A contends that she and Respondent decided not to tell the Field Director of their therapeutic relationship because of their concern that the College might object and not accept the placement.

14. On June 4, 1999, the school approved Ms. A's field placement under Respondent's supervision. On September 6, 1999, Ms. A began her field placement with Respondent.

15. On September 22, 1999, two weeks after the placement commenced, Ms. A met with the Director of Elmergreen Associates to discuss issues and concerns regarding her internship at that agency. During that meeting;

- a. Ms. A told the Director of her past therapeutic relationship with Respondent, including the sessions which occurred the previous month.
- b. The Director expressed concerns about the multiple relationship.
- c. Ms. A said that she wished to do her field placement at that agency and that any boundary issues with Respondent could be managed.
- d. The Director and Ms. A discussed possible remedies should such a conflict occur.
- e. The Director met with Respondent who said she was willing to withdraw from any supervisory role with Ms. A if there appeared to be difficulty.

f. Because it appeared to the Director that Ms. A was aware of the risks of changing roles with Respondent, he agreed to allow the field placement to occur at the facility.

16. During the field placement, Ms. A never advised the Director of any dissatisfaction with her training experience or any conflicts with Respondent. However, Ms. A contends that she believed that Respondent was unable to separate the supervisor/student and therapist/client roles. Ms. A contends that, if she was having difficulty with a treatment plan or had other questions regarding treatment of a client, Respondent, instead of teaching, would focus on issues that had been addressed during her therapy with Ms. A.

17. In April 2000, following completion of her internship on March 31, 2000, Ms. A disclosed to her field placement faculty liaison that she had been in therapy with Respondent intermittently for several years and their last session was in August 1999. The Field Director was informed of the disclosure and subsequently confirmed with Ms. A the existence of the dual relationship.

18. On May 5, 2000, the College MSW Director and Field Director met with Ms. A to discuss the educational and ethical concerns resulting from Respondent's supervision of Ms. A's field placement. The College determined the dual relationship was a serious breach of ethical conduct and therefore invalidated Ms. A's field internship. Ms. A was required to complete additional field placement hours.

PRIOR DISCIPLINE

19. On February 9, 2000, the Section reprimanded Respondent for a violation of law related to social work practice and required Respondent to take and complete an additional 6 hours of approved continuing education on the subject of social workers' legal and ethical obligations.

20. On May 11 and 12, 2000, Respondent complied with that disciplinary Order. Respondent attended the National Association of Social Workers Wisconsin Chapter's Annual State Conference: Ethical Social Work Practice in a Bottom line Age and earned 9.5 hours of approved continuing education. The training Respondent attended included a 3 hour program in "Boundaries in Social Work Practice" presented by Dr. Frederic Reamer.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Social Worker Section of the Wisconsin Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work Examining Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to § 457.26(2), Stats., and authority to enter into this stipulated resolution pursuant to § 227.44(5), Stats.

2. Respondent's conduct, as set out above, constitutes failure to avoid a dual relationship, which is unprofessional conduct as defined by Wis. Admin. Code § MPSW 20.02 (13) and subjects Respondent to discipline pursuant to § 457.26(2)(f), Stats.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. Respondent, Shirley A. Limberg, LCSW, is hereby REPRIMANDED for the above conduct.
2. Within 6 months of the date of this Order, Respondent shall take and complete 3 hours of continuing education on the subject of appropriate professional boundaries between social workers and clients, which course or courses shall first be approved by the Section, or its designee. These credits shall be in addition to the continuing education required for licensure renewal for the following biennium and Respondent shall not attempt to apply these credits to the biennial requirement.
3. Respondent shall not provide supervision to any current or former client who is in an educational field placement or who is acquiring hours of supervised clinical practice for any purpose.
4. Respondent shall provide the Section with proof of satisfactory completion of the continuing education within 30

days of completion.

5. All requests for: approval of continuing education, an extension of the time within which to complete the continuing education and evidence of completion of the education required by this Order shall be mailed, faxed or delivered to:

Department Monitor
Department of Regulation And Licensing
Division of Enforcement
1400 East Washington Ave.
P.O. Box 8935
Madison, WI 53708-8935
Fax (608) 266-2264
Telephone (608) 267-3817

The rights of a party aggrieved by this Decision to petition the Section for rehearing and to petition for judicial review are set forth on the attached "Notice of Appeal Information."

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin this 21st day of April, 2004.

George J. Kamps, L.C.S.W.
Chairperson
Social Worker Section