

IN THE MATTER OF

\*

BEFORE THE STATE

UZI BEN-AMI, Ph.D.,

\*

BOARD OF EXAMINERS

License No. 01074

\*

OF PSYCHOLOGISTS

Petitioner

\*

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CONSENT ORDER STAYING THE SUSPENSION

Brief History

On September 12, 1997, pursuant to a Consent Order the Maryland State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (the "Board") suspended the license of Uzi Ben-Ami, Ph.D., (the "Petitioner") to practice psychology for violating § 18-313 (7), (12), (14), (16), and (17) of the *Maryland Psychologists Act* (the "*Act*") and for violating the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (the "Code of Ethics"), specifically COMAR 10.36.01.05, Client Welfare. Among the several violations of the *Act* and the Code of Ethics, the Board found that the Petitioner failed to maintain appropriate boundaries between his practice of psychology and the social and business relationships he entered into with individuals who were his patients or who would become his patients. This included having a sexual relationship with an individual a few weeks after his therapy with that patient had ended and during a time when the individual was also employed by the Petitioner.

The Board's Consent Order of September 12, 1997, called for a two-year suspension of the Petitioner's license, beginning December 1, 1997, with all but one year of the suspension stayed. In order for the second year of the suspension to be stayed, the Board must find that the Petitioner is ready to resume the practice of psychology with supervision.

### Board's Findings and Conclusions

At its meetings of November 13 and December 11, 1998, the Board considered the stay of the second year of suspension of the Petitioner's license to practice psychology. The Board reviewed the results of the November 10, 1998, psychological evaluation of the Petitioner by David Fago, Ph.D., as amended by Dr. Fago on December 9, 1998. This evaluation was conducted pursuant to the Board's Consent Order of September 12, 1997. The Board considered the circumstances of the Petitioner's license suspension, as was described in the Board's Consent Order. In addition, the Board subsequently took into account a letter from the Petitioner's attorney, Mr. Richard Bloch, dated December 16, 1998.

The Board found that the Petitioner was not ready to return to the practice of psychology with supervision under the probationary conditions and restrictions contained in the Board's Consent Order of September 12, 1997.

The Board did find that the Petitioner was ready to return to the practice of psychology with supervision under other probationary conditions and restrictions in addition to those contained in the Board's Consent Order of September 12, 1997.

### Orders of the Board

**ORDERED** that the Board stays the second year of the suspension of the Petitioner's license to practice psychology provided that the Petitioner agrees to and complies with the following probationary restrictions and conditions on his license to practice psychology:

1. The Petitioner shall be under the supervision of a Board-approved licensed psychologist, and the Petitioner shall bear the cost of this supervision. The Board will provide the respondent with a list of licensed psychologists approved to provide supervision in this matter.

During the supervisory period, the Petitioner shall have no other business or social relationship with the supervisor than that specified by this Consent Order Staying the Supervision.

2. The Petitioner shall provide the supervisor with a copy of the Board's Consent Order of September 12, 1997, this Consent Order Staying the Supervision, and other relevant information as requested by the supervisor. The Petitioner shall permit the supervisor to discuss any aspect of the Orders or the Petitioner's supervision with the Board.

3. The Petitioner shall meet with the supervisor at least once per month. The supervisor shall determine if more frequent meetings are necessary. The supervisor shall review all assessment and treatment cases by each patient's (or client's) third session for the purpose of approving the continuation of services. When indicated, the Petitioner in consultation with his supervisor shall refer a patient for appropriate services elsewhere. The supervisor shall determine the frequency and duration of any other supervision indicated by the supervisor's ongoing review of the Petitioner's cases and in accordance with good professional judgment, with the exception that the Petitioner's services to female patients shall especially be monitored in any event.

4. The Petitioner shall not provide assessment or treatment services to any female patient (or client) whose presenting complaint is sexual dysfunction. Should this complaint or problem arise during an initial or subsequent treatment session, the Petitioner in consultation with his supervisor shall refer the patient for appropriate services elsewhere.

5. Each patient or client shall be explicitly informed that the psychological services being provided by the Petitioner are being supervised by another licensed psychologist. The supervisor's name shall be given to each patient.

receiving all of the required reports from the Petitioner's supervisor, the Board will determine if the Petitioner's license may be reinstated without further probationary conditions or restrictions.

8. The Petitioner shall take and pass a Board-approved graduate level ethics course with at least a grade of "B" or better.

**ORDERED** that the stay of the second year of the suspension and the authorization to practice psychology under probationary conditions and restrictions and with supervision begins after receipt of the signed and notarized letter of agreement from the Petitioner, after receipt of the signed and notarized statements from each secretary to the Petitioner and from the supervisor selected by the Petitioner, and upon approval and signing of this document by the Board.

**ORDERED** that this Consent Order Staying the Suspension is a Final Order and is therefore a public record under the *Maryland Public Information Act*, Md. Code Ann., STATE GOV'T ARTICLE, § 10-611, *et seq.*

2-16-99  
Date

  
Daniel R. Malone, Ph.D.  
Chair, Board of Examiners of Psychologists

**CONSENT OF UZI BEN-AMI, PH.D.**

I, Uzi Ben-Ami, Ph.D., by affixing my signature hereto, acknowledge that:

1. I am represented by attorney Richard Bloch, Esq, and I have had the opportunity to consult with counsel before signing this document;

2. I hereby consent and submit to the probationary conditions and restrictions set forth in the Consent Order Staying the Suspension;

3. By failure to abide by the probationary conditions and restrictions set forth in the Order and following proper procedures I may suffer disciplinary action, possibly including revocation of the Stay of Suspension, against my license to practice psychology in the State of Maryland.

2-16-99  
Date

*Uzi Ben-Ami*  
Uzi Ben-Ami, Ph.D.  
License No. 01074

State of Maryland  
City/County of Montgomery

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 16<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1999, before me, a notary public of the State of Maryland and the aforesaid City/County, personally appeared Uzi Ben-Ami, Ph.D., License No. 01074, and made oath in due form of law that signing the foregoing Consent was a voluntary act and deed, and the statements made herein are true and correct.

As witnesseth my hand and notarial seal.

*Roxana Gonzalo*  
Notary Public

ROXANA GONZALO  
NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF MARYLAND  
My Commission Expires October 2, 2001

My commission expires \_\_\_\_\_