

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA  
PSYCHOLOGY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:  
SHENAE WHITEHEAD, Ph.D.,

Respondent.

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**CONSENT ORDER**

This cause, coming on to be heard and being heard before the North Carolina Psychology Board (hereinafter "the Board"), at its meeting on February 9, 2023, pursuant to a Statement of Charges issued by the Board on November 10, 2022, which is now pending; and

IT APPEARING to the Board that the Respondent has stipulated to certain facts and to the entry of a Consent Order in conformity therewith;

IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED by the undersigned Respondent and the Board that:

1. Respondent was at all times relevant to this cause a licensed psychological associate and is subject to the Board's jurisdiction pursuant to the Psychology Practice Act, Chapter 90, Article 18G of the North Carolina General Statutes.
2. In January 2017, Respondent began providing individual psychotherapy to Client A, a minor, focusing on trauma. Respondent also provided family therapy to Client A and her siblings and parents, focusing on familial relationships. In addition, Respondent provided psychotherapy to three of Client A's siblings. In December 2019, Respondent considered adopting Client A. This was approximately one month before Respondent terminated Client A's psychological services in January 2020, after Client A turned 18 years old. After a trial placement in Respondent's home, Respondent decided not to adopt Client A.
3. In another matter in February 2019, Respondent provided a psychosexual assessment of Client B and C, both minors, following a report by the children's mother that Client B had disclosed that her father had touched her inappropriately. Based on Respondent's psychological evaluation report, Respondent stated purpose was to gather information in order to assess whether Client B and C had been exposed to sexual behaviors and to provide recommendations for their mental health treatment. Respondent administered psychological assessment tools focusing on the children, and Respondent also administered psychological assessment tools to both parents. There was no documentation of informed consent by the parents regarding their own psychological testing and no indication that this testing was warranted to address the referral question. Respondent made clinical statements in her psychological evaluation report regarding the emotional well-being of the children's mother and the effects of her actions on the children, despite not completing a thorough psychological evaluation of the parents. Respondent made statements to law enforcement regarding the mother and that this may be a case of parental alienation, despite not having sufficient information to draw this conclusion.

4. In another matter in August 2020, Respondent began providing individual psychotherapy to Client D, a minor, which was related to a custody dispute between her parents. In a letter written by Respondent, dated April 3, 2021, which was sent to DSS and provided to the court, Respondent made statements to suggest that Client D's mother could meet criteria for a diagnosis of Munchausen's syndrome by proxy, despite not having conducted a psychological evaluation of the mother. In the letter, Respondent also made specific recommendations regarding both Client D's and her brother's custody and visitation by their mother, despite not having completed a child custody evaluation, and despite not providing any psychological services to Client D's brother. Respondent also made clinical statements about Client D's mother, which were not based on any psychological evaluation or assessment by Respondent and Respondent did not provide any evidence for the basis of these clinical statements. This letter was used in court along with Respondent's testimony regarding the custody dispute between Client D's parents.

5. The conduct described in Paragraphs 2 through 4 above constitutes violations of N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 90-270.148(a)(10), (a)(11), (a)(14) & (a)(15) of the North Carolina Psychology Practice Act, and constitutes violations of Standards 3.04, 3.05, 3.06, 3.10(a), 9.01(a) & (b), 9.02(a), 9.03(a) & 9.06 of the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (*American Psychological Association, 2017*).

6. The Board and Respondent wish to avoid the time and the costs associated with full litigation of this matter and, in lieu of any proceedings, enter into this Consent Order.

7. Respondent expressly waives notice of hearing, a hearing, the making of findings of fact and conclusions of law, and all further proceedings before the Board to which the Respondent may be entitled by law. Respondent further agrees that presentation of this Consent Order to the Consent Committee of the Board for approval and presentation of Consent Order to the full Board shall not constitute improper ex parte communication between the Board and its counsel, or the Board and its staff, nor require the recusal of any members of the Board from consideration of this matter before the full Board, should a hearing be required in this case.

8. Respondent waives the right to seek judicial review or to otherwise challenge the validity of this Consent Order in any court. Respondent understands and agrees that this Consent Order shall be effective only after approval by the full Board and the signature of its Chairperson.

9. Respondent forever releases the State of North Carolina, the North Carolina Psychology Board, and all its members, officials, agents, representatives and employees, both past and present, in their individual or official capacities from any and all liability, suits, claims, and causes of action, arising prior to or as a result of the execution of this Consent Order.

This Consent Order contains the entire agreement between the undersigned, there being no agreement of any kind, verbal or otherwise, which varies, alters, or adds to this Consent Order.

Based upon the record and the foregoing stipulations,

NOW, THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

- I. The license of the undersigned Respondent is hereby CENSURED.
- II. The supervision set forth in this consent order shall take place after completion of the supervision set forth in the Consent Order, dated November 4, 2021.
- III. For a period of two years consisting of at least 3000 hours of practice by Respondent in psychology, whichever takes longer to occur, Respondent's Board designated supervisor shall submit quarterly reports to the Board on the Board's Supervision Report form, together with written narrative descriptions of Respondent's practice and response to supervision. The focus of the supervision shall be on: appropriate assessment procedures and testimony practices; making statements within one's own experiences, knowledge base, and scope of practice; defining and staying within one's role; dual relationships; when it is inappropriate to make diagnostic statements; and how Respondent's conduct resulted in this action taken by the Board. The Board shall not credit any time period in which Respondent does not receive at least average ratings, and written narratives consistent with those ratings, as counting toward the required two years or 3000 hours of practice in psychology, whichever takes longer to occur. Any costs and associated expenses of this supervision shall be borne by Respondent. The Board Chairperson may, in his/her discretion, grant written approval of Respondent's release from this reporting requirement prior to a Board meeting, or he/she may decide that the full Board should review the matter at its next scheduled Board meeting. Once Respondent has completed the supervision, Respondent shall submit an essay to the Board regarding what she has learned from supervision in order to avoid these issues from occurring in her practice in the future.
- IV. After the passage of one year consisting of 1500 hours in the practice of psychology, whichever takes longer to occur, Respondent may petition the Board to be released from the supervision requirements set forth in Paragraph III. In order for the Board to consider this request, Respondent shall have received at least average ratings on all quarterly reports and written narratives consistent with those ratings. In addition, Respondent's supervisor shall recommend her release from the supervision set forth in Paragraph III. Finally, prior to her release, Respondent shall submit an essay regarding what she has learned from supervision in order to avoid these issues from occurring in her practice in the future. The Board may, in its discretion, grant Respondent's early release, at which time she may apply for reduced supervision, so long as all other requirements in Rule .2008(h) are met. If the Board does not approve the request for reduced supervision, Respondent shall remain under the supervision set forth in Paragraph III., and once she has successfully completed it and her release has been approved by the Board, she may apply for reduced supervision.
- V. In addition, Respondent may reapply for licensure at the LP level once she has successfully complied with all of the terms of this Consent Order and the Consent Order, dated November 4, 2021. Once her application for licensed at the LP level is approved she may take the national exam (EPPP).
- VI. The failure of Respondent to abide by any provisions of this Consent Order, if proven true by a preponderance of the evidence following notice and an opportunity for hearing, may result in

the suspension, revocation, or other disciplinary action against Respondent's license, in the discretion of the Board.

VII. The Board will maintain this Consent Order as a public record pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-270.148(e).

VIII. Respondent is assessed three hundred dollars (\$300.00) in costs, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-270.148 and 21 N.C.A.C. 54. 1605, and shall remit this sum to the Board no later than March 10, 2023.

This the 9<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2023.

CONSENTED TO BY:

NORTH CAROLINA  
PSYCHOLOGY BOARD

BY:

Helen T. Brantley, Ph.D. 1/9/23  
Helen T. Brantley, Ph.D. date  
Board Chairperson

Sherae Whitehead, Ph.D. 12/16/22  
Sherae Whitehead, Ph.D. date  
Respondent

Crystal S. Carlisle 12/16/22  
Crystal S. Carlisle date  
Attorney for Respondent  
The Brocker Law Firm, P.A.