

COLLEGE OF LICENSED COUNSELLING THERAPISTS OF NEW BRUNSWICK

Notice of Discipline Committee Decision

In September 2020, the College of Licensed Counselling Therapists of New Brunswick (“College”) received a complaint from a previous client of a Member (“Complainant”) alleging that the Member acted inappropriately during counselling sessions (“Complaint”).

At a meeting on September 10, 2021, the Discipline Committee of the College received and considered a Resolution Agreement from the Member and heard submissions from legal counsel for the Member.

Following the meeting on September 10, 2021, the Discipline Committee issued a decision of the same date wherein it accepted the Resolution Agreement.

Based on the evidence received, including the Resolution Proposal, the Discipline Committee found that:

1. the Member gave the Complainant compliments on the Complainant’s appearance. The Member acknowledged that it is not appropriate to comment on a client’s appearance and will refrain from doing so going forward;
2. the Member admitted that a “trolley problem” type conversation occurred with the Complainant regarding past trauma experiences. The Member acknowledged that the Complainant was asked whether they would “flip the switch” and asked what the Complainant felt would constitute justice on a scale from “letting someone go” to “capital punishment”. Further, the Member acknowledged that the Member may have stated that the Complainant is a better person for not deciding on capital punishment. The Member acknowledged that this type of therapy should not have been engaged with the Complainant. The Member commits to refraining from offering personal opinion with respect to such matters in counselling sessions in the future;
3. the Member admitted indicating to the Complainant that he was planning on leaving his then employer;
4. the Member admitted engaging in discussions with the Complainant regarding intimacy. Further, the Member acknowledged having a discussion with the Complainant wherein the Member described sex as a predictor of relational satisfaction and stability;
5. the Member acknowledged asking the Complainant whether the Complainant ever felt attracted to other individuals; and
6. the Member admitted asking the Complainant whether the Complainant could think of a past positive intimate experience.

In determining the appropriate order, the Discipline Committee considered that the Member had taken the following steps since receipt of the Complaint:

1. consulted with the Member’s supervisor to ensure adherence to all ethical standards;

2. reflected deeply on chosen methods and case conceptualization to ensure that they were both research-based and ethical;
3. sought out continuing education opportunities to ensure acquaintance with relevant standards and ethical principles and successfully completed the “Ethics Primer” course delivered by the Canadian Counselling Psychotherapy Association;
4. sent a letter of professional apology to the Complainant;
5. implemented changes to the Member’s informed consent process to further demonstrate transparency and commitment to ethical standards;
6. engaged in personal therapy; and
7. demonstrated significant insight, reflection, and rehabilitation.

Based on the evidence and the findings, the Discipline Committee accepted the Resolution Agreement and ordered that:

1. the Member is reprimanded for the Member’s admitted conduct and the reprimand placed on the Member’s file with the College for 18 months;
2. the Member shall develop, implement and provide the Registrar an emergency protocol for clients within 30 days of the decision;
3. the Member shall complete the Canadian Psychological Association’s “Being an Ethical Psychologist” course and the Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute’s “Trauma – Counselling Strategies for Healing and Resilience”, at the Member’s cost and within 12 months;
4. the Member shall complete a reflective essay to demonstrate how the Member will incorporate into practice the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association’s Standards of Practice going forward;
5. the Member shall arrange for the Member’s remaining supervision reports to be forwarded to the Registrar; and
6. the Member shall pay costs associated with the Complaint of \$1000.
