

Letter from Nicola Riley to the Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing as required by her Stipulation Agreement

[Source of this essay: <http://thisculturalchristian.blogspot.com/2012/03/doctor-nicola-riley-essay-of-being.html>]

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Mark L. Shurtleff (USB 4666)
Utah Attorney General
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Attorneys for Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing
To Messrs. Perry and Shurtleff:

I would like to thank the Utah Board of Medicine for the opportunity to put into words what I have learned over the past year about myself, how inaccurate reporting on professional applications affected my license and my medical practice.

As everyone now knows, twenty years ago, while serving in the military, I was convicted of a felony. The actions that led to the felony conviction caused me a profound sense of shame that I still carry with me today. My behavior at the time was uncharacteristic of anything I had done before, or since. I embarrassed my family, my country and myself.

When I was discharged from Ft. Leavenworth Military barracks in 1992, I did everything possible to put the past behind me. I did not want my terrible mistake to define who I was. In retrospect, I understand that I was in denial of what I had done. I rarely discussed my criminal actions with my family and had chosen to tell only a few very close friends. I never reviewed my discharge papers. I could not face doing so. My denial was so all encompassing that it never even occurred to me to obtain another set of discharge papers after I lost the originals. I also never tried to have my record expunged. When I was asked to answer questions about my past, I did everything possible to continue to minimize what I had done. I did so not to defraud anyone, but because I did not want to confront my own past. It was and remains terribly painful. But it is my past, not my present.

Each less than perfect act that I have ever done has been laid bare before the public. My patients have questioned me extensively about my past. I answer them as openly and honestly as I can. I know now that I must not flinch away from the past. I have no secrets to withhold. For the first time, a patient under my care suffered a medical complication and I have had to live with that knowledge and these subsequent repercussions.

Despite the newspaper reports, internet stories and local news, I still have family, friends, patients and other doctors who support me. Although my practice is a shadow of what it once was, every week there are patients that make the decision to trust me again. I feel blessed and humbled by their trust in me. Their faith in me must be repaid by giving them the best and most ethical treatment that I can. I pledge that to them.

Finally what I have lost professionally is profound based on the unfortunate events of the last year and the Utah DOPL sanctions:

1 A summary suspension of my Maryland medical license;

- 2 The surrender of my Wyoming license since I did not have the financial means to defend myself in multiple legal venues;
- 3 Revocation of my American Board of Family Medicine certification, with subsequent job position termination due to revocation of board certification;
- 4 Loss of my hospital privileges at Alta View I and St. Mark's hospitals in Utah;
- 5 Termination of participation in several major insurance panels, with subsequent loss of longstanding patients;
- 6 A malpractice claim and termination of insurance coverage;
- 7 An agreement with DOPL to cease performing termination procedures; and,
- 8 A public reprimand by DOPL, a \$10,000 fine and this essay.

Although I am essentially unemployable in Salt Lake City and my income is approximately sixty percent of what it once was and I am struggling to keep my home and provide for my family; the most difficult obstacles I face are those that involve rebuilding the trust of my family, patients and colleagues.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Nicola Riley, MD
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