

1 **BEFORE THE BOARD OF LICENSED**  
2 **PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS AND THERAPISTS**  
3 **FOR THE STATE OF OREGON**

4 In the Matter of:

Agency Case No. 2009-025

5  
6 **VINCENT BRUNNING, LPC,**

7 Respondent.

**FINAL ORDER BY DEFAULT IMPOSING  
DISCIPLINE**

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9 **HISTORY OF THE CASE**

10 On March 24, 2010, the Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists  
11 (Board) issued a Notice of Intent to Impose Discipline and Right to Request Hearing (Notice)  
12 stating that the Board intended to impose discipline on Vincent Brunning (Respondent),  
13 Licensed Professional Counselor, for numerous violations of the Board's Code of Ethics, OAR  
14 833, Chapter 100.

15 The Notice was served on Respondent by regular and certified U.S. Mail addressed to  
16 Respondent at Respondent's last known address – 517 NW 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Pendleton, Oregon 97801  
17 on March 24, 2010. The Notice informed Respondent of the opportunity for a hearing if  
18 requested in writing and received within twenty-one (21) days of service of the Notice. The  
19 Notice also informed Respondent that if a written request for a hearing is not received within the  
20 21-day period, Respondent's right to a hearing shall be considered waived. To date, the Board  
21 has received no request for a hearing from Respondent, and the time for requesting such a  
22 hearing has passed. Respondent is therefore in default. The Notice further informed Respondent  
23 that in the event the Board issues a Final Order by Default, the Board designates it file on this

1 matter for purposes of proving a *prima facie* case.

2       **NOW, THEREFORE**, after consideration of the records and files of the Board relating  
3 to this matter, including various correspondences received from Respondent, the Board enters the  
4 following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Opinion and Order.

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**FINDINGS OF FACT**

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1.       The Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists (Board) is the  
8 state agency responsible for licensing, regulating and disciplining licensed professional  
9 counselors and licensed marriage and family therapists.

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2.       Vincent Brunning (Respondent) is licensed as a Licensed Professional Counselor  
11 (LPC).

12

3.       The Board has adopted a Code of Ethics (Code) that applies to all licensees. The  
13 Code “constitutes the standards against which the required professional conduct of  
14 licensed professional counselors and marriage and family therapists is measured.” OAR  
15 833-100-0011(1). The Code’s goal is “the welfare and protection of the individuals and  
16 groups with whom counselors and therapists work.” *Id.* The Code makes clear that  
17 violations of its standards are subject to the highest level of discipline – “Violation of the  
18 provisions of this code of ethics will be considered unprofessional or unethical conduct  
19 and is sufficient reason for disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, denial of  
20 license.” *Id.*

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4.       Respondent engaged in unprofessional and unethical conduct when he encouraged  
22 a physical confrontation with a former client (Client A) and bragged to Client A that  
23 Client A could not take him down.

1           5.       Respondent violated the ethical and professional responsibilities he owed to his  
2 clients when he made derogatory, demeaning and disparaging comments about his  
3 clients. For example, in conversations with his coworkers, Respondent repeatedly  
4 referred to his clients as “fat,” “overweight” or “disgusting.” Respondent also made  
5 statements suggesting that fat people stink because they are so fat they can’t bathe  
6 properly.

7           6.       Respondent also violated his ethical and professional responsibilities when he  
8 used language that could be interpreted as disdainful of his suicidal clients. For example,  
9 Respondent used words to the effect that his suicidal patients were worthless, stupid and  
10 that both he and his clients would be better off if the clients did commit suicide. He also  
11 implied that if these clients didn’t want to live, why should he care about them.

12          7.       Respondent’s disparaging and inappropriate comments were not limited to his  
13 clients, as many were also directed at his coworkers. For example, Respondent admits  
14 that he called a coworker “Humpty Dumpty” on several occasions, and mocked how this  
15 coworker walked. Additionally, when a female coworker was asked to introduce herself  
16 and inquired what information would be useful to the group, Respondent said he wanted  
17 to know the coworker’s age, height and weight. Respondent also made fun of another  
18 coworker’s difficulty with the English language.

19          8.       Respondent also violated his ethical and professional responsibilities by using  
20 coarse, profane and offensive language in front of clients and coworkers. Respondent  
21 repeatedly used words such as “fuck,” “shit,” “shitty,” “bullshit,” “crap,” and “crappy.”  
22 With the exception of “fuck,” Respondent admits using such language in the workplace.



1 violation of ORS 675.745(1)(e), OAR 833-100-0041(1) and OAR 833-100-  
2 0061(1).

3 3. Respondent failed to recognize that his primary professional responsibility is to  
4 his clients and caused harm to his clients and coworkers by treating them in a  
5 derogatory and demeaning manner in violation of ORS 675.745(1)(e), OAR 833-  
6 100-0021(1), and OAR 833-100-0031(1), (2), (3) & (6).

7 4. Respondent treated his clients in a discourteous and disrespectful manner when he  
8 failed to provide adequate counseling services to them in violation of ORS  
9 675.745(1)(e) and OAR 833-100-0031(3).

10 5. The Board is entitled to recover all costs associated with pursuing this disciplinary  
11 matter under ORS 675.745(7).

12  
13 **OPINION**

14 Respondent has engaged in serious misconduct. It is clear to the Board that Respondent's  
15 work needs to be subject to intense supervision to ensure that such misconduct does not occur  
16 again. It is also clear that Respondent needs to receive additional training in suicide assessment  
17 and intervention. Climbing into a car with a client who has voiced intent to commit suicide by  
18 speeding is certainly not best practices, and could have resulted in serious injury to both the  
19 client and Respondent.

20 Respondent also has problems interacting with his coworkers. No coworker should be  
21 subject to taunts and other degrading comments about that coworker's physical appearance,  
22 nationality or ability to speak English, especially from the mental health professional Respondent  
23 professes to be. The Board will be reviewing the report prepared by Respondent's supervisor to

1 ensure that Respondent understands the effects of his misconduct and has taken the appropriate  
2 steps to ensure no such conduct occurs in the future.

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**FINAL ORDER**

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**NOW THEREFORE**, the Board hereby **ORDERS** that:

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1. Respondent Vincent Brunning, LPC, shall receive a written reprimand;

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2. Respondent shall obtain a Board-approved supervisor within two (2) weeks after  
8 this Final Order is signed. The supervisor's review will consist of two sessions a  
9 month of at least one hour per session for a total of twenty-four (24) sessions.

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These 24 sessions must be completed within one (1) year of the date the

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supervisor is approved by the Board. The supervisor must prepare quarterly

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reports for the Board addressing Respondent's ability to comply with all Oregon

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statutes and rules;

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3. Respondent shall be required to complete six (6) clock hours of training in suicide  
15 assessment and intervention, no hours of which may be used to satisfy any  
16 continuing education requirements. This course must be completed within one  
17 year after this Final Order is signed;

18

4. Respondent shall be required to attend and complete a three (3) hour training  
19 course in Social and Cultural Competency and Diversity in a clinical setting, no  
20 hours of which may be used to satisfy any continuing education requirements.

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This course must be completed within one year after this Final Order is signed;

22

and

23

1           5.       Respondent is **ASSESSED** the Board's costs associated with this action,  
2                   including the Board's attorney fees, in the amount of **\$917.90**, pursuant to ORS  
3                   675.745(7).

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5       **DATED AND ISSUED** this <sup>13<sup>th</sup></sup> day of <sup>August</sup> ~~July~~, 2010.

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8                   Oregon Board of Licensed Professional  
                      Counselors and Therapists

9                   By   
10                   Ryan Melton, Chair

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12                                   **NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL**

13                   You are entitled to judicial review of this Final Order by Default. You may request  
14                   judicial review by filing a petition for review with the Oregon Court of Appeals in Salem,  
15                   Oregon within sixty (60) days from service of this Final Order. Judicial review is pursuant to the  
16                   provisions of ORS 183.482.

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2010, I served the foregoing **FINAL ORDER BY DEFAULT IMPOSING DISCIPLINE** by depositing a true copy of the same in a sealed envelope sent by regular mail, addressed as follows:

Vincent Brunning  
517 NW 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pendleton, OR 97801

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Johnson, Investigator  
Board of Licensed Professional Counselors  
and Therapists

cc: Kelly M. Gabliks, DOJ  
Department of Justice  
General Counsel/Business Activities Section  
1162 Court Street NE  
Salem OR 97310