

October 30, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I was asked by Yaakov Sterling to write a letter of recommendation, and I am very pleased to do so. My professional acquaintance with Yaakov began during the nine-month course I delivered to train a select group of Couple Counselors to become Supervisors in the Y.N.R Center. During the course, I perceived that Yaakov was an intent and active participant, asking insightful questions and demonstrating a deep and thorough understanding of the material. When he presented cases to the group and was supervised by one of his colleagues, Yaakov chose to raise sensitive and difficult issues and questions regarding his cases that were universally relevant and important to the other participants, as demonstrated by the fact that the cases he presented inevitably stimulated heated, intense discussions among the group members. His willingness to share personal, vulnerable experiences as a therapist, set the stage and opened up the hearts of others to become vulnerable and speak about their own vulnerabilities, which facilitated an atmosphere of trust, unity and bonding among group members. When Yaakov acted in the role of supervisor in front of the group, his self-confidence, preparation, listening ability, empathy and depth were clearly evident. He made explicit efforts to cater to the expressed goals of the therapist that he supervised by asking pre-supervision questions in an attempt to match the expectations of the therapist with the supervision process. It was a pleasure to have him as my student.

My second significant encounter with Yaakov occurred several months after completion of the course. Yaakov contacted me, requesting that I supervise him on a very complex case of Family Therapy, in which all five children left home to stay with relatives because the situation in their own home was unbearable. With great devotion and professionalism, Yaakov took on this case, which was later described by veteran social workers in the Welfare Department (who eventually took over the case following a committee meeting in which Yaakov participated in) as "the most difficult case we can remember." During our many supervision sessions, I was impressed by Yaakov's insights, focused questions, moral steadfastness, broad outlook and attention to details. He had 25 meetings and held 50 phone conversations with family members over the 4-month period that he handled the case – with each family member individually, in dyads, triads and full family meetings. He was sensitive to the needs of each individual, without losing his systems perspective, in each delicate and calculated move he made. I felt that we built up a great level of trust between us during the supervision, and this enabled Yaakov to challenge me or disagree

with me respectively, often by simply adding additional facts that enabled me to understand the picture more clearly and broadly so that we could come to an agreed-upon action plan. He constantly demonstrated a high level of maturity, both in thought and therapeutic intervention, and was an avid and appreciative listener to my ideas, thoughts and suggestions.

In general, I can attest to the fact that Yaakov is open, friendly, serious, original, devoted, motivated, deep thinking, mature and capable, both personally and professionally. I highly recommend him for any advanced training that would add to his existing therapeutic toolbox and enable him to reach greater and greater heights in his personal and professional life. I look forward to being called upon again to work together with Yaakov on future challenging cases.

Sincerely,



Micha Belzer,

*Psychotherapist*

*Certified Couple and Family Therapist*

*Certified Therapist Supervisor*