

1 CHARLES DODGSON (SBN 999999)  
2 123 Main Street  
3 Walnut Creek, CA 94507  
4 Ph: (510) 555-1212  
5 Fx: (415) 555-1212  
6 *charles@dodgsonlaw.com*

6 Respondent Pro Se

7 STATE BAR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
8 HEARING DEPARTMENT – SAN FRANCISCO  
9

11 In the matter of:  
12 CHARLES DODGSON,  
13 No. 999999,  
14 A Member of The State Bar

Case No. 13-O-1778506

**RESPONDENT'S DECLARATION IN  
SUPPORT OF MOTION TO  
SET ASIDE DEFAULT**

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17 I, Charles Dodgson, hereby declare as follows:

- 18 1. I failed to respond to the Notice of Disciplinary charges as I do not recall receiving them  
19 and I was under severe emotional stress during those times;
- 20 2. My sister passed away unexpectedly in India on March 14, 2016. Her death exacerbated  
21 family circumstances which had been causing me severe difficulties and stress for approximately  
22 four years;
- 23 3. I had been very close to my sister until she decided in 2013 to move to India without  
24 warning;
- 25 4. We grew up in a small town in central California, where everyone knows each other;
- 26 5. My sister's move coincided with her sudden abandonment of her family in our town;
- 27 6. My sister's move led to me suddenly becoming the primary caregiver to her two young  
children;
7. These events caused embarrassment and anxiety as people have talked, ridiculed or made  
fun of the situation and my sister;

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1 8. I was attempting to reconcile with my sister in January 2016, when I spoke to her by phone  
2 and planned a trip to go see her in April 2016;

3 9. I purchased my plane ticket to India the day before my sister passed away;

4 10. There is a tremendous amount of emotional angst relating to my sister and her passing;

5 11. In addition, my sister's children are now certainly to be without a parent the rest of their  
6 lives, and it is my role to fill those shoes for them;

7 12. During this difficult time, all other family members have relied completely on me to control  
8 the situation or to make things better;

9 13. This responsibility specifically extends to the legal aspects of the situation;

10 14. I feel guilty for not being able to resolve the heartbreak that this situation has caused my  
11 family especially my sister's children;

12 15. I have been traveling to India to handle issues relating to my sister's life and death;

13 16. In the midst of these personal struggles, a State Bar complaint was filed against me, and I  
14 did not see the initial inquiries from the State Bar;

15 17. By the time I realized I needed to respond to the Bar, a Notice of Disciplinary Charges had  
16 been filed against me. I do not recall receiving the Notice of Disciplinary Charges, but even if I  
17 did, I was likely unable to respond to it under the circumstances;

18 18. I began seeing a counselor two months ago for issues related to stress and anxiety;

19 19. My therapist has told me that attempting to practice law while handling my sister's  
20 problems and raising her children contributed significantly to my problems;

21 20. My therapist has been helping me tremendously, and I believe that I can now face both the  
22 Notice of Disciplinary Charges and ongoing law practice if I am given the chance to do so;

23 21. My mailing address on my State Bar membership record is current, but it does happen on  
24 occasion that mail is mis-delivered among the suites in our building;

25 22. It is also possible that the mail from the State Bar was given to one of our office mates. I  
26 have recently inquired of them, but no one recalls one way or the other whether they received mail  
27 containing the default order or Notice of Disciplinary Charges;

28 23. If the Notice of Disciplinary Charges and order of default were in fact delivered to me, I  
29 would have had difficulty responding to them due to the stress I was under, but I absolutely would  
30 have taken whatever action I was capable of taking to address them. I simply do not recall ever  
31 receiving them.

32 24. An officemate received and signed for the receipt of the Petition for Disbarment, and I  
33 received it from my officemate on March 19, 2017. I immediately took action to respond to it. I

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set out to determine the rules for objecting to the Petition for Disbarment and seeking the court’s review. I immediately began putting together this motion and declaration to try to set aside the default. Had I received the Notice of Disciplinary Charges or the default order, I would have taken immediate action upon those documents as well.

42. These facts and circumstances establish excusable neglect for my failure to respond to the Notice of Disciplinary Charges or seek to aside the default order within 90 days of its entry, and I seek to now set aside the default so that I may respond to the charges on their merits.

I declare under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: March 28, 2017

Charles Dodgson