

My Legal Obligations as a Biofeedback Professional

by John Gilbert, Ph.D.

Priests and ministers are barred from disclosing any information about anybody given to them under the sacrament of confession. Under the sanctity of the confessional, criminals may disclose the gory details of their crimes without fear of their confessor ever divulging this confidential information. If any person who confesses to a priest or minister believes they were confessing their sins to the Divine, the priest or minister must keep that confession completely confidential.

Biofeedback professionals are not barred from disclosing any information about any illegal activities their clients confess to them. To the contrary, they are required by law to report all illegal activity or suspected illegal activity to the proper authorities. This includes agencies for the protection of children, women and the elderly. It also includes the police, district, state or provincial attorneys, and local, state or provincial departments of health, education and welfare.

All professionals providing medical, health, wellness, psychotherapy, counseling or coaching services, including biofeedback professionals, must report any client they suspect of actively abusing others or whom they suspect is actively being abused. It is a criminal offense not to report such suspected activities to the police or agencies that protect abused people.

All professionals, including biofeedback professionals, are legally required to report any person they know or suspect to be a sexual predator or pedophile to the local, state or provincial police or government attorney. It is a crime for any medical doctor, chiropractor, psychotherapist, homeopath, naturopath, massage therapist, acupuncturist, oriental medical doctor, dentist, nurse, school teacher, nutritionist, hypnotist, biofeedback provider, coach, or other standard or alternative health care provider not to report any known or suspected sexual predator or pedophile to the authorities in all 50 states and 10 provinces.

Spiritual healers do not have the authority to perform the sacrament of confession, and they are not required by law to keep any such confessions confidential. To the contrary, spiritual healers have the same obligation as any other professional to report known and suspected abuse, sexual predators and pedophiles to the proper authorities or governmental agencies.

Biofeedback professionals who are also ministers need to decide if being a minister is more important to them than protecting the public from their clients who are abusive, sexual predators or pedophiles. Renouncing one's ordination and becoming a spiritual healer or spiritual coach is an option if done before your client confesses these activities to you. There is also nothing wrong in a minister talking their client into confessing to the authorities or seeking professional help. If you suspect a non-client of wrongdoing, you are legally bound to report your suspicions to the authorities whether you're a minister or not.