



April 2026
ISSN:1538-1080

Volume 26 Number 1
<https://doi.10.78717/ijhc.2026124>

COMMENTARY

Abuse of Clients in the Energy Practitioner Community

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Since the Epstein files came out, much analysis has been directed to the names mentioned in the documents. Some of those names have sparked conversations concerning abuse, accountability, and ways to prevent this situation from happening again. While these conversations are important, they largely focus on abuse and potential abuse by prominent individuals. Unfortunately, this ignores the very real problem of abuse by individual practitioners. The scope of the problem is far larger than is being acknowledged within the energy practitioner community.

Not only are there more people involved beyond just prominent individuals, the types of harm are far broader than are being acknowledged. So far there have not been any research studies which specifically

focused on energy practitioner abuse, but there have been research studies on therapists and boundary violations with their clients that can be used to extrapolate. Aravind, V. K., Krishnaram, V. D., & Thasneem, Z.(2012) describe different types of boundary violations and the slippery slope these violations can cause. Hook, J. & Devereux, D. (2018) focus on the harm caused to clients. There have long been anecdotal examples of these boundary violations, such as described by Ashley Riley in their blog post titled “How Energy Workers Can Harm Clients When They Aren’t Trauma Informed.” The clearest example, however, concerns the prevalence of advice to not ask for permission in words but instead “ask their higher self” before working on someone. Abuse isn’t just sexual

or physical. The harm caused by ignoring boundaries is equally as real. ***If you cannot ask your client or the person on which you wish to work, out loud and in words, or the person who holds guardianship of that persons' health care, you do not have permission to work on them.*** Instead, you have a fantasy and need to go to therapy to work on your power and control issues.

Once again, there have not been any research studies to determine the rates of abuse in or of energy practitioners, which makes the prevalence extremely difficult to state. However, there have been several studies on the prevalence of different types of abuse in a variety of different health care areas, which can be used to generally extrapolate. A 2023 study (Fávero, M., et al, 2023) found that 8.96% of participants in the study had experienced sexual violence by a health practitioner. Prior to that, a 2017 study analyzed 101 cases of sexual violation of patients by physicians to try and identify motive, means, and opportunity (DuBois, J. M., et al., 2017). The first study of this type was only published in 2016, and was designed to establish the frequency, response, and victim characteristics (AbuDagga A, Wolfe SM, Carome M, Oshel RE., 2016). As a response to this problem, a guide was written with

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suggestions for how patients who had been assaulted could respond, placing the burden of prevention and response on the patients (McIntosh, T., et al., 2022).

If practitioners are going to be held accountable for their actions and the harm they cause, the first necessary step is a method of reporting them. At the moment, the only option that exists is attempting to tell other people in the same physical area-- which runs into the common problem of individuals not believing reports, or secondly, reporting to the police. At this point in time, energy practitioner rape has no additional reporting options and no method of tracking separate from that of the general population. At least with physicians, individuals have the option of reporting to the state licensing board, which tracks those reports. Whether there are consequences for those actions remains a problem, but the reports can at least be searched and patterns identified, which is not currently an option with energy practitioners.

Energy practitioners are not the first industry to try to ignore assault and rape by practitioners. It would be wise if we as a community acknowledged and challenged that situation rather than creating a situation where there is tacit approval of inappropriate behavior.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0147800>

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Bio:

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