

Position Paper#4: Professional Counselor Identity and How Faith Informs that Identity.

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Reflecting on my professional counseling identity and how my faith manifests itself has been impacted by primary factor, experiencing the affects God's love has impacted me. Analyzing who I am professionally is the result of my evolving growth, culture, personal perspective from different experiences and observation, has increased self-learning, influenced by my understanding and awareness. Knowing and having full understanding that I am Imago Dei, delineates and governs my personal, spiritual, social, and professional identity. Having the cognizant that all humans are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28) and having been given the gift of understanding and gaining knowledge to provide professional counseling to others such awareness, enhances my ethical competencies directing me in both logical and rational thoughts a guiding force to be mindful of personal assumptions, avoiding generalization, actions towards each clients. By faith I am living within my purpose professionally serving God's children providing soul care, utilizing professional skills integrating with the Holy Spirit in empathy showing compassion, building confidence and self-esteem, empowering and collaborating with like-minded, helping to build a voice for those that have been marginalized.

Living in this awareness and acceptance of God's purpose for my life has been an evolving journey, and reflecting on divine leading, I am convinced that my professional life is a direct impact from the work God design for me. Despite the obstacles, and my desire to create new direction God been infinite and sovereign cause all things to work for good because he loves me. Having surrendered to the Holy Spirit is amazing and fulfilled knowing that God has looked beyond my faults and saw my needs. Yes, unconditional love is non-judgmental, accepting, and compassionate just as I have experienced the greatest love, it is necessary that my professional life also reflects the second greatest commandment. "Loving my neighbor as myself" Matthew 22: 9 (Clinton, 2001). Manifestation of God's love includes acceptance of others, respecting

their culture, traditions, and lifestyle, reframe from imposing personal perspective unto others, be willing to learn about others without comparing. Professional these principles are identified to be multicultural aware.

Another attribute of faith informing my professional identity is advocacy, God send His only son into the world, Jesus obey His Father's will and submitted himself as human, died, buried, and rose ascending to the Father, advocated and have send me a gift, the Holy Spirit to be my guide, protector, confidant, and advocator, meeting all my needs and working on my behalf. I have been given so much, should I not give to those who are in need? To whom much is given, much will be required, Luke 12:48, I have been blessed with many talents, wealth of knowledge, it is expected that I become a benefit to others. Assisting those that are emotionally weak, marginalized within my society, have very limited access to healthcare, experiencing food and home insecurities, and are ostracized because they lack the ability to self-represent. Having been place into this capacity as professional counselor, I am confident that each clients that sits in front of me have been chosen for a divine purpose, as the Psalmist plead to God for justice for the poor, fatherless and needy in Psalm 82: 3-4 (Clinton, 2001), I must educate, empower, and advocate wherever needed.

Putting it all together can be challenging, overwhelming, and demanding, requiring my ability to operate in moderation, and wholeness. According to (Pargament et al, 2016, as cited in Wong, 2022), "wholeness relates to how well we put our lives together." Selfcare is of vital importance, 3 John 1:2 illustrates the prayer of apostle John praying for the congregation in Asia Minor that they prosper in all things, meaning financially, physically, emotionally and be in good health even as their soul prospers. It is imperative that I must be balance in my life, everything I do must be done in wisdom, operating in equal proportion without neglecting of self, working

wisely, rather than physically doing it all; leading others by empowering others, using networking and referrals as a means of motivation for the purpose of building self-esteem, and self-confidence. Faith informing my professional identity is the process of finding and identifying purpose and balance, living a life of stability.

References

Clinton, T. (200). The soul care Bible. Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wong, S. (2022). Putting the pieces together with kenneth pargament, *Journal of American Psychology Association* ((9)1, 3-6.