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Professional identity results from a developmental process that facilitates a growing understanding of self in one’s chosen field, enabling one to articulate her or his role to others within and outside of the discipline (Brott & Myers, 1999; Smith & Robinson, 1995). In order to merge the personal and professional, every arena of one’s life will be reflected upon as the new professional emerges. This conceptual manuscript highlights how professional identity relates to personal beliefs, life experiences and gender role expectations. Implications for counselor educators and practitioners will be discussed.

Keywords: counseling, professional identity, gender, success

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Professional identity is the result of a developmental process that facilitates individuals to reach an understanding of their profession in conjunction with their own self-concept, enabling them to articulate their role, philosophy, and approach to others within and outside of their chosen field (Brott & Myers, 1999; Smith & Robinson, 1995). As counselors engage in this individually unique growth process, it is hoped that the counseling profession as a whole will be strengthened as its practitioners and educators reach a heightened sense of purpose and a synergistic collective identity, an identity which is still developing within the profession (Gale & Austin, 2003). The term collective identity refers to having shared goals, resources, and aspirations for the profession (Daniels, 2002). In order for individuals to build a personal relationship with their chosen occupation, it is important for a clear foundation to be

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established. To build this foundation, a professional philosophy must be constructed which clarifies and distinguishes one’s profession from other similar vocations; in this instance, other mental health fields. In counseling, this foundation is thought to be created by establishing clear professional expectations through licensure, streamlined educational programming, professional organizations, and ethical standards that build on an underlying professional philosophy (Remley & Herlihy, 2007). This article will review current literature and research on professional identity in the counseling field. This review will then be presented in relation to the external evaluation of success within counseling and counselor education and how this evaluation is influenced and internally understood through one’s gender role beliefs and associated societal expectations.

As a counselor engages with the profession, there is an intersection among three central components: expectations emanating from the established structure of counseling field itself with regard to competency and success, individual personal beliefs and values, and socio-cultural expectations (e.g. culturally defined gender roles) that influence individual self concept. Therefore, to assess a counselor’s professional identity development, it is important to connect philosophical constructs to issues of gender, as they may affect internal perceptions of competency and personal estimations of professional success. Due to these varying influences on professional identity development, it is important to address the current conceptualization of professional identity as it pertains to the counseling literature and highlight how gender role expectations (a piece of the socio-cultural component previously mentioned) intersect with how this identity is evaluated and personally reflected upon. Figure 1 serves to provide a graphical representation of professional identity and related constructs pertaining to this review.
Figure 1.
Conceptualization of professional identity and gender role in counseling
Conceptualizing Professional Identity in Counseling

Figure 1, which is meant to conceptualize aspects of professional identity, displays areas of the profession that influence the development of one’s professional identity including issues related to traditional or cultural gender role expectations. This model was developed as an application of the ecological systems theory paradigm (Healey, 2009; Wertsch & Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Additional layers could be added to encompass other socio-cultural aspects of individual experience, but are not included here as those issues go beyond the focus of this manuscript. Each layer has an impact on the process of professional development as well as the personal sense of connectedness with the professional role; the role through which a counseling professional engages in the field. At the core of professional identity is one’s agreement with the guiding philosophy: wellness, prevention, advocacy, consideration of normal developmental issues and empowerment (Laflue, 2007; Myers, 1992; Remley & Herlihy, 2007). These fundamental beliefs and values, as well as a professional counselor’s resulting approach to their role within the profession, can be viewed through the individualized lens created by the additional layers related to professional and gender role expectations.

In interpreting the diagram, it should be noted, that the line moving from the values of advocacy and prevention to encompass engagement activities represents the means by which these values are put into action. In other words, a counselor’s agreement with components related to advocacy and prevention can be evaluated through their engagement behaviors (Borders & Benshoff, 1992; Myers, 1992; Puglia, 2008). Engagement behaviors are actions that one takes to become involved in the profession, such as publishing, presenting, and community service. This line of reasoning moves further to encompass the roles of counselor educator and graduate student, as activities related to involvement in the profession with regard to scholarly endeavors are at times more relevant to those positions (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Myers & Sweeney, 2004); however, the line on the figure is dotted to represent a permeability of engagement expectations regarding other professional roles. Evaluating agreement with constructs through engagement is not necessarily a linear process. It should also be thought of as a feeder effect; as one develops a strong agreement with the counseling philosophy, such as the advocacy construct, successful engagement could then be evaluated by assessing a professional’s level of engagement in each area. Thus, evaluation would not only include philosophical agreement, but as a professional develops a strong identity, evaluation of success would include action (Laflue, 2007; Puglia, 2008).

The approach level within the diagram (Figure 1) is provided as a means by which a counselor’s agreement with the proposed counseling philosophy can be readily assessed: through engagement behaviors, the strength of the therapeutic alliance, theoretical implementation, adherence to ethical standards, and client outcomes (M. A. Hanna & Smith, 1997; Myers & Sweeney, 2008; van Hesteren & Ivey, 1990). Given this information as a ground work, professional identity and the counseling philosophy can be described within a systemic context, specifically focusing on societal gender role expectations. From this point of intersection, the gender role expectations and subsequent effects on professional identity development can then be considered with regard to the current success paradigm in the counseling field at the level of professional engagement.
The Counseling Philosophy

Before issues of professional identity development can be related to societal constructs of gender roles, it is important to first understand how the counseling philosophy is conceptualized. Remley and Herlihy (2007) described the counseling philosophy as a wellness-based approach to clinical practice with the conceptualization of clients emerging from a developmental perspective. The wellness paradigm pertains to the conscious integration of the mind, body, and spirit to promote holistic wellbeing (Myers & Sweeney, 2008). In addition to the beliefs associated with wellness, the counseling philosophy also includes a focus on client empowerment as a means by which individuals can achieve wellness. This process of empowerment is implemented through an emphasis on personal strengths and inclusion of prevention practices to curb the development or continuation of serious mental illness or pervasive life issues. Therefore, empowerment and encouragement are integral goals associated with the counseling relationship. This philosophy marked a shift from its roots in psychology, which traditionally focused more heavily on the medical model (diagnosis and symptom management) as a guide for conceptualization and treatment(Myers, 1992). In addition, counseling psychology has shown a distinctive shift away from development and prevention with a turn towards a focus on clinical remediation (Goodyear, et al., 2008) and therefore the wellness approach tends to be most prominent within professional counseling and counselor education, as distinctive from the psychologically-oriented fields. While professional counselors recognize development of pathology, it is seen as a unique and extreme end result that is the consequence of prolonged dysfunction rather than a common occurrence, the symptoms of which should typically be treated with pharmacological intervention in addition to counseling initiatives. Despite the emergence of professional counseling as a unique and accepted mental health field, an emphasis on psychological perspectives concerning behavioral issues remains and thus the differentiation of professional counseling from psychology continues to be dubious for many professionals. This medical model focus within the mental health system is evidenced by a focus on diagnosis with the aid of the DSM and the increased long-term use of psychotropic drugs (Eriksen & Kress, 2006; Goodyear, 2000). Due to this focus, the beliefs and therapeutic, expert-oriented practices of psychologists and psychiatrists are perceived to be of greater value culturally (as evidenced by continuing struggles for recognition within government programs such as Medicare and job opportunities at veteran’s hospitals), which has created a philosophical and practical conflict within the counseling profession (Lafleur, 2007).

In addition to beliefs surrounding wellness and empowerment, the counseling philosophy is also grounded in advocacy for clients, the communities served by professional counselors and the counseling profession itself (Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002). Advocacy that concerns client welfare refers to the process by which a counselor assists in the procurement of needed resources or services. In terms of the profession, advocacy can be conceptualized as actions that lead to professional engagement (Borders & Benshoff, 1992). Engagement in the profession is therefore a necessary and expected component of the counseling philosophy. Engagement in advocacy efforts can involve activities that include educating the community about the counseling profession, involvement in lobbying efforts that support the profession, service to the profession through organizational involvement, and other activities that relate to a direct contribution to the counseling field.
The philosophical separation of counseling and psychology is clear in terms of the differing clinical focus (humanistic versus pathological), however, the expectations for professionals are similar. For instance, practitioners and educators in both psychology and counseling are expected to engage in the knowledge and growth of the profession through conference attendance, presentations, publications, licensure, and membership (Daniels, 2002; Feit & Lloyd, 1990; Goodyear, et al., 2008; F. J. Hanna & Bemak, 1997; Myers, et al., 2002; Spruill & Benshoff, 1996). Literature related to professional identity development indicates it is clear that a strong professional identity has been viewed by many in the counseling profession as an indicator of success (Brott & Myers, 1999; Lafleur, 2007). Therefore, engagement in the components of professional identity that relate to the actionable components of the philosophy can be considered a strong indicator of an individual’s extrinsic markers for success in the counseling field. However, in addition to extrinsic markers for success, intrinsic forms of success as a motivator for the development of an internal relationship between self and profession must also be considered in order to create a holistic, balanced view of counseling professionals. Intrinsic motivators can be individually important in the developmental process of professional identity and tends to be of greater value to female professionals within our society due to cultural norms related to factors of emotional fulfillment (Archer, 2008; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992a).

While agreement with the core beliefs of the counseling philosophy may be necessary in the development and distinction of a counseling professional, these values may not solely or exclusively translate into aforementioned engagement behaviors in the counseling field. CACREP (2009), for example, includes professional orientation as one of the main competency areas to be addressed in all accredited counselor education programs. This is required to help new counselors develop a clear sense of professional identity grounded in the counseling philosophy. Currently, literature seems to equate professional identity development or professionalism with involvement in organizational activities, publication, professional speaking, licensure, and event attendance (Gale & Austin, 2003; Spruill & Benshoff, 1996). The dominant operating ideology within the field accordingly suggests that through these engagement behaviors, one reaches a modicum of extrinsic success. This process may or may not lead to intrinsic feelings of accomplishment, as this depends on the values related to success ascribed to by individual counselors.

The possible connection between the personal identity of professional counselors and their outward involvement in the field had not been empirically investigated. Related studies demonstrate how engagement in the counseling profession early in the process of developing a professional identity (training) was beneficial for creating a personal understanding and relationship with the field (Puglia, 2008; Spruill & Benshoff, 1996). It is believed that by addressing both the development of the self as well as the development of a counselor’s professional identity, both will be facilitated to grow together; leading to a stronger sense of self as a counseling professional (Carrere & Weiss, 1988). In order to provide evidence for professional growth, engagement behaviors such as organizational leadership, acquisition of credentials, and continued development of knowledge through professional conference attendance are highlighted as measures of success through engagement (Borders & Benshoff, 1992; Gale & Austin, 2003).
Professional Development, Gender Roles and Success

The integration of professional values with one’s self identity can be a process begun separately from active involvement in the engagement behaviors that are believed to facilitate this. For instance, DeVault (1999) discussed what she refers to as the adoption of a discipline. In entering into the adoption process, she points to the need for professionals to understand how their field works; what topics are included and excluded and how that advances inquiry and the profession’s agenda. By engaging in this investigation, one is able to integrate aspects of the professional philosophy into a personal philosophy, which fits with the themes revealed by the qualitative research with counselors conducted by Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992a); one aspect inevitably influencing the other. From this perspective, perhaps the process of professional identity does not necessarily need to be linked with the actions that are systemically or externally defined as those that would result in success. Professional identity, at least initially, may have more to do with the integration of professional values into one’s self identity rather than a mere identification with the counseling philosophy, beliefs, and participation in occupational engagement activities (Gattiker & Larwood, 1986). Insight, personal and professional investigation and reflection may be a necessary step in the process of becoming a successful counselor, something not necessarily measured through assessment of action alone.

Therefore, it is important to understand how one’s level of professional identity, in general, may have come to be defined in terms of what would lead to external and individual perceptions of success. In order to provide a practical framework, it will also be necessary to evaluate behaviors associated with a strong professional identity that may lead individuals or organizations to view someone as successful within the counseling field. Since counseling initially developed as a profession within the United States, it is also prudent to view it within a cultural context. Aspects related to expectations within the workplace will have naturally influenced ideas related to how a successful counseling professional should behave, what they should believe, and how they should conduct themselves.

Success and work ethic have been traditionally defined by men with regard to the dominant professional culture, due to their historical domination of the workplace and positions of corporate and institutional power (Clinite, 2000). The ideals associated with the achievement of success are not only present in the corporate world and private industry, but have moved into the school and university settings as they attempt to compete with profiteering private industry. This competitive focus, or the “capitalization of academia” creates a pressure to produce and disseminate relevant information pertaining to all fields of expertise promoted by the university or college (Archer, 2008, p. 386), thus changing the purpose and meaning of academic work. Archer argued that the professional and personal self cannot be separated, which is in agreement with Skovholt and Ronnestad’s (1992a) view of the developing counselor. Given that these selves must co-exist, personal beliefs will therefore inevitably influence the perception of the profession for which one is a part as well as one’s ability to feel successful within the constructs of what one’s profession has decided exemplifies success.

In Archer’s qualitative study, participants’ struggles to meet performance expectations with regard to the requirement for prolific publication were portrayed. This struggle led to a conflict of authenticity. This was interpreted to mean that the participants were going through the motions determined by the outside forces of the profession without a matching level of personal
agreement or interest in those actions. Those outside forces served to define professional expectations and therefore one’s success within the profession. Therefore, participants reported they were not able to follow their own personal feelings of what success and professional identity meant, creating an internal conflict. The study also found the young professional women defined success in terms of personal fulfillment and young male professionals would tend to define success in terms of security and control over their professional path. All participants perceived success as being defined externally, or by their respective institutions, through the achievement of particular positions and accolades. In essence, this externally imposed pressure for individual recognition was part of an agreed upon definition relating to the dominant culture of success. Archer also highlighted how cultural and class backgrounds affected the participants’ perceptions related to the process of achieving success and professional identity and the boundaries present in that journey. Similar results were found in a longitudinal study of tenure track counselor educators (Magnuson, Norem, & Lonnenman-Doroff, 2009).

When analyzing professional identity, it is important to note that research often implies the construct of professional identity as contributing to gender inequity in many professions (Rubineau, 2008). This inequity may manifest in terms of gender representation in the profession with regard to leadership positions and promotion within professional agencies and businesses or full professorships within educational settings. Many professions, such as those related to the medical fields, may appear to have achieved gender equality when one looks at student admission rates, graduation rates, and grades; however, when one considers the specialties within, for example medicine, following training an obvious gender gap exists due to the requirements for success (e.g., time requirements) and how the profession is defined in terms of expectations (Boulis & Jacobs, 2003). Time requirements were found to play a role, in particular, as it affected the female professional’s ability to balance their personal and professional responsibilities as a result of role-conflict (Simon, 1995). Evaluation of labor statistics has also revealed that while women are entering higher education in larger numbers than in previous years, they are less likely to continue on to earn a doctorate degree and rather, were more likely to hold bachelor’s or master’s degrees when compared to men (Hecker, 1998). Hecker also reported that while women were employed as counselors and social workers at higher rates than men, they earned less and may not pursue supervisory positions at the same rate as men.

When reviewing statistics on gender in comparison to the attainment of tenure in 4-year Title IV institutions, women only account for 40% of the total number of faculty tenured and make up merely 33% of the faculty across all disciplines (National Center for Education Statistics, 1998). The percentage of females represented in higher education faculty continues to fall as the level of faculty changes from assistant to full professor. Factors related to this include the higher proportion of women in part-time faculty positions as well as the likelihood of their participation in teaching and services activities rather than research and administrative activities (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). Women who do manage to attain a full professorship still face a $10,000 salary disparity overall in 4-year public institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007); however, no specific information for psychology or counseling has been found. All of these issues within higher education and mental health agencies serve to highlight the possibility that the way in which we currently use valued components of actionable professional identity to gauge professional success may, in fact, influence gender inequities within the counseling field. These statistics are presented in order to show the noticeable gender
differences present in professional positions of prominence within the counseling field. It is conceivable that contributing to these differences are the constructs related to how we as a field assess professional identity as it intersects with our success values.

**Evaluating Success**

Gattiker and Larwood (1986) evaluated subjective success and postulated that individual perceptions of professional expectations and one’s success with regard to those expectations impacts career development. Previously, research has focused on external evaluation of career success using criteria such as job title, salary level, and the number of promotions (Gattiker & Larwood, 1990). This has shown to be important through research on professional identity development which indicates a connection between the development of professional self and the development of personal self. The current view seems to be that professional identity and self identity must reach a certain point of amalgamation in order for individuals to perform adequately or successfully as a professional counselor (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992a; Ronnestad & Skovholt, 2008) and for the profession to continue (Lafleur, 2007).

Reviewing the construct of success with regard to extrinsic motivation is particularly important due to research that reflects the values related to success as a gendered construct. In higher education, the relationship between professional identity and success can be exemplified through the tenure process. Archer (2008) brought attention to this issue, as success was examined in terms of gender, socioeconomic background, and ethnicity. Her qualitative inquiry indicated that women did not define professional success in the same way that their male counterparts did. Of particular note, external reward and notoriety did not appear to be priorities for those women studied. Due to this, the attainment of tenure resulted in feelings of dissonance with the profession and feelings of in-authenticity and segregation. Further, Di Dio, Saragovi, Koestner and Aubé (1996) asserted that there was not only a tendency to attribute stereotypical values and behaviors to certain genders, but these values, traits and behaviors as defined by society contributed to self-concept and values regarding career. They revealed that men typically valued security, freedom, recognition, and accomplishment whereas women typically placed higher priority on values such as harmony, family, friendship, and equality. Understanding value differences between males and females serves to highlight how societal roles can be internalized and also how these roles can affect perceptions related to importance of a counselor’s identity. These gendered societal values not only influence women as they develop professionally but also men, especially when they enter a field that is culturally considered to be non-traditional (a helping or service field such as counseling) (Dodson & Borders, 2006).

Dyke and Murphy (2006) found through a qualitative study conducted with 40 individuals considered to be *traditionally successful* in a variety of corporate and educational positions, that women defined success in terms of personal balance and relationships and men defined success in terms of material accumulation and financial security. Women also did not solely define success in terms of their career but rather also stated that their profession was only a part of achieving a successful balance in one’s life. Most respondents who indicated a need for recognition defined it in a limited, interpersonal fashion rather than a need for broader, public recognition. Participants were pooled from a variety of work settings, including those in human resources, higher education, consulting, and finance positions. Dyke and Murphy also indicated in their study that women attributed slow progress towards career success to investment in family
and investment in clients and the job over institutional advancement opportunities. While women perceived career success in terms of the balance between their profession and their family, men continued to focus their ideas of success solely on accomplishments in the work realm as they have not yet, culturally, been expected to take on the responsibility of family in the way that women are expected to do. As women tend to devalue advancement, men are more likely to move into higher institutional positions and their values then influence institutional policy and assessment of success, paving the way for a continuation of the system as is.

Gender stereotypes can also influence the socially defined prestige of a profession. Glick (1991) found that the those professions perceived and defined in traditionally masculine terms predicted occupational salary as well as the social prestige associated with the job. This issue can be seen with regard to the credence attributed to the profession of psychology within the mental health field, which traditionally and generally takes on masculine values related to authoritarian, expert positioning in contrast to the counseling profession, which assumes philosophical values, such as empowerment and collaborative practice; values which are traditionally attributed to women (Worell & Remer, 2003). This may also contribute to the growing number of female practitioners in the counseling field and its perception as a profession dominated by women at the level of the practitioner.

What has traditionally been considered a successful counseling career can be evidenced by the requirements we currently have for tenure as well as the perception of expectations new professionals have regarding their role in the field. Counselor educators and tenure track faculty in other professions are familiar with the phrase “publish or perish” which has historically been and continues to be the mantra for academic success. This phrase highlights how a faculty member’s worth is evaluated as well as what is valued in the field; moving away from a focus on teaching and service to an emphasis on research and productivity (Davies, 2005; Magnuson, et al., 2009; Santo, Engstrom, Reetz, Schweinle, & Reed, 2009).

At each stage of professional identity development there are markers by which a counseling professional gauges success in terms of satisfaction and effectiveness (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992b). Given that professional identity includes the philosophical beliefs and values foundational to the counseling profession, it could be concluded that the markers of success within the field should be congruent with those values. However, as the definitional qualities of professional identity in counseling continue to develop, some ideals for success may not necessarily be in agreement with the philosophy that the counseling field holds as important in work with clients and students. If, according to Skovholt and Ronnestad (2008), professionals who have reached a higher level of development in terms of professional identity have congruent personal and professional values, one could then assume that the means by which a counselor is defined as successful must be congruent with our professional values in order for counselors and counselor educators to have a strong professional identity. If we, as a profession, cannot assess success in a way that is congruent with our own philosophy, how can we expect professionals with the field to find a way towards personal and professional cohesion? Calley and Hawley (2008) stated that, in counseling, there are several factors that make up professional identity. Those factors include the values and beliefs unique to the profession, the scope of one’s professional activities, an understanding of the profession’s history, scholarship, theoretical orientation, and credentialing or licensure. It can be argued that, in order for a counselor to have a strong, developed professional identity, all of these factors must be congruent with one another; professionally and personally.
Calley and Hawley (2008) administered the Counselor Educators: Professional Identity and Current Trends Survey to 69 counselor educators, 75% of which held a doctorate in Counselor Education and 77% of which were full or associate professors. They found, that in terms of the previously identified factors related to professional identity, counselor educators preferred activities related to what they termed “a sense of belongingness” (p. 14) rather than activities conceptually deemed appropriate for a successful and engaged counselor to be involved with, such as participation in leadership and advocacy for the profession through scholarship or scholarly work. In this study, the lack of engagement could be due to the lack of equal representation from counselor educators involved in the tenure process, which is currently set up to require engagement in professional activities such as publishing, presenting, and involvement in service. This gap was filled by the research conducted by Magnuson, Norem & Lonneman-Doroff (2009) who found that tenure-track faculty valued a supportive environment and experienced conflict when professional expectations did not value their personal experience. Many of the participants in this qualitative study struggled with the values demonstrated systemically by the tenure process; this could in part be due to a conflict with perceptions related to the core constructs of the counseling professional identity previously discussed.

Discussion

The counseling philosophy emphasizes holistic wellness, or life balance, as a core construct. However, the current mental health agency corporate model and the tenure model prevalent in academia are based on systems that highlight the importance of accolades, promotion to supervisory positions, and recognition as a process by which a professional is evaluated as successful. Through adherence to this process, professionals could be overtly viewed as having a strong professional identity. By continuing with the current system, male professionals may remain at higher, disproportionally represented levels of upper management positions in community mental health agencies and in attaining full professorship or administrative positions in academia at disproportional rates (Rubineau, 2008; Stark, Lowther, & Austin, 1985; Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers, & Wentworth, 2007). A trend towards disproportional male institutional leadership is furthered by research indicating that male gender role expectations do not require the same level of balance between their personal and professional life due to spousal support and lack of cultural expectations regarding domestic responsibility (Koball, 2004). In addition, the present day cultural values men tend to ascribe to in the United States, such as autonomy and recognition, may be of greater value in a professional identity model that includes scholarly levels of engagement as a sole marker or marker of greater value for successful professional development.

Implications for women in academia and female professional counselors are many. Given that women may seek to align their personal and professional values through their activities in both life roles, a system that does not value family, balance, and well-being in determining success may lead women to seek employment that allows for the pursuit of those goals. This not only may be due to a conflict of value, but also a conflict of expected gender roles and requirements within and outside of the home (Di Dio, et al., 1996; Douglas & Michaels, 2004; Hoffnung, 2004). In order to assure that women have the realistic choice to seek professional roles that involve leadership, it is necessary to conduct research that evaluates
how the current tenure system and mental health agency expectations impact career decision making.

**Implications for the Profession**

Depending on one’s role within the counseling profession (counselor educator, student, practitioner), differing issues emerge regarding assessment models pertaining to success and professional growth. If wellness and holistic balance is valued as the core of the counseling philosophy, then the profession should advocate for this belief within and outside of the mental health system. Many westernized countries outside of the United States, for instance, give value to male domestic responsibility within the home. This is reflected in public policy through paternity leave, on-site child care facilities at institutions of business, and expectations for men to consider their presence within the family as contributing to its welfare as a unit. Advocacy for inclusive gender-role policies would not only be congruent with the counseling philosophy but could contribute to the well-being of our communities. With regard to professional counselors, it may be useful for agencies to focus on positive client outcomes as a valued basis for the evaluation of success rather than timely reports, chart audits, grant writing, and involvement in training or speaking engagements. Not only would a focus on outcomes assist in a needed focus on quality care, but it would also possibly serve to influence useful interactions within the communities various agencies serve.

In academia, a tenure system that weighted professional and community service, advocacy, and teaching equally or more heavily than scholarly activity may also help to produce a system more congruent with our professional values. In counseling, it will be imperative for us as we move forward to recognize the value of our unique perspective on mental health and promote that value system through our actions, expectations, and assessment practices. Professionals and educators will need to advocate for these changes within institutions and practical changes to the current assessment structure that will assist in the recognition of the counseling philosophy with regard to assessment practices and create an atmosphere attuned to women’s issues. With regard to training, it will be useful for counselor educators to discuss professional identity development throughout the training process within the framework of self assessment and personal reflection. Mentoring and self disclosure related to the educator’s own path towards attaining a clear identity within the counseling field may also be useful for students as they attempt to understand how the personal and professional roles come to reach congruence.
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