Internationalization has become one of the most important issues in the counseling profession. The purpose of this article is to examine the professionalization of counseling on a global basis. To begin, the traditional nature of counseling and the challenges inherent in attempting to make it a global profession will be examined. Next the potential of counseling for promoting well-being on a global basis will be discussed. Finally, a set of transcultural counseling competencies and their relationship to the counselor as a person will be introduced.

*Keywords:* internationalization, globalization, counseling, value-added, transcultural
that counseling as traditionally practiced is a professional relationship that helps to bring about effective change in people’s lives as well as enhance their wellbeing. Working with individuals, families, or groups, professional counselors strive to help those they work with accomplish mental health, education, or vocational goals (Gladding, 2009). In essence then, counseling is a profession and process that seeks to help people solve problems and make decisions with the overall aim of promoting human development (Gladding, 2009; Myers, 1992).

It is important to emphasize that the traditional nature of counseling that is manifested in its practice represents unique aspects of Western culture. It has long been noted that the theoretical and practical traditions of counseling reflect Western middle-class culture (Atkinson, Morten & Sue, 1989; Lago, 2011; Lee, 2013; Pedersen, 1987; Sue, 1977; Vontress, 1971). In many respects the counseling process is uniquely reflective of major Western culture, class, and language values (Sue, 1977). Some of these culture-bound characteristics of counseling have been identified as the individual-centered nature of the helping process, openness and intimacy between counselor and client, long-range goal setting, and the use of verbal communication in counselor-client interaction (Sue & Sue, 1981).

Given the cultural realities of counseling as a profession, it is important that the internationalization of its practice be focused on promoting human development within the context of unique national, cultural, and individual realities (Borgen, 2007; Lee, 2012). Therefore, values representative of non-Western cultural realities must be effectively incorporated into the nature of counseling. This means that the cultural assumptions inherent in the theory and practice of counseling must be constantly challenged as the profession is introduced into those parts of the world where it has not existed previously (Lee, 2012).

The nature of counseling, therefore, must be predicated on an understanding of and an appreciation for cultural diversity that transcends national borders. This must be at the center of a global professional consciousness (Borgen, 2007; Lee, 2012). It is important that as the counseling profession becomes more global in scope and practice it reflects upon some crucial questions:

- How do perceptions of health and illness vary across countries and cultures?
- How do help-seeking attitudes and behaviors vary across countries and cultures?
- How do models of helping vary across countries and cultures?
- What is the relationship between indigenous helping practices and professional counseling?
- What constitutes ethical helping practices across countries and cultures?

As the profession seeks answers to these questions, it must be prepared to have traditional assumptions and parochial worldviews on the nature of helping challenged. Responses to these crucial questions from areas of the world where the profession of counseling does not exist or is just beginning to emerge will have a significant impact on Western conceptions of counseling theory and practice, hopefully spawning new helping paradigms.

**The “Value-Added” Aspect of Counseling**

As counseling advances into those parts of the world where it has not existed previously, it is important that the profession articulate the value of its process in helping people solve problems and make decisions. It is crucial that counselors be able to delineate how what they do differs from the practices of other helping professionals such as social workers, psychologists, and physicians. Therefore, global counseling initiatives must present both empirical and anecdotal evidence that the process and profession of counseling add value to people’s lives and promote human growth and development. It is important to demonstrate how the theory and practice of counseling can be adapted to diverse cultural, social, religious, and political contexts.

Value-added counseling can best be articulated if the global mission of counseling is conceptualized as promoting human growth and development within the context of unique national and cultural realities. Significantly, in recent years, world bodies such as the