

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT
CPP Ep. 9 Self-Care for Christian Counselors to Prevent Burnout

Camille McDaniel, LPC (00:04.664)

Welcome back to another episode of Christ in Private Practice Podcast. I'm your host, Camille McDaniel, and today I get to sit down with a wonderful therapist who is very lighthearted and put up with little of my before show shenanigans that maybe I'll explain a little later, but we are going to talk today to Veronica O'Brien.

Veronica is a licensed professional counselor and life coach in the state of New Jersey. And she's also a certified integrated mental health professional and certified informed sex therapist. Now, as I was sharing with her before, it's so wonderful to sit and talk with mental health therapists, mental health therapists who are practicing Christ-centered counseling services because people have such.

wonderful lived experiences and Veronica is no exception. So let me take a moment to introduce you further. Veronica is naturalized citizen of the United States and she lived in New Jersey or does live in New Jersey, has for the last 21 years.

but she's actually a native of St. gosh, St. Louis, St. Lucia, excuse me. St. Lucia West Indies, which is part of the Eastern Caribbean Islands.

Her passion is for counseling and it actually began in a local church that was on the island of St. Lucia where she grew up. It's called Bethel Tabernacle. So she had an experience where she had friends, she had family, she had strangers asking her for Christian advice from everything from relationships to career development and so on and so forth. And so what eventually happened was it just kind of like made her think a little bit.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (02:00.12)

And I think that kind of nugget came forward later on, but the seed was planted. And so she was a member of International Student Christian Fellowship, and then God used her to help other students. And then after several years in the helping profession and teaching profession, she actually felt called to mission work. And so she signed up for a year-long commitment.

to missionary work through a organization called Operation Mobilization, which is, get this, a floating missionary ship.

How cool is that, right? Okay, and so she worked with people from around the globe and she spoke at conferences, she has worked with churches to help equip them to share the gospel. And it wasn't until she actually became ill herself that she started to discover the importance of self-care and she really started to make a commitment to doing better to integrate that philosophy into her everyday life.

And so then, you know, after a period of time, she kind of, you know, had these various experiences. She felt very strongly called to pursuing a degree in psychology and she did that. And then later she went to get her graduate degree and she did that as well and graduated

summa cum laude from Grand Canyon University. Well, that's where she got her master's in professional counseling. So today she

works in private practice. She provides a telemental health services to families, to individuals, to couples. She is happily married, has been happily married for 16 years. has, she's cat parents. She said they are cat parents to Buddy and to, is it Tiger? Right. Okay. And,

Veronica O'Brien (04:02.205)
Tiger. My babies.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (04:09.249)
and she enjoys listening to worship music and she enjoys movement and it sounds like, and I told her before we were taping, was like, you have definitely some lived life experience, right? One thing I did leave out and I just wanna also just share because some people may be in New Jersey or some people may have some referrals that they need to give to New Jersey. So let me also just pop in and

you that she does specialize with anxiety disorders with body focused repetitive behavior or BFRM. She also focuses and specializes in binge eating disorders, trauma and stress related disorders, depression, grief and loss. Thank you, Veronica, for taking this time to speak with me on the Christ in Private Practice podcast.

Veronica O'Brien (05:07.258)
Thank you so much Camille for having me. It is my absolute honor and pleasure and privilege.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (05:14.242)
Well, today you're going to be talking with us about the importance of self-care for Christian counselors to prevent burnout. And that is definitely a...

Veronica O'Brien (05:24.961)
Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (05:28.501)
a very important topic for us. Full transparency to the audience. You know, I was telling Veronica before we actually started taping that this is a perfect topic because I was not practicing good self care. Last night I was up super late doing some home improvement work and one of the therapists at the practice was telling me like, my gosh, you look so tired. And so I

Veronica O'Brien (05:55.561)
No.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (05:58.398)
told Veronica, like, I was not, again, I was not with it because I did not practice good self care. So here's Veronica waiting so patiently in the waiting room for us to start. And I am putting on makeup because I'm like, I am not going to look tired. This airs on YouTube. And then she's like, hey, I'm here. I can see you getting ready. And I'm like, see, my mind was somewhere else. And so I told her, I'm like,

Veronica O'Brien (06:15.163)
Yep.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (06:24.718)

this is actually perfect timing because I am going to need to really lean into whatever it is that Veronica is sharing. Everyone needs a reminder, no matter how long we have been in the field of mental health, we may give this information to other people, but sometimes we need to listen to it for ourselves. So, with that being said, I am going to jump right on into it and just ask like,

Veronica O'Brien (06:34.332)
Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (06:42.758)
Yeah.

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (06:54.417)
Let's do it.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (06:54.694)
you know, all right, so then tell us what are some of the signs of burnout, you know, that Christian counselors should be aware of, especially those that might like overlook it because they're so focused in the spiritual side of their practice.

Veronica O'Brien (07:13.849)
Yes, so you know, first of all, I just want to normalize how normal your experience is. And right, like we're not talking about perfectionism because a lot of people get very nervous when they talk about self care and like, my God, something else I have to do. know, but it's it's I always say God knows we're human.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (07:31.38)
Mmm, yes.

Veronica O'Brien (07:38.713)
and he remembers where dust and I think sometimes we have to remember that and remind

Camille McDaniel, LPC (07:40.085)
Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (07:44.581)
ourselves of that too. So I think, first of all, I always want to kind of define what burnout is, right? Like what that is. And according to the World Health Organization, they've actually defined it as a syndrome, right? And I'm just going to read what they have, if that's okay. They have defined it as a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (07:53.485)
Yeah, yeah, please.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (08:06.361)
Absolutely.

Veronica O'Brien (08:14.747)
that has not been successfully managed. It is, right? Like, kind of like puts it in perspective in the frame.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (08:18.423)

Wow. Wow. Yes. Yeah.

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (08:27.131)

You know, and they're saying three dimensions that it kind of incorporates. It's feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion, increased mental distance from one's job, right? Feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job and reduced professional efficacy. So this kind of like broad

you know, or specific in certain situations, definitions of what burnout can look like and feel like.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (09:00.215)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (09:01.861)

And so to clarify, like to just understand your question in terms of what it might look like for a Christian counselor, I think it can look like different things. can, you know, depending on the day and the situation, especially if you're like, if I think of, if you're a very new Christian counselor, it can look like, you know, over, you know, wanting to get everything right and then spending a lot of time, you know, in preparation and kind of not

Camille McDaniel, LPC (09:15.726)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (09:31.797)

trusting the Lord. I have to kind of like get everything right and so your focus is on being that perfect which is understandable because you want to do such a good job and then you can kind of lose focus on who's the master counselor.

Right? And then like so for more seasoned counselors or counselors who've been doing this a while, sometimes it can look like you can be a little bit neglectful of your scheduling. You can over schedule, overextend yourself. Right? You might say.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (09:48.846)

Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (10:02.423)

Right, right. I'm just gonna say ouch. I'm just gonna go ahead, that's fine. That's okay, you can call me out. It's fine.

Veronica O'Brien (10:17.827)

experiences I have gone through, right? You know, our personalities and so on and how the Lord has had to sometimes gently, sometimes, you know, a brick, right?

Camille McDaniel, LPC (10:29.998)

Yes,

Veronica O'Brien (10:33.789)

So I think it can look like that, like sometimes avoiding trainings, procrastinating, putting off things, you know, because trainings are important. They kind of help, especially ethical trainings, I think they kind of help, you know, refocus you. So I think these are some, just a few,

you know, signs that that you can, you can begin to see kind of neglecting, even neglecting just your personal relationships, right, friendships,

Camille McDaniel, LPC (11:03.363)
Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (11:03.695)
right? Spending time with your spouse or your loved ones or your friends. Kind of just making the work the focus, right? Neglecting church. You know, I can't get to Bible study because I have this, this, this and that. you know, so I think it's so many different, it affects so many different aspects of our lives, like physical, emotional, spiritual, mental. Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (11:28.451)
this.

That's good because as you start to identify and lay out for us all of the different signs that we need to look out for, whether we're seasoned or whether we're new, that kind of takes me into...

the next thing that I wanted to ask because when you talk about exhaustion and putting in maybe too many hours, know, extending our boundaries beyond what is healthy for us, we noticed that, I mean, the world does kind of glorify hustle culture, you know, and people have all these different sayings about, know, I'll sleep, I'll sleep when I'm dead. I gotta get this now. And all of that, you know, that push almost to show how productive you are and really

Veronica O'Brien (12:06.447)
Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (12:11.986)
Yeah.

Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (12:15.612)
how you're really just kind of exhausting your body, mentally, physically, spiritually. And so I guess could you tell us a little bit about how we can actually be comfortable adopting a counterculture approach to self care that really prioritizes God's guidance over the society's expectations.

Veronica O'Brien (12:25.767)
here.

Veronica O'Brien (12:32.027)
Yeah, yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (12:38.797)
Yeah, I just have to say some of these questions were so great and just so important, I think, to what we're dealing with as Christians in today's culture, not just as counselors, but in today's culture. There's so much of a mixing of the world and the church. Sometimes it's very hard to decipher it. And I think part of that in, you know, during my devotions this week, it's amazing how the Holy Spirit

Camille McDaniel, LPC (12:55.513)
Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (13:07.629)

just align certain principles. And one of the things that came up over the last couple of weeks for me just personally was having a conviction or a mission statement, right? Of re kind of purposing and reevaluating what do I really believe, right?

Camille McDaniel, LPC (13:19.769)

Okay, yes.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (13:27.0)

Wow. Okay. Wow. Yes. Mm -hmm.

Veronica O'Brien (13:29.915)

You know, what is it that I really, what are my values? know, when we go to, when we work with our clients, we always, you know, if you're using whatever your orientation is, if it's, you know, if it's behavioral or whatever, you always go to what are your, your, beliefs? What are your core values? Right? Those are the things that drive us. And it's so easy to get caught up with, you know, I grew up in a Caribbean family and that's my mom's favorite saying is I'll sleep

when I'm dead.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (14:00.634)

look, right? I know a lot of people say that one. Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (14:08.355)

but like there's too much to get done right and sometimes because you know we love the Lord and we're we want to kind of do so many things for God and you know it's coming from a good place but there's also that balance so I think realigning yourself with

Whose voice am I believing? Whose report am I gonna believe? Am I gonna believe that this counterculture of I'm gonna work my fingers to the bone and then when I'm dead, it's all done or no, right? And I think that's gonna slow us down and realign us. God is God, the supreme being of the universe.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (14:34.155)

Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (14:46.67)

Right.

Veronica O'Brien (14:56.133)

Then after that, what is it that I can go to him and say, okay, what is it that's important for me to be able to do and focus on? And that might look like different things, know, different seasons.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (15:07.512)

Yes. Yeah, so see, in what you're saying there, I'm hearing it's like instead of sometimes us trying to do a little too much, know, trying to drive the whole entire ship and direct everything, we're not sometimes checking in to say, Lord, is this what you would have me to do so that we can stay on track and not, you know, burn out. so then.

Veronica O'Brien (15:25.403)

Yes. Yeah.

Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (15:34.948)

What about for those who they're like, okay, and I have my clients too, right? Because they're like, okay, I'm trying this self care, but there is so much that has to be done. And they kind of feel bad about taking time off or slowing down. And then there's the other thing, because I think about this at any time, summertime, holidays, sick leave, we get fearful of slowing down because we are worried that it might actually

Veronica O'Brien (15:49.733)

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (15:58.329)

you

Camille McDaniel, LPC (16:05.324)

hinder our growth in practice because bills are real. We know God is definitely in charge of everything but in our humanness, you know in our humanness sometimes we do worry about like okay if I take this time off and then something happens or I don't pay this bill or I have fewer clients, my goodness what am I gonna do? Like what advice could you you know could you give give counselors out there about that?

Veronica O'Brien (16:07.068)

Yeah.

yes. yes. yes.

Veronica O'Brien (16:27.303)

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (16:34.033)

Yeah, so I think that's so important and my advice is going to be based on the Word of God and based on experiences that I've gone through, which what the Lord has said to me and I was in a season like that. I started, I only launched my practice about nine months ago.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (16:54.617)

you

Veronica O'Brien (16:54.737)

And of those nine months, I had to take a few months for myself. And that looked like me kind of saying to clients who wanted to come with me, you know, the ethical thing for me to do was to give myself a couple of months to address whatever was going on medically so that I could show up appropriately. And that looks like planning.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (17:06.061)

Right.

Veronica O'Brien (17:21.659)

Right? It looks like planning ahead, sitting, you know, with with your spouse or or you know, whomever it is and looking at right, like what is the financial situation? What can we know some people don't like it when I say this. But let's look at the prophet Isaiah, he said to the woman, what do you have in your hand? Right?

Camille McDaniel, LPC (17:22.499)

Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (17:42.732)
Mmm.

Veronica O'Brien (17:45.437)
And so sometimes we're looking for more and the Lord is saying, maybe you have like 500 pairs of shoes. Maybe you can get rid of some of those, right? Right. To bring in some income. so what is the, practically you have to be able to look and say, okay, is this my only source? Right? Is it, is it just meeting with the clients is my only source? What else do I have in my hand?

Camille McDaniel, LPC (17:48.109)
Yeah, it's already there. Yes. Yes.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (17:59.275)
Okay.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (18:09.337)
night.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (18:14.328)
Yes, that's a good one and that's sometimes that's a hard one because you know just just real human -ness you know we we have either experienced it or we've heard from our clients or heard from friends where it's like you know I want to be able to take the break not give up any of my current patterns or any of my current choices and Lord I want you to make it happen.

Veronica O'Brien (18:15.205)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (18:23.644)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (18:27.965)
Okay.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (18:42.202)
and and you know he can do whatever he wants to because he's God but sometimes when it's not benefiting us sometimes he is saying you know hey what's that spending looking like hey did you absolutely need to go there at this point in time you know and so that can get hard that gets hard so

Veronica O'Brien (18:53.627)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (18:58.341)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (19:01.955)
It can.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (19:03.544)
But that's great advice. Like you're saying, know, hey, there has to be some planning that goes into place. And I know I have to, I am so sorry to the audience. I cannot remember the scripture. I will try and look it up as the podcast goes on. But it's like, what man creates a

building or business? What man starts to build without accounting for his materials? Like, you know, so as we are, you know, going through...

Veronica O'Brien (19:25.361)
That's right. Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (19:30.722)
building our practice, right? And also having to take care of our body and stop. As you're saying to us, Veronica, it's like, you also got to have a plan. You you got to kind of outline for these things, because it's not, it's not good for us to just kind of skip and say, you know what, I'll, I'll sleep when I'm dead. It's like, no, we need to be able to rest now. Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (19:39.815)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (19:53.098)
And I get, you know, if I may just share from personal experience, you know, I had to take a job that paid significantly less, you know, at the time.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (19:59.019)
Absolutely.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (20:09.133)
Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (20:11.943)
just because that's where I was at in my life and that's what I needed to do. And I had to sit down with my husband and say, hey, this is where we are and how can we move forward? So it's practical, but it's also personal for me. And I had to kind of pray. And so we had to make some tough decisions. I think you have to always, when we look to Jesus and we look to the biblical principles,

Camille McDaniel, LPC (20:30.329)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (20:41.869)
always a cost. You know, you know, there's always a cost. It's either I always say this to my clients. I said it's hard either way.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (20:43.351)
Mm -hmm. Yeah. Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (20:52.433)
But you have to choose your heart. it's, it's hard to read. It's like hard. It's right. It's like, and what I'm saying, I know it's, it's not easy cause I've been there, you know, some scripture verses I have it on my, I had, you know, I put it on my notepad on my phone because I didn't want to forget. Like, you know, be anxious for nothing. You know, you're worrying about the fields and this, and you're worrying about all of this and you're worrying and worrying.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (20:55.53)
Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (21:22.539)

which is taking away from your peace, which is part of your spiritual self-care, right? And then you're not trusting God. then, so it's really like a reevaluation of again, whom am I really believing? You know? You know, it's like a, yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (21:27.043)

Yes, yes.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (21:39.674)

Right, so that's good, that's good. That kind of even rolls into kind of looking at like, you how can we integrate our faith? And what I'm hearing you say is, you know, there's a lot of sitting with God, right? You know, there's a lot of talking to him about what is the plan and, you know, and praying.

Veronica O'Brien (21:51.143)

Right.

Veronica O'Brien (21:55.02)

Yes.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (22:01.978)

and letting him hold all of our concerns and all of our questions and just pose them, lay them at his feet. I did find that verse, it's in Luke chapter 14 verse 28, so who will build a building without not first sitting down to count the expense, whether he has the things to complete it. So it's even saying as we are in private practice, are we looking at our

Veronica O'Brien (22:04.709)

Yeah.

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (22:13.539)

Okay. Great.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (22:31.934)

our business plans to say, how do I account for sick leave? How do I account for vacation? How do I account for sabbatical? Whatever the sabbatical is for you. So I think that's good. And when it comes to then integrating our faith, like I'm hearing you as you're talking, and it's really about being able to also take our hands off of it. Sometimes we...

Veronica O'Brien (22:37.093)

Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (22:59.448)

we forget that God is mighty. Not that we forget, I hate to say that like that, I don't want the audience to come for me. But you know, but you know, but it's kind of like while you're sitting there worrying me like, well, I can't take off for the holidays. What will I do? Like I gotta make, and it's like, do you?

Veronica O'Brien (23:05.853)

I think it's...

Camille McDaniel, LPC (23:17.646)

Do you really believe that he wants you to work till like you have no more health or that you're stressed out or, and do you not think that he couldn't bring people your way right when you

need it so that you can have what you need? Did he not promise that he would supply for you or no?

Veronica O'Brien (23:33.413)

All your needs. All your needs. All your needs. Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (23:34.699)

Right, so sometimes we find that integrating our faith actually means like really practicing our faith, which I think goes back to what you said, you you got to sit down and write down what do you believe. Yeah, that's...

Veronica O'Brien (23:44.367)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (23:53.561)

Yeah, no, sorry, go ahead.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (23:55.308)

no, that's good. I was just thinking about what you had shared earlier. So no, please go ahead.

Veronica O'Brien (24:00.057)

No, it's so true. It's really... and I don't want the audience to think that it's some Pollyanna or this is not practical. No, it is because Jesus is the God of the practical. You know, he took... look at the miracle of the fish and the two loaves.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (24:19.619)

Right.

Veronica O'Brien (24:20.261)

You know, and I was listening to a pastor the other day and he really put it because in my mind I'm from the Caribbean and fish are huge like they're baby like little fish. Sorry, but this guy was saying that they're they're like tiny little things and that Jesus took that and blessed it and fed a crowd. So if we believe like this is the God we serve, can he take what is little?

Camille McDaniel, LPC (24:27.907)

Mm -hmm.

Veronica O'Brien (24:49.723)

and multiply it. You know, even in our mistakes, you know, even in our mistakes that he can restore, you know, in Joel two, talks about him being able to restore the years the canker worm has, got is our backup plan, our for plan.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (24:51.329)

Absolutely, absolutely.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (25:06.541)

Yes. Okay.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (25:20.66)

just tell you all look Veronica is on a roll she is she is just touching on

She's touching on all the good stuff because I really and truly, promise you, I was going to ask her, was going to say, you know, how do we understand our identity in Christ? You know, and like, you know, our mission, our gifts and talents, you know, to, to prevent burnout. And it's

like, you know, you have to know who you believe. You got to know who you serve and not just, you know, we're not just saying it like you just got to know, but no, literally who is he? Who does the Bible say that he is? Who do other people describe him? Because we, can't even capture our words.

Veronica O'Brien (25:28.462)
You

Veronica O'Brien (25:39.751)
the Holy Spirit.

Veronica O'Brien (25:55.1)
Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (25:58.059)
you know, the totality of God, but there are many, many words that have been used as people have experiences with him to show that he will protect, he will provide, he will heal, he will do, you know, all the things that you're needing.

Veronica O'Brien (25:59.589)
Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (26:11.968)
As we move forward and we talk about being Christian counselors and building our practices, we really have to lean into hearing from Him, is what I'm hearing you say, and knowing who He is and who we serve and trusting that He can show up, that there is nothing too hard for Him. Absolutely.

Veronica O'Brien (26:26.768)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (26:31.186)
Yeah.

Yeah, absolutely.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (26:35.735)
And that's, you know, I can't even, I can't even think of even in my practice, you know, where there were times where was like, you know, building up the practice and being like, man, this is going to be interesting. The holidays are coming around or this is going to be interesting. Summertime is coming around times where I've had to like take a break. really maybe was burned out or something. And, and he had people out of nowhere calling for appointments that I didn't even, I didn't even see that coming, you know, or, you know, referrals that I made connections with.

with like a year ago, all of a sudden, you know, sending people my way. Just like, you know, not to doubt that he can't take that situation and handle it, you know, he handles many, many more things as well. So, okay. So then let me kind of pivot a little to ask you about like the comparison that we also struggle with as it relates to self care and you know, our practices. So.

Veronica O'Brien (27:08.422)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (27:14.14)

it.

Veronica O'Brien (27:18.225)

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (27:26.973)

Thank

Camille McDaniel, LPC (27:31.262)

As counselors, as Christian counselors, how can we avoid that trap of comparing our progress to the success that we see others, especially, you know, in a world that basically tells us, know, worth has to be about visible achievements.

Veronica O'Brien (27:37.489)

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (27:41.17)

Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (27:50.465)

How do we help ourselves not get into that as we are practicing self-care which sometimes may cause us to have to slow down and practice that the Lord will provide and all of that but we see other people and they're talking about I'm full or you know it's like or I'm doing this or that or with the other. What can we do about that?

Veronica O'Brien (28:03.873)

Yeah. Yeah. You know, that's such a human thing. And I think the first thing that comes up for me is to just be honest with the Lord and be honest with ourselves and just say, you know what, I'm a little bit of a green eyed monster right now. Like I, you know, I'm jealous. I'm, I'm, I'm

Camille McDaniel, LPC (28:26.357)

Yes. Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (28:29.465)

not you know practicing love right now and I want these things and I want to be able you know I'm not even playing I'm happy for my my my sister or brother in Christ or just somebody else you know I want that to be me and I think being honest with ourselves and being honest with the Lord and then just saying God work on that because I think that's an opportunity like it's natural there's that human side of us that wants to excel and once you know right like you have to kind of recognize

Camille McDaniel, LPC (28:40.473)

Bye. Right.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (28:55.458)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (28:59.439)

that. But you also have to say to yourself, what is the comparison showing me about an area that I might be neglecting that the Lord wants to work on? Right? Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (29:11.257)

wow. that's so okay. You're touching on something good that I don't even really hear as part of a self-care practice always. that's ask the Lord to search my heart and then show me what I need to work on. Cause that is self-care. Yeah. Wow. Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (29:22.043)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (29:26.489)

Yes, and that's spiritual self-care, right? So I didn't break down the different types of self-care, but there, you know, there's spiritual, there's emotional, there's mental, there's physical types of self-care. So when sometimes people think about self-care, they think about going to the salon and getting there, you know, going to the barbershop or, know, my body right for summer.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (29:46.891)

Mm-hmm. Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (29:53.703)

you know, summer body, had a client who used to say, you know, I just want a summer body. was like, okay, you know, and, you know, all that.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (29:58.359)

Wait.

Veronica O'Brien (30:04.637)

part of the physical side of it. But the comparison really speaks to what's going on spiritually and emotionally that can have a negative effect on our mental health as counselors. know, because if you're comparing, you're out of, it's almost like you're bringing in and inviting that spirit of kind of like condemnation. And it's very human. I forget the story in the Bible where the kings, there was this comparison

Camille McDaniel, LPC (30:28.921)

Yeah, yeah, yes.

Veronica O'Brien (30:34.591)

because he was jealous that God had appointed Saul to be king, right? And so we have to, I'm not a Bible scholar, I quote scriptures, I'm in perimenopause, I don't always remember. I don't always, just keep it in 100 percent real. I don't always remember, but I know the scriptures.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (30:41.559)

Yes, yes.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (30:54.445)

They've got, okay, but you know what? That's okay because thankfully with the advent of Google, we can look those up. They got all the Bible scriptures out there. We can verify, yes, okay.

Veronica O'Brien (31:05.651)

Yes ma'am, yes ma'am, yes. So, you know, I'm not pulling things out of thin air.

I think it's understandable and knowing that I really believe in just having a real relationship with the Lord and coming to Him and saying, I'm struggling with this. I see my friends getting on these podcasts. I want to be able to do that. And a lot of times it's from a good perspective.

It's from, I want to be able to share and I want to be able to do this. But you have to really kind of look at and say, okay,

else is going on with me that I'm you know who am I really looking at right because if we if we believe right if we believe that God is omniscient and omnipresent and he is all -knowing and all -powerful

that we can look at someone who's doing well and we can say, wow, I'm so happy for them. I know God you're using this to work on me.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (32:14.222)

Yes, that's good. Okay. That's another perspective too, that instead of us just looking at it and finding ourselves comparing, we can also look at it and recognize if it brings something up within us that is not aligned with what he would have for us to be thinking or feeling, we can also be thankful that we had that awareness to say, Lord, I'm recognizing something.

Veronica O'Brien (32:18.305)

You know.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (32:43.713)

work on me, help me, what is this? What's coming up? Is this fear? Is this something else that I'm wanting or believe that I won't be able to get? What's happening that's causing me to have this reaction? Search me and then create a new thought, a new feeling so that I can better align with you. yeah, this is so helpful.

Veronica O'Brien (32:43.847)

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (32:51.74)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (33:03.729)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (33:12.411)

Yeah, well I'm glad.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (33:12.966)

This is so real, yeah. So then, what are some ways that we can just kind of find our balance in it? Just some practical strategies in order to just maintain this healthy life balance. We've mentioned a few, but if we can kind of put it right lined up for people so that they can just be like, okay, what are some strategies? Because we have mentioned a few things.

Veronica O'Brien (33:38.299)

Yeah, so I always think, you know, practically, if you're a Christian counselor, and you might need to get some extra counseling, even if it's once every few months, do that. I think that's really important to helping keep you centered too. Also, you know, continuing with peer supervision, like having a support group of peers that you can turn to that can really, you know, pray with you.

and kind of just you bounce ideas, you this is what I'm going through, what do you think about this kind of thing? And like you were sharing, I think it was off, you know, you have a close friend that's very honest, that's important.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (34:20.473)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (34:22.097)

You know, so practically, I would say also reevaluate our boundaries, like know what those are, right? Like a lot of times when we overextend is because again, we grew up with the value of, you know, work, work, work to the bone until you die. And so kind of pulling that back in can be hard. So you kind of have to reevaluate what is important, you know, how much time am I giving to

Camille McDaniel, LPC (34:39.833)

Yes.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (34:48.547)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (34:52.081)

work over just sleep you know. You know as we get older you know I have a passion for the Gen X group.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (34:55.947)

Yes. Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (35:03.665)

because that's kind of my area. But as we get older, things are changing. So you have to prioritize sleep, check your sleep hygiene. What is that like? Are you getting quality sleep? Are you spending a lot of time binging on the phone? So kind of binge watching TVs, just practical steps. Nowadays, the phone gives you, you use your phone three hours more you did last week. Okay, why? Why am I using my

Camille McDaniel, LPC (35:11.097)

Absolutely.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (35:32.885)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (35:33.999)

hours more right and so thinking through what what's kind of the the clues that you're getting throughout your day are you fatigued are you irritable emotionally are you kind of like snapping at yourself right like those so

Camille McDaniel, LPC (35:48.769)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (35:52.753)

Those are some signs that can give you clues that you can start to apply practical changes. How are you eating? What's your nutrition like? Are we drinking enough? What?

Camille McDaniel, LPC (36:02.585)

Good night. Good night. Right?

Veronica O'Brien (36:07.546)

listen, that's been one been working on for a while.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (36:11.285)

You know what

So as believers, it's like all of this goes back to certain scriptures, because even him saying in the Bible that our body is a temple, and we have to just be mindful of how we treat ourselves. And everything that you're saying is so spot on. We need to set some new goals, it sounds like.

Veronica O'Brien (36:18.715)

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (36:24.635)

Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (36:41.386)

How much exercise am I getting? know, being a counselor, you're sitting all the time. Recently I had to get a sit -to -stand laptop holder just to kind of get some...

Camille McDaniel, LPC (36:43.778)

Yes.

Veronica O'Brien (37:00.507)

you know, in throughout the day. And so you kind of incorporate if you have a break or a client cancels, let's use that time to get out for a walk, you know, or do some stretching in the office, you know, put on some Kirk Franklin if that's still, you know, if he's still hot.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (37:10.968)

Yes.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (37:14.551)

Yeah, that's a good idea.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (37:20.529)

Whoever you find, right?

Veronica O'Brien (37:24.977)

Whoever, whatever your gospel is, know, and you know, dance, you know, make a joyful noise to the Lord and move your body while you do that. So those are some very practical, I think, and important things that we can do to kind of just take care of ourselves, you know.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (37:45.882)

Absolutely. That's all good and we're gonna hopefully all take in everything that you've shared with us today and really start putting them in practice and maybe people can kind of like, you know, just jot these things down, keep each other accountable, you know, if you have friends, if you have, you know, and...

Veronica O'Brien (38:00.251)

Yeah.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (38:05.262)

whatever support system, if you don't have a support system, put that on the list, start seeing about that. so, yeah, that's gonna be good. Okay, so Veronica, you have really helped us so much and shared so much. Please tell people, where can they find you? I know you have your website, so whatever you're doing at this time, share that with us. Where can people locate you?

Veronica O'Brien (38:09.881)
Right.

Veronica O'Brien (38:28.561)
Yeah.

Veronica O'Brien (38:32.337)
Thank you, it's just been my pleasure and privilege to be here and share with you guys. you can find me on Facebook, Veronica O'Brien Counseling LLC. I have my website, veronicaobryancounseling.com. Or you could go to therapyinnewjersey.com, shorter and quicker to get to. I'm also on Psychology Today and Therapy for Christians.

that network and I recently joined headway I'm excited to say because I'm an out of network usually I'm out of network self pay with clients but I recently joined headway to make it a little bit more accessible for those clients who need to use insurance so that's where you could find me and you could always reach out to me Veronica at veronicaobriancounseling.com I do have limited slots because I'm very mindful

Camille McDaniel, LPC (39:06.527)
Hey.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (39:12.226)
Okay.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (39:18.764)
Okay.

Veronica O'Brien (39:31.729)
about my schedule and the quality of care I give to patients. used to over schedule myself. don't do that anymore. yeah. Doing my best. Doing my best. Thank you.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (39:39.561)
Okay, self-care, practicing it, know, talking it and practicing it. Okay, well, thank you so much and we look forward to maybe even talking to you again in the future.

Veronica O'Brien (39:54.717)
Thank you, this was fun. Thank you, Camille.

Camille McDaniel, LPC (39:56.409)
Thank