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Self-assessment paper

My values are what determine how I am going to respond in a given situation and is defined as a set of core standards or beliefs that I consider worthy to determine what is good and bad behavior. As a Christian, my values are mainly based on my belief in Jesus Christ and his example that I am to follow. I can sum up my values in two statements found in the Bible. "Love the lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul" and "Love your neighbor as yourself." Everything I do *should* reflect my motivation to comply with those two commands, however values are ideals for what behavior should be to be called a good person. As the reader will see later in this paper, I do not consider any person (including myself) to be good. Meaning I am unable to comply all the time with all the regulations in my own value system.

The social work values mentioned in the NASW code of ethics all represent ways to go about loving a person that in return fulfills my second core value. I chose to enter into the field of social work because its focus on service was consistent with my personal conviction to love people. My values tell me that I am to humble myself and always be willing to help the people around me - always considering others before myself and not expect anything from them in return. I recently took a trip to Thailand where I lived for six months with a

missionary family and taught their children. Although this was a difficult time to be so far away from my home, I was drawn to leave my every day life because I knew there was a need in that community that I was able to fill. I chose to put my concern for serving others above my personal goals of getting through school and the desire to stay close to my core family because of my consideration for the importance of service.

Although I believe that social justice is a very important basis for social work, I do not hold the same views of why we should work to bring equality of service to each person we come into contact with. It is commonly accepted that humans are born as mostly good beings, but we are corrupted as we are socialized throughout our lifetime. Therefore when we are faced with an individual who has done things that in our eyes are despicable acts we should consider what in their environment, and what mental or physical diagnosis can explain why they have deviated so far from their “good” roots. From this perspective it is understandable for social workers to learn to over look the bad behavior because the individual is still a good person at heart that deserves the help he or she needs. My point of view concerning our human nature brings me to the need for social justice from the opposite direction. I believe that humans are born with a very selfish nature that taints every decision we make in our lifetime. As a person grows, they are either taught not to let their selfishness take control of them or their desires encourage them to see their deviant behavior as acceptable because it gives them a sense of fulfillment by getting what they want. Our human nature is what brings every person to an equal ground where no one is worthy to think of himself or herself as any better than another person.

With this mindset the people in my life who have deviated from what society says is normal can never be moved in my mind to a lower level than myself and are always worthy of love.

Not many people would argue about how important human relationships are to living a fulfilling life. We know their importance from our having families who help shape our ideas and values. We know from our friendships that encourage us to be the people we are meant to become. We know from those who have lived life before us and have accomplished more due to the loving support around them than they could have ever done alone. Any functions that relationships serve are rooted in the ideas that we need to know we are loved and to have someone to love in return. I back up my opinions on this subject with life application every day. I structure my day around my relationships that I consider to be beneficial for either my need to love other people or my need for others to love me. Whether it is a friend who is in need of love or myself, I will set apart time to spend in search of acceptance or ways to encourage my friend. Most of the time, however, a reciprocal friendship is in place where both people are giving and receiving support at the same time. No matter how the exchange takes place in relationships, giving and receiving love is vital for us to grow as individuals.

The one value that most people would say that Christians should be extremely experienced at is integrity. It should be simple for such moral people to live honest lives always encouraging the upholding of truth. I would have to disagree that integrity is always the easiest value to keep because so many times I want to tell people what they want to hear. I do not like confrontational

situations very much, so I would rather cover the truth about a situation nicely so I do not have to face the ugly truth. There is a major problem with this behavior, however, because it is not fair to the people around me if I know something to be true, but still let other people flounder around unsure about something I already know.

The common answer a person going into social work gives when he is questioned about why they want to enter this field is that they want to help people. This answer is almost the same for me, but my reason goes much deeper than the surface answer. Loving God with all my heart mind and soul is really the defining thing that makes my social work practice unique from many other people. Everything I do should be done first and foremost as a means to love God with every part of me. So no matter what I do with my life and what decisions I make about my future, the reason should never change because everything I do is in order to love God. Some of the ways I go about loving God are worship and obedience.

Obedience is what drives me to love people through social work, not just the blind hope that maybe I will be able to help someone along the way. Of course I want to help people or I would not be in social work, but what good is a person who wants to help who does not have the stamina to endure the burden that comes with this type of job? I believe that I have a unique resource in my drive to obey God that will enable me to endure when the stress of working with clients seems too great for me to handle. I have seen many times in my life when I have approached difficult circumstances and wanted to give up but my drive to obey God was encouragement enough to enable me to push through and keep

living a consistent life.

In order to love God I have to obey his commands. But to obey his commands to me I have to love the people around me. I have found that social work is one of the best ways that I can go about loving people because it incorporates the same loving techniques that my life model, Jesus, utilized throughout the Bible to change the lives of those around him. I do not think there is a better example of a social worker in all of history than Jesus. He loved people for their individual selves without letting their past failures cloud his thinking about how important each person was, and he also served people honestly by fulfilling every promise he made.