Exploring how a Christ-following faith perspective based on the calling of Micah 6:8 urges those of faith to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly fits within social work practice.
Ko Queeni Mere toku Waka (around the late 1800’s)

Ko Hagen toku maunga.

Ko Wahgi toku awa.

Ko Papua Nūkini (Papua New Guinea) toku turangawaewae.

Ko Kotirana (Scotland) me Iharaira (Israel) oku iwi.

Ko Greg Crawford toku matua.

Ko Carlene Tolpohf toku Whaea.

Ko Katie toku teina.

Ko Hamish toku tungāne.

Ko Shae na Kyan toku tama.

Ko Heidi ahau.

No reira tena koutou katoa.
First & Foremost (situating myself):

“What we believe (our beliefs) and believe in (our values) are more influential in determining the ways in which we work with people (and the outcomes for them), than what we know or how skilled we are” (McCashen, 2005, p. 16)
My understanding of what it means to be a human being

Psalm 8:3-5

Createdness, Creatureliness, Creativity, Community – Bowpitt, 2000

We do not grow absolutely, chronologically. We grow sometimes in one dimension, and not in another, unevenly. We grow partially. We are relative. We are mature in one realm, childish in another. The past, present, and future mingle and pull us backward, forward, or fix us in the present. We are made up of layers, cells and constellations.

-Anais Nin
My understanding of what I want for people

Shalom

“Consult not your fears, but your hopes and dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tired and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.”

- Pope John XXIII

Shalom

McCashen, 2005
My understanding of core social work qualities

The worker needs to be clear about his or her commitments that shape the approach to practice (Canda & Furman, 2010). The worker’s role is to be honest, listen, feelings, opinions, beliefs, and moral commitments that shape the approach to practice (Canda & Furman, 2010).
My understanding of calling

Social work in its best sense can be considered a spiritual vocation. This does not mean that all social workers ... are religious. Rather, it means there is an awareness of suffering and the possibility of transformation. It means that there is a motive of compassion to work together with other people to help us overcome obstacles (Canda & Furman, 1999 cited in Crisp, 2012).

The stressful nature of social work practice means that social workers need to get in touch with something outside themselves on a regular basis (Gumz et al, 2003 cited in Crisp, 2012).

Micah 6:8
He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the L ORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly[\textsuperscript{a}] with your God.

[New International Version]
Act Justly

The condition of daily existence – Wolterstorff, 2006

Justice as restoration of right relationship – Poe, 2001

“interpret Jesus as talking about charity . . . I find it beyond reasonable doubt that this passage is not about charity, but about justice. Jesus is saying that to fail to treat the naked, the hungry, the imprisoned, and so forth with justice is to wrong Jesus himself” (Wolterstorff, 2006).
Love Mercy

Mercy transcends compassion by motivating effective action

Mercy opens a way to reconciliation

Mercy is reciprocal

Grisez, 2008
KJV Dictionary Definition: humility
HUMIL'ITY, n. L. humilitas.

1. In ethics, freedom from pride and arrogance; humbleness of mind; a modest estimate of one's own worth. In theology, humility consists in lowliness of mind; a deep sense of one's own unworthiness in the sight of God, self-abasement, penitence for sin, and submission to the divine will.

2. Act of submission.
Tensions

The ‘Salvation’ aspect

Why do you do what you do?

The pressure

Disagreeing with peoples life-style choices
Bringing who you are into practice

A perspective of how those of Christ-following faith can bring who they are into their practice in a way that is honouring, respectful and non-judgemental to those they walk alongside.
Applying a Strengths-Based Perspective

- LISTEN - NO really listen, be genuine
- Allow those you work with to be the expert in their story
- Be aware of power imbalance and give power to those you work with—via your interactions/ questionings
- Have hope and instil hope
- Allow for sharing and safety
- Allow the client to be the change maker – you are the facilitator of change

McCashen, 2005
“Every strength and exception exposes stories of what people do despite problems; what they do to overcome problems; what they do well and what they do to meet dreams and aspirations” (McCashen, 2005, p. 59).
People get ‘stuck’ in a view of themselves as incompetent, not responsible, victims or powerless. This might be seen in terms of ‘learned helplessness’ (Seligman). A view of self as hopeless, helpless or beyond caring tends to become self-fulfilling.
Applying Solution-focussed work

“Solution focussed work ... lends itself to being entirely open with the service-user as there are no hidden agendas behind the questioning of the worker; they are eliciting information from the person and seeking their meanings rather than analysing it from a professional perspective. In this sense, it is relatively EASY TO EXPLAIN TO PEOPLE HOW YOU WORK, emphasizing that THEY are the person who knows themselves the best; that everyone has the capacity to change and the strengths to achieve this; and that your role is to work with them to further their progress towards their goals.”

(Milner & O’Byrne, 2009, p. 150).
“It is in the **problem free** areas you find **most of the resources** to help the client. It also relaxes them and helps build rapport, and it can give you ideas to use for treatment...**Everybody has natural resources** that can be utilised. These might be events...or talk about friends or family...The idea behind accessing resources is that it gives you something to work with that you can use to help the client to achieve their goal...Even negative beliefs and opinions can be utilised as resources.” (Jones, 2008, p.451)
The Questions I leave with you:

- How are your values & beliefs impacting on your practice?

- How does this impact affect those you are working with? Is it hindering, hurting or helping?

- How are you already working in a way that is honouring, non-judgemental and respectful to those you walk the path with?

- What might you need to change about your practice ensure your practice is honouring, non-judgemental and respectful to those you walk the path with?
A list of some good books & journal articles to follow-up if you are wanting to explore this area more:


