

Social Justice Action Plan

Grace-Ann Gibby

Liberty University

**Explore Life Meaning and Commitment**

Every interaction with another individual has the potential to be life-changing, inspirational, and positive; conversely, interactions can also perpetuate negativity, reinforce bitterness, and result in both parties feeling drained. I believe that human beings have a tremendous capacity to be productive in life. Due to a myriad of reasons that range from: this fallen world to continual bad choices and decisions, people are not experiencing or achieving

Commented [DM(fC&FS1): So true!

their due amount of greatness. As a Christian, the call on ~~our~~ lives ~~my~~ life is even higher to understand and execute that Jesus Christ came so that we can live abundantly. This is not to appear naïve about the difficulty or hardness in life because of sin, but as ~~we~~ I quickly define ~~ourselves~~ myself by limitations, it makes me wonder why can't we all define ourselves by positivity?

I help people as best as I possibly can, because I may never know or see the effects of that help. Working in the school system affords me a priceless opportunity to influence teenage students during their years in high school. While sSome of them travel for College, and I don't see them again for a very long time, my interactions have the opportunity to encourage them, foster hope and show my belief in them for greatness. This motivates me to strive hard to maintain a posture that allows for this type of interaction to occur as much as possible. I want to love people well, represent Christ in everything that I do. This position towards life and mankind is exhausting and requires a strict adherence to self-care, daily spiritual fillings, and allocating time for important relationships and friendships.

While I am honestly not interested in boasting of any kind, I sincerely believe that God has blessed me with unique abilities to interact and connect with a variety of ages and cultural individuals. To this end, I feel strongly motivated to give back to my island, and my country. In my personal opinion and I am biased, The Bahamas is a little slice of paradise, the geographic layout is outstanding and the average person is kind and good-natured. However, the country has so much potential and there is a lot that limits our citizens from giving their full contributions. Through mental health and future education opportunities, I want to improve individuals in our society one interaction at a time.

**Commented [DM(fc&FS2):** In cases like this type of paper, it is more empowering to write in the first person.

Either that, or you can write ... I believe that as Christians, the call ...

But I like the strong statement that you are making ... and doing it this way allows you to state it boldly as your statement of faith

**Commented [DM(fc&FS3):** This alone changes lives! For so many, your belief in them may be the one point that they hold onto during those hard times.

**Commented [DM(fc&FS4):** I would absolutely agree 😊

**Commented [DM(fc&FS5):** I hope that you are able to pursue this also as a research area as your experiences in the Bahamas can bring not only improvement to your citizen, but also bring a broader perspective to multicultural counseling given some of the unique factors you often discussed in class

**Explore Personal Privilege:**

As I reflect on my childhood, I remember an easy life that felt balanced. We were a Christian family that took a vacation once a year, my mother was a stay-at home mom and my father worked very hard to keep everything going. I took swimming lessons, and piano lessons. We had average vehicles and I barely understood the word racism. Always an avid reader, my vocabulary was somewhat impressive with adults and I learned the beauty of wisdom at a very young age. Every single item I just described is an unearned privilege. I learned the true cost of this when I started working in the public high school system and experienced the amount of students living in single-parent homes, and consistently surviving without electricity or necessary amounts of food. I was in shock; how could this living exist on my little island? I am urged to give back, it is undebatable.

**Commented [DM(fC&FS6):** What is sad is how many people can see things like this, and never really see it. This is where your voice becomes so much more important in advocacy

My life experiences of wholeness can help me to provide that for others, or help them to provide it for themselves. How can it be available for them? When I started in the public high school, I would say to my students: things may be harder and take longer but it is possible. Human beings are created in God's image, this concept sets the bar for their purpose in life. God doesn't create junk or trash. This biblical truth has given me the courage to believe that all lives have a purpose, whether they are spiritually attuned or not. We can fulfill our highest aim in life when we are fully surrendered to God, but it doesn't negate the fact that humans are created in his image therefore the potential for greatness exists. Everyday in my high school, I am trying to instill and create systems that tear down barriers and promote equity. What can others do that my students will never be able to do if I don't find an avenue to allow them the opportunity? How

**Commented [DM(fC&FS7):** And this is where you can then share these experiences with the field at large ... it is so needed

can I influence their beliefs so that when opportunities present themselves, they feel confident to try?

### **Explore the Nature of Oppression:**

I truly can not think of a time that I was a victim of oppression. Anything that I set out to do, through hard work and perseverance, God has allowed me to achieve wonderful things. Perhaps it existed, but through my rose-colored lenses, I missed it. I am extremely passionate about justice; and what is fair to people. It seems to be a knee-jerk reaction in most cases, the appearance of injustice elicits strong negative emotions from me and I immediately begin the process of solving the issue. The public high school that I work at has a large population of students who come from low socioeconomic homes. It is a privilege to advocate on their behalf and ensure that they have access to equity. Through these opportunities, the counseling department has assisted students with scholarships, memorable experiences, and a boost in self-esteem that helps them to believe and hope for better options.

On every scale of life, we can make a positive impact and a difference. Will the change be evident in my church, school, community, political arena, nationally or internationally? I'll never know, but it is worth it to always aim for the best, help anyone, everyone who crosses your path. When given the opportunity- practice kindness, and never give up an opportunity to help well.

### **Work to Become Multiculturally Literate:**

Multiculturalism has steadily climbed the ladder and now is a major priority for myself and my family. My husband and I often discuss how much travel we want to do as a family, and missionary work to help others. We both share a strong passion for helping people of any age, race or culture. I believe that the more exposure an individual experiences with multiculturalism,

**Commented [DM(FC&FS8):** Excellent! I think this goes hand in hand with the strategies we discussed in class as to how to be effective in this 😊. You are changing the lives of those in your sphere of influence, and what you are learning may help shape it on a more systemic level!

the more you understand humanity, and humility in various forms. The approach to life is one of wonder and awe, what can I learn from this person and their culture? There is a richness that is gleaned from learning different types of people and having a sincere approach to understanding their culture regardless of how different it may be from your own.

Commented [DM(FC&FS9)]: Very much so!

**Personal Social Compass**

When I think of guiding principles to ensure of my commitment to social justice, I consider a few concepts: 1. Consistently operate with integrity – this allows for good work to be done and my voice to be heard, 2. Have the courage to address when injustices are observed, 3. Always work to be a part of the solution and not the problem, and 4. Take time-outs from everything to recharge. Social justice issues can be perpetual and tiring, it is helpful to be rested to be effective. Taking care of myself is a precursor to being an effective advocate for social justice issues.

Commented [DM(FC&FS10)]: These are strong guides  
Excellent job!