Task Sheet 12. Violence and Non-Violence

Suggested Task
In preparation for the tandem meeting, read Chapter 4 ‘Science, Religion and War’ of Tina Beattie, The New Atheists: The Twilight of Reason and the War on Religion (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2007). You may also read any other chapters you find interesting.

Aim
To gain an awareness of religious perspectives on violence and non-violence.

Objectives
On your own and with your partner define your objectives for this tandem exercise. What do you want to learn?

Consider asking yourself
- What perspective does my religion offer on the use of force or violence? [e.g. war, corporal punishment, capital punishment.]
- Is there a tradition of ‘non-violence’ within my religious tradition?
- What are the justifications for violence or non-violence within my religion?
- To what extent can these prescriptions or perspectives be negotiated within the framework of British law?

Consider asking your tandem partner
You may ask all or none of the suggestions above plus:
- What do you think about Tina Beattie’s perspective?
- What do you feel about the way in which religious perspectives are sometimes used to justify violent actions?
- Is the association of religion with violence in contemporary political discourse justified or not? Why?

Things to reflect on together
- What are our similarities? Why?
- Where do we differ? Why?