Task Sheet 1: Religion & Belief Identity

Suggested task
A person’s religion or belief identity is multi-dimensional. Some aspects of religion and belief identity are listed below. Consider to what extent you recognise these different dimensions of religion and belief in your life. Are some of them more/less important to you?

1. Interest in religion and belief
2. Intellectual knowledge and/or commitment, e.g. having a belief in God or the divine, knowing about your religion/belief
3. Public practice, e.g. attending a place of worship, being part of a community or group
4. Private practice, e.g. meditating or praying, private study
5. Individual experiences, e.g. having a religious experience, making a commitment to a belief position
6. Relevance of religion to everyday life

Aims
• Get to know your tandem partner.
• Get a sense of your tandem partner’s faith or belief as a real lived experience.
• Reflect about the significance of your own faith/belief in your life.

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

Consider asking yourself
Core religious dimensions
• How central is belief in my life? What other important things are there?
• What does my belief mean to me?
• How important is it to belong to a group of people who have the same belief as me, and how do I participate in such a community?
• How do I express my religion or belief?

General significance of religion & belief
• How much does my religion or belief contribute to my outlook on the world?
• Am I ‘religious’ or ‘spiritual’ or ‘atheist’ or … ? What’s the difference (if any)?

Areas of life
• In which area of my life does belief have least and/or most significance or impact? What do I learn from this?
Consider asking your tandem partner

You may want to ask any of the suggestions above plus:

- What is your version of the divine, or God, or of a Godless universe like?
- How do you use writings from within your belief system? (E.g. sacred texts, important contemporary writers).
- Do you contemplate, chant, pray, or meditate or use other spiritual exercises?
- How does your belief help you in life? In times of crisis? Of joy? In regard to politics?

Things to reflect on together

- What are our similarities? Why?
- Where do we differ? Why?