

### **My experience of showing “Nonviolence for a Change” DVD at Meeting for Channel Island Friends held in Jersey, on Saturday 22 October 2011**

I tested likely responses by showing the DVD to 2 Friends a couple of weeks beforehand. Their reaction was largely negative which made me realise I would have to structure the event to make it accessible to islanders who have little or no experience of protest or demonstrations. 25 adults were present on the day.

#### **Introduction:**

“The film you are about to see lasts 30 minutes. It is designed to promote discussion – you might find it controversial. The first part is mainly historical, newsreel-type footage, showing the different forms that protest can take. I shall stop the film after about 10 mins to allow for discussion in pairs. Think about your own individual response to the different forms of protest. How far would you be prepared to go to promote nonviolent change and social justice? This film was completed before the Arab uprisings and current the anti-capitalist protest taking place outside St Paul’s Cathedral.”

Read out: taken from DIY study guidelines on TTT website:

*“What’s the film all about?”*

*This 30-minute film seeks to stimulate debate and get people to reflect on where they stand when it comes to nonviolent protest, particularly nonviolent direct action. Nonviolent protest is all about actively challenging and addressing injustice with the long-term vision of building another, more just, world. Nonviolence isn’t simply not using violence. It is a pro-active, positive approach to working for change. It offers a third way between passively accepting the status quo and trying to impose a change through violent force.”*

Show DVD and stop film after about 10 mins:

I invited viewers to turn to the person sitting next to them and talk about their own point of view of what they had seen so far. I had planned 5 mins for this but discussions sounded so animated I let it continue for 8 mins; then ran film to the end. It would be a good idea to advise that if the feelings are strong in response to the film, to try to identify where the feelings come from – this useful hint is from Steve W.

Discussion for whole group:

We rearranged the seating to make it circular. I asked if anyone would like to comment. The contributions from individuals continued for 45 minutes after which I concluded the meeting by thanking everyone and reading out the TTT **Principles of Nonviolence** from the website:

- *being willing to take action for justice without giving into or mimicking violence*
- *respecting and caring for everyone involved in a conflict, including our opponent*
- *refusing to harm, damage or degrade people / living things / the earth as a means of achieving goals*
- *acting in ways consistent with the ends we seek*
- *being prepared take suffering on ourselves without inflicting it on others*
- *believing that everyone is capable of change and no-one has a monopoly of the truth*
- *recognising the importance of training so that nonviolence thinking and behaviour become part of our everyday lives.*