Views about Types of Crime Summary Sheet

Types of crime

**Hate crime** – crimes against people because of their race, religion, sexuality, gender, social class, nationality etc. Examples include the Holocaust against Jews and violence against Polish people after the Brexit vote.

**Theft** – stealing. This can include stealing ideas such as breaking copyright rules by copying somebody else’s book ideas without permission.

**Murder** – unlawful, deliberate killing of people. Accidental killing is not murder; it’s called manslaughter (if it was somebody’s fault). Execution of criminals by law courts is not murder because it is lawful.

Religious attitudes to crime

Buddhists are against **hate crime** because hatred is one of the Three Poisons that cause suffering. People who hate are causing suffering to themselves (as well as others) because it makes them feel unhappy.

Christians believe **hatred** is wrong usually. They believe in the Bible teaching, ‘God is love.’ (1 John 4:8). However, they do believe people should, ‘Hate the sin but love the sinner.’

Buddhists are against **theft** because in the Five Precepts Buddha taught, ‘Do not take what is not given freely.’

Christians are against **theft** because in the Ten Commandments God says, ‘You shall not steal.’ (Exodus 20:15).

Buddhists are against **murder** because the Five Precepts teach, ‘Do not harm a sentient being.’ A ‘sentient being’ means one who is capable of thinking and feeling. This includes animals so a Buddhist might agree that, ‘Meat is murder.’

Christians are against **murder** because the Ten Commandments say, ‘You shall not kill.’ (Exodus 20:13). Jesus taught that hating someone is like committing murder in your heart. Most Christians do not think it is murder to kill animals, e.g., for food.

Religious attitudes to lawbreakers

**Buddhists** believe that committing crime is bad karma and it will bring suffering to the person who does it. They try to have compassion on criminals and show them a better way to be happy. Buddhists like the idea of giving a criminal work skills so they can get an honest job after leaving prison.

**Christians** believe that criminals should be punished according to the law. However, Christians believe that they are sinners themselves who deserve to be punished but God forgave them. Therefore, they try to forgive criminals and treat them with compassion. Jesus taught that it was good to visit those in prison.