

3. God and the World

Learners will study the nature and influence of religious experience, and the challenge posed to religious belief by the problems of evil and suffering

Topic	Content	Key Knowledge
Religious experience*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature and influence of religious experience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ mystical experience ○ conversion experience • different ways in which individual religious experiences can be understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examples of mystical and conversion experiences and views about these, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ views and main conclusions of William James • as union with a greater power • psychological effect such as illusion • the product of a physiological effect
<p>Learners should have the opportunity to discuss issues related to religious experience, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether personal testimony or witness is enough to support the validity of religious experiences • whether or not corporate religious experiences might be considered more reliable or valid than individual experiences • whether or not religious experience provides a basis for belief in God or a greater power 		
<p>Contextual references <i>For reference, the ideas of William James listed above can be found in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James, W. <i>The Varieties of Religious Experience</i>, lectures 9,10,16,17 and 20 <p>Suggested scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority <i>Learners will be given credit for referring to any appropriate scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority, however the following examples may prove useful</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts 9.4–8, 22.6–10, 26 • Otto, R. (1923/1968) <i>The Idea of the Holy</i>, Oxford University Press, Chapters 4 and 5 • Saint Teresa of Avila, from <i>The Autobiography of Saint Teresa</i> (1960/2010) Allison Peers, E. (ed. and trans.) Dover Publications 		