

Autistic Christians Support Community

Seeing, noticing, valuing? (a 'thought experiment')

Presenter: Stewart Rapley

Chair: David Derbyshire
Chat Monitor: Sue Hartley

18 April 2026

AGENDA

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. 11.00 – 11.05 | Welcome and Introduction |
| 2. 11.05 – 11.15 | Stewart: Seeing, noticing, valuing? |
| 3. 11.15 – 11.45 | Discussion (30 mins) |
| 4. 11.45 – 11.55 | Community Update |
| 5. 11.55 – 12.00 | AOB |

12.00 - 12.30

Social time

I would value your help with a thought experiment!

Have you ever noticed that:

- You can be standing with someone looking at something together – supposedly ‘seeing’ the same thing, but have completely different experiences?
- That there are some things that you are instantly aware of, spot, get, or ‘notice’ – without having to think.
- That, whilst there is some continuity between the things that you ‘notice’ and the things you ‘value’, or are interested in, they are not identical.

And then wondered what this tells you about your spirituality?

Autistic Christians Support Community

Seeing, noticing, valuing? (a 'thought experiment')

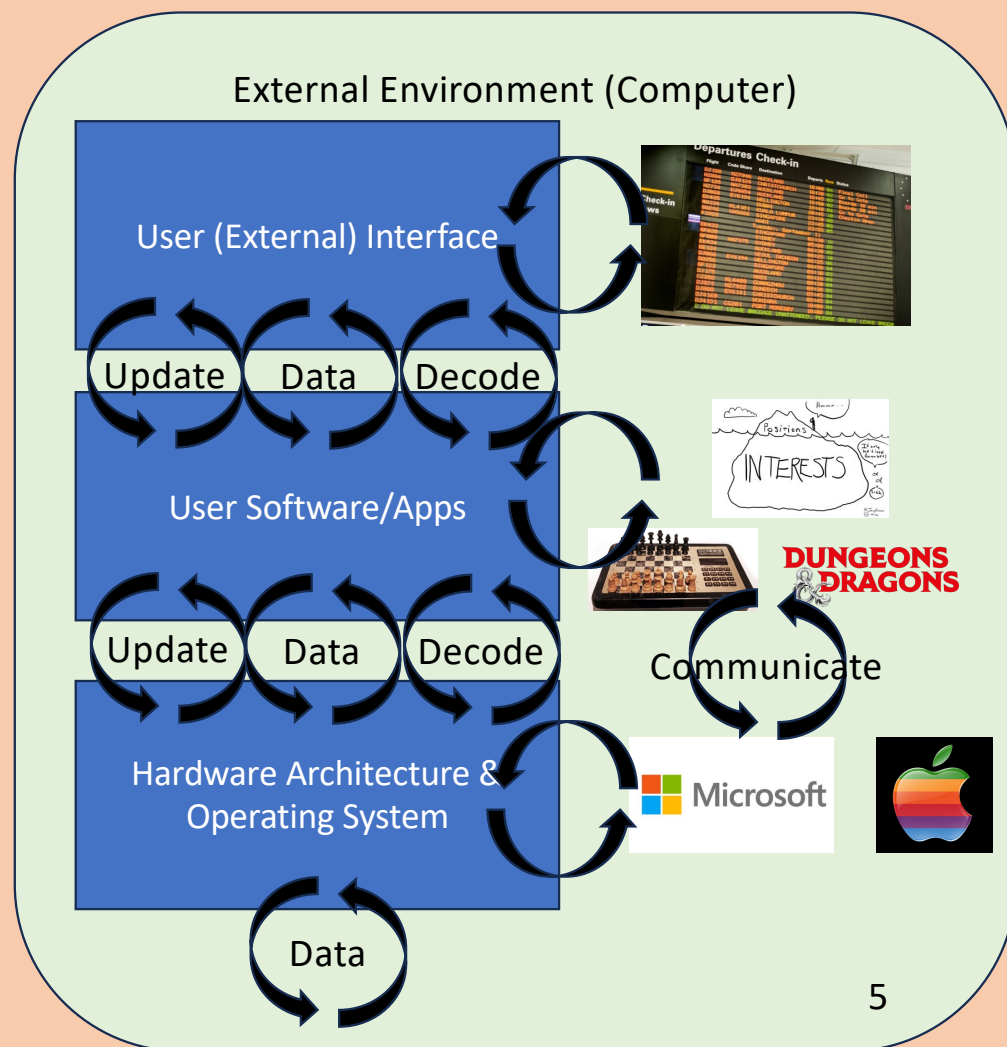
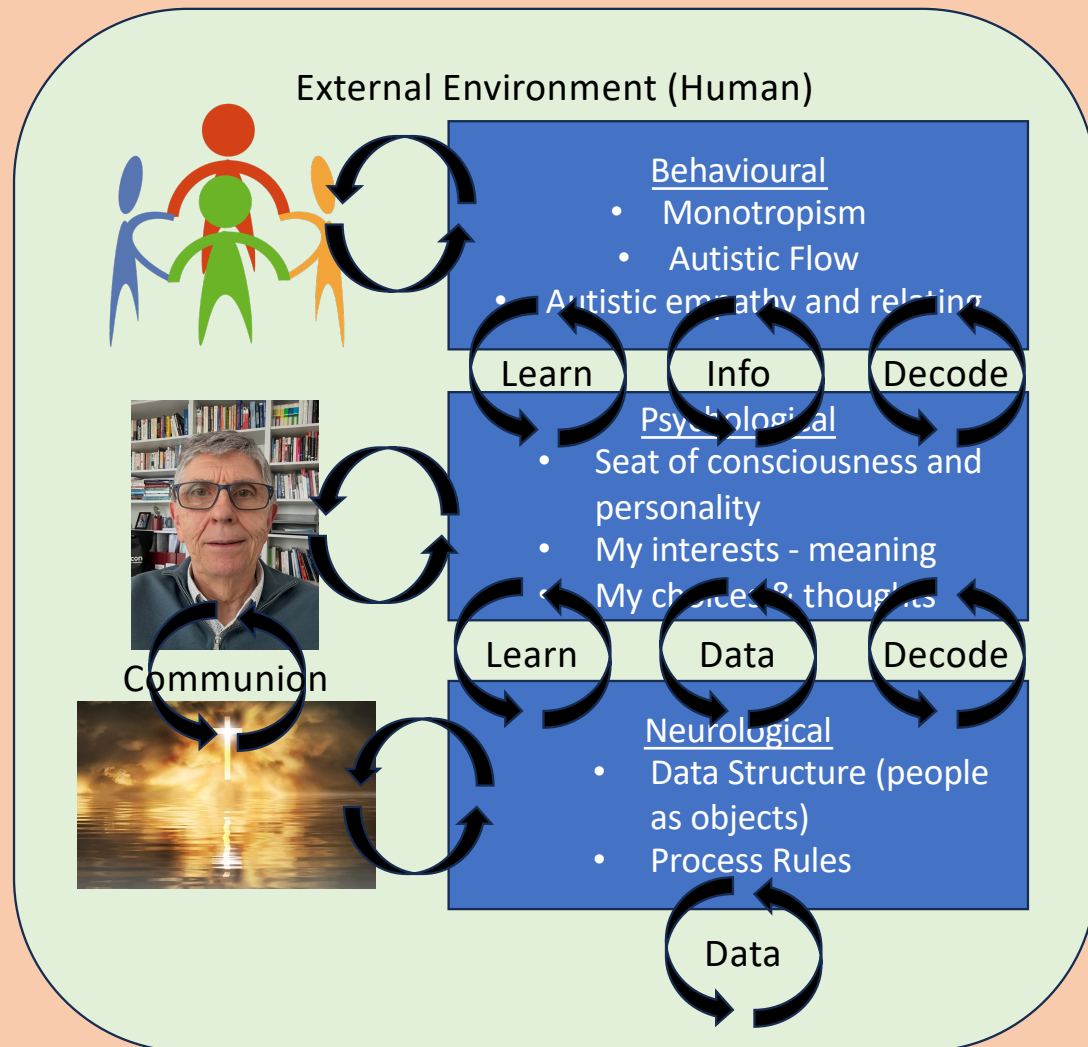
Stewart Rapley

Chair: David Derbyshire

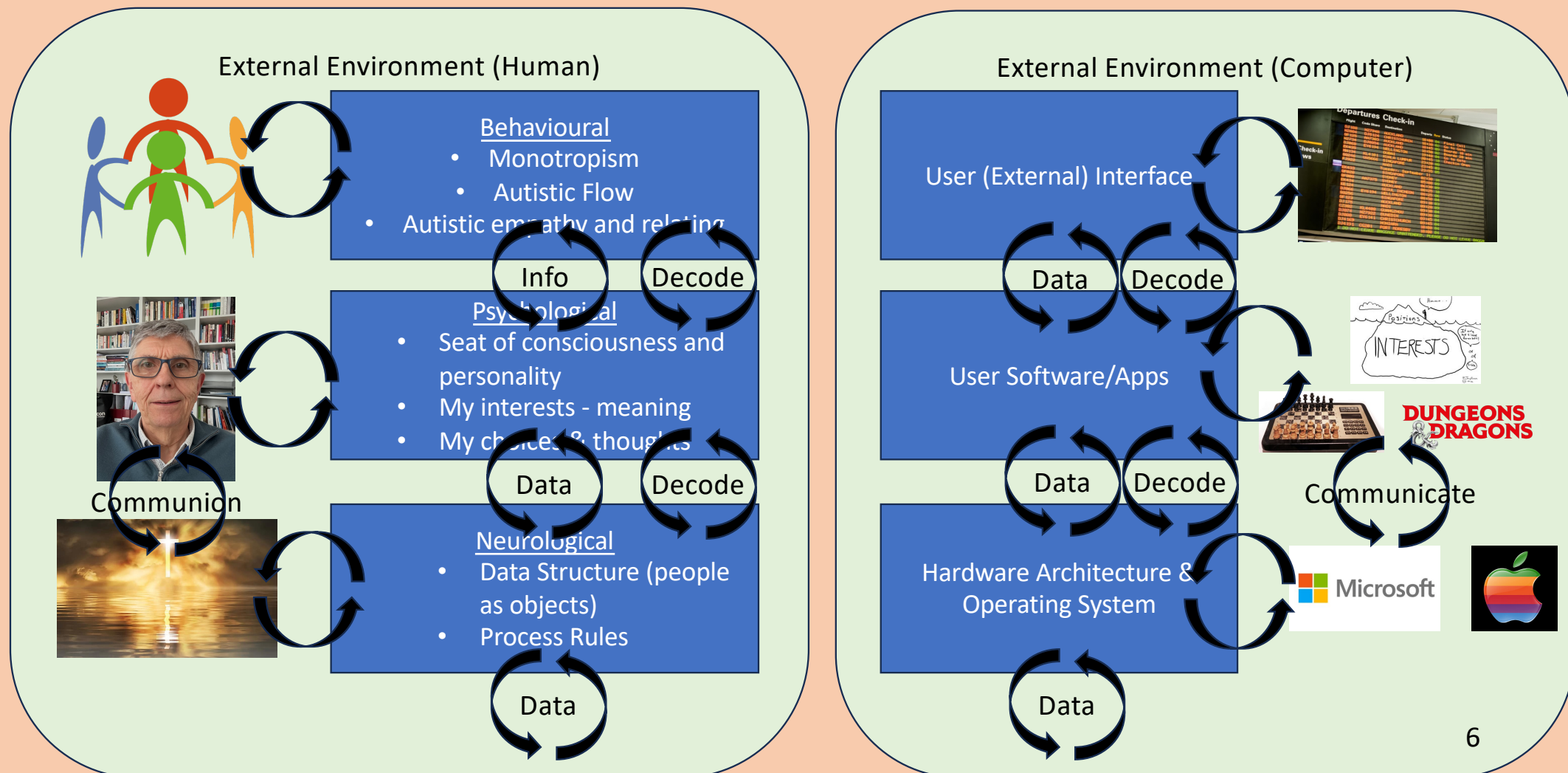
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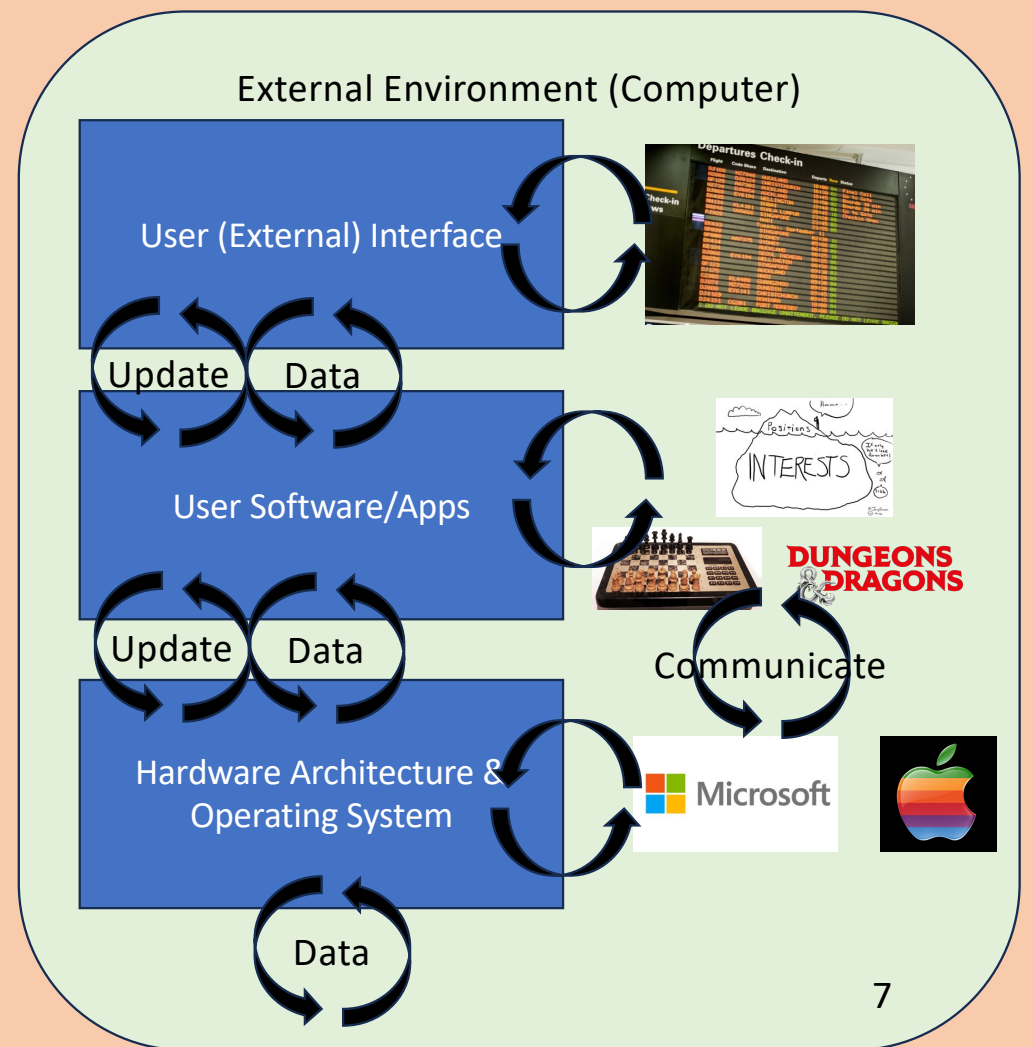
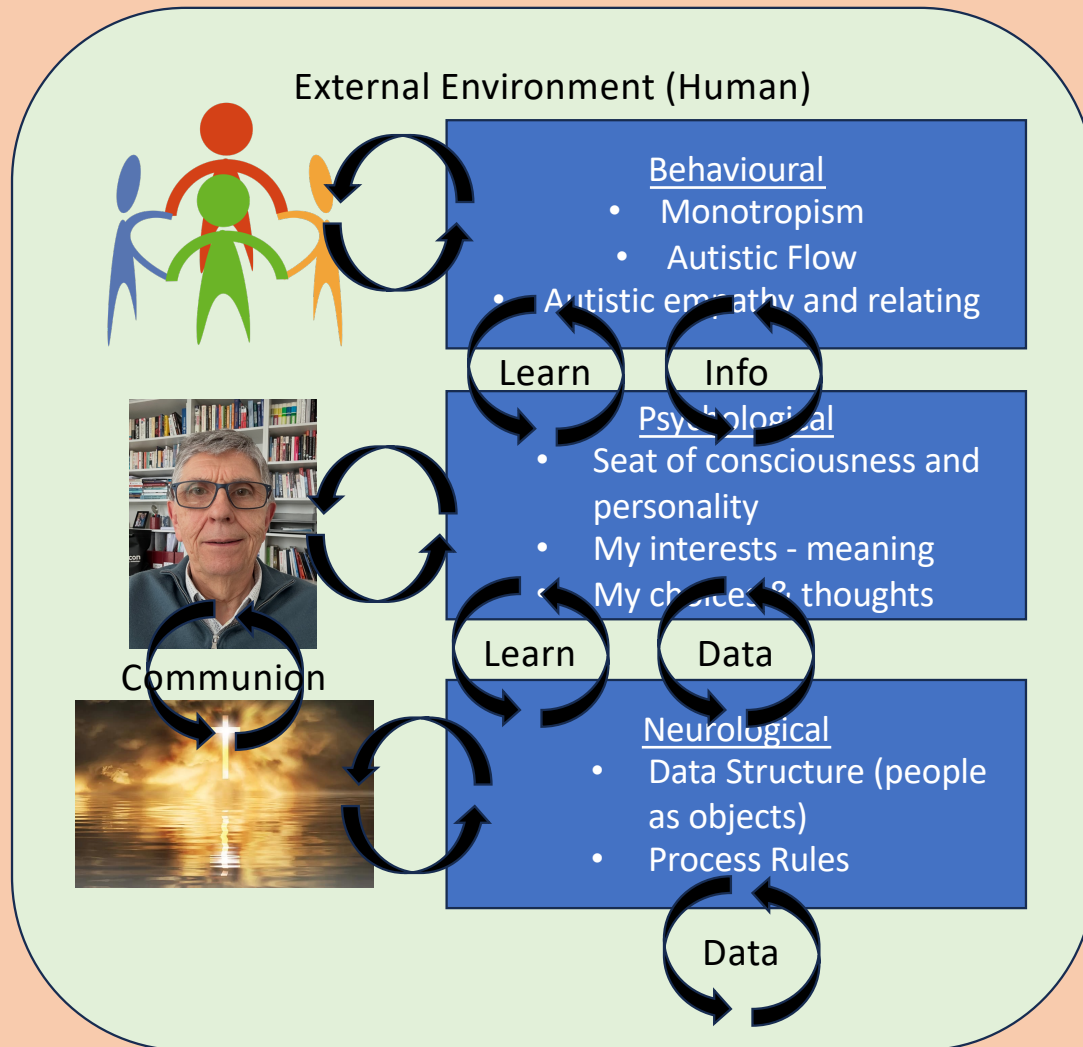
Learn + Decode: 'Value' > 'Notice'

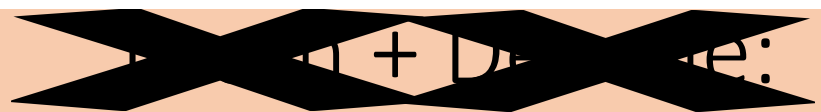


~~Value~~ 'Value' = 'Notice' (Kanner, 'Aloof'?)

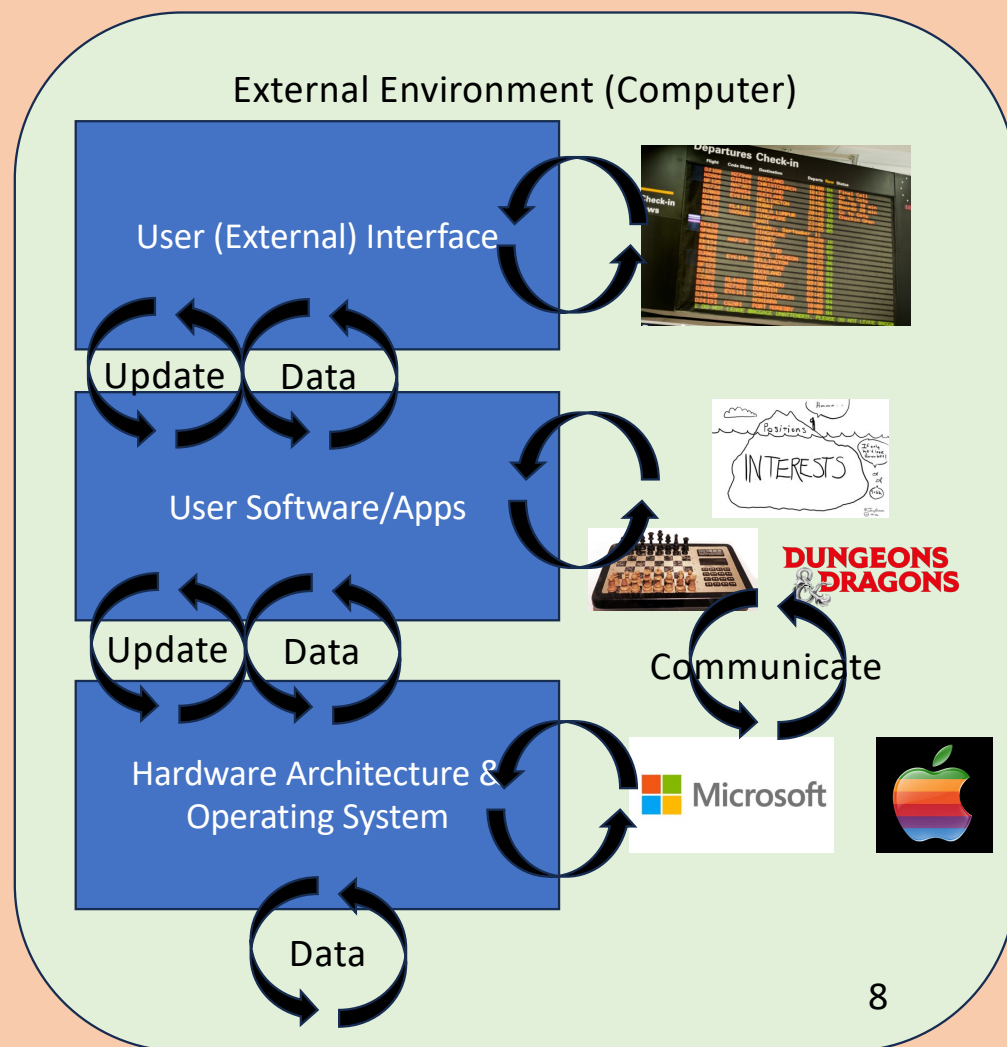
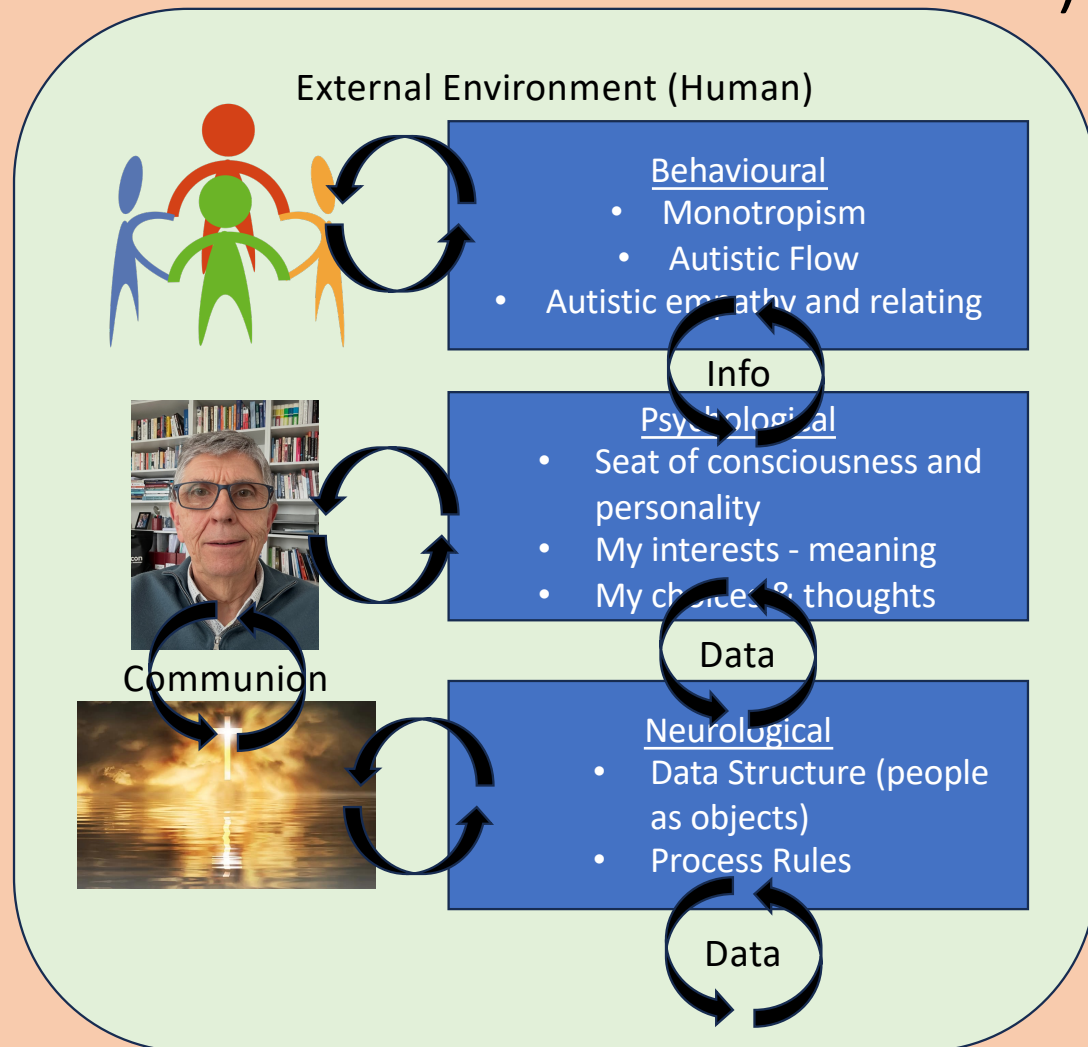


Title: 'Non-Verbal'?





~~Value~~ + Data = Notice: 'Value' = 'Notice' (Kanner, 'Aloof' + 'Non-Verbal'?)



Discussion Questions

1. What is your initial reaction?
2. How do we account Biblically for the concept of human consciousness and self-consciousness – which appears to be something that does not arise from a ‘material world’?
3. How well do you think this approach caters for the observed ability of some autistic people (those with functioning learning capabilities) to learn social skills, empathy, etc. – skills that neurotypical people develop as innate functions (even if the ‘autistic versions’ can sometimes be ‘different’)?
4. What are the implications for the contribution of autistic people in the Body of Christ?

COMMUNITY NEWS

CFE Discussion Schedule - 2026

DATE	DAY/TIME	CFE-Autism DISCUSSION TOPIC	SPEAKER	CHAIR	CHAT
21 Feb	Sat/11am GMT	Long Covid and Autism - overlapping communities?	Grant	Stewart	Sue
21 Feb	Sat/11am GMT	Beating alcohol dependence?	Courtney	Sue	David
21 Mar	Sat/11am GMT	Autistic burnout and trauma?	Sue	David	Stewart
18 Apr	Sat/11am BST*	Seeing, noticing, valuing?	Stewart	David	Sue
16 May	Sat/11am BST	Wounded healers - Christ, Coventry and Me.	Franceska	Stewart	Sue
20 Jun	Sat/11am BST	Appreciating Anglo-Catholic liturgy?	Catherine	David	Stewart
18 Jul	Sat/11am BST	Humour, Faith and Autism?	Jonathan	Stewart	Sue
Aug		Summer Break – no meeting			

CFE Discussion Schedule - 2026

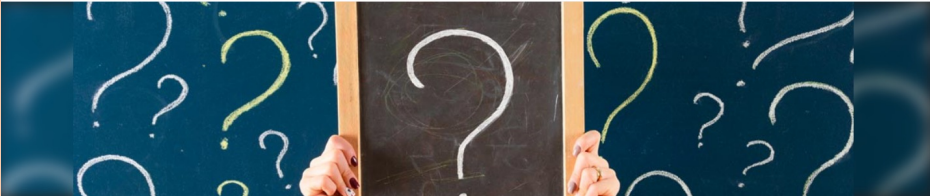
We are now looking for topics for September onwards.

If you would like to take on one of these topics (below) – or have another idea – or are happy to do a talk and would like help choosing a topic - please let me know.

No	Topic
8	Rules and Tricks for Autistic flourishing: Can project management ideas help?
9	Building helpful and 'impactful' relationships outside meetings
12	Autism and Other Faiths
20	Monotropism
21	AI, Autism & Faith
22	Ageing: an issue for autistic Christians?
23	Raising issues with Church: "shall I stay or shall I go?"
24	Autism and Shame, a faith-based approach.
25	Safeguarding - what is a 'safe space'?



Who we are - What we do - Safeguarding



WEBINAR - Autism / Diversity / Inclusion

Supporting Hidden Differences

Building Church culture for 'Belonging'

Wednesday 4 March 2026
7.30pm to 9.30pm
Free

A webinar hosted by St James and Emmanuel, in association with the Centre for Autism and Theology

[Sign up via Zoom](#)

The webinar recording is now available either from our church website:

<https://stjamesandemmanuel.org/>

Or directly at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHto3ocUh9k>

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This programme will be available shortly after broadcast

James 3 - Taming the tongue

A space for spiritual reflection with a Bible reading, prayer and a range of Christian music led by Stewart Rapley.

15 April 2026
🕒 15 minutes

[Show more](#)

On radio


Wednesday
09:45
BBC RADIO 4 EXTRA

More episodes

PREVIOUS
James 2 - Faith and deeds

NEXT
James 4 - Favour to the humble

[See all episodes from Daily Service](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m002v142>

Something you might be interested in – addresses issues of being human, consciousness etc..



Richard Dawkins versus Rowan Williams: Humanity's ultimate origins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zruhc7XqSxo&t=5035s>