

It's also hard for him to "read" us



51

?

Can you decide how the person sitting next to you feels right now?

52

Use a "camera"



53

But some people can't

54

Prosopagnosia

H. Cygan, H. Okuniewska, et al. (2018). Face processing in a case of high functioning autism with developmental prosopagnosia. *Acta Neurobiologiae Experimentalis Journal*. 78: 114–131; Barton, J., et al. (2004) Are patients with social developmental disorders prosopagnosic? Perceptual heterogeneity in the Asperger and socio-emotional processing disorders. *Brain*. 127: 1706-1716

- can't read the face of others
- may focus only on individual components of the face
- may not realize one expression has multiple meanings

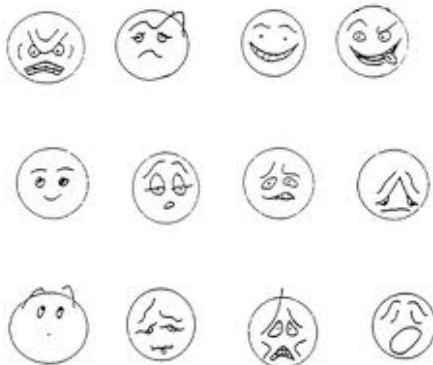
55

Yale Eye-Gaze Study



56

Feelings



57

?

Can you decide how you feel right now?

58

But not everyone can

59

Alexythymia

E. Kinnaird, C. Stewart and K. Tchanturia (2019) Investigating alexithymia in autism: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *European Psychiatry*. 55: 80-89;
C. Mul, S. Stagg, et al. (2018). The feeling of me feeling for You: Interoception, alexithymia and empathy in autism. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. 48: 2953-2967.

- the inability to identify and describe feeling states
 - can't read emotions in others
 - limited vocabulary to describe these states
 - especially with subtle states

60

?

How can we help these individuals develop this skill that the rest of us simply take for granted?

61

That's where "The Zone" can help

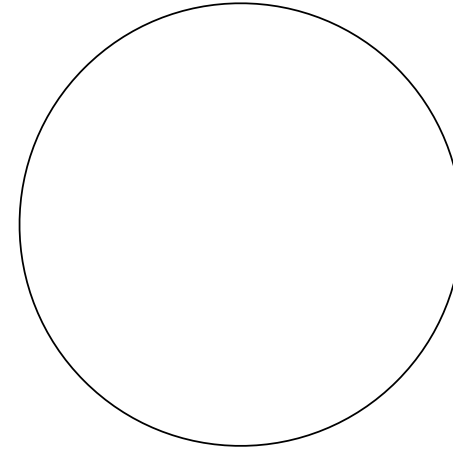
62

The circle is "The Zone"

It represents
what most people
expect to see at
that moment
in time.

63

The dot is the client



64

Ever overdress for a party?



65

Embarrassing, right?



66

Being “Out of the Zone”
is not where you want to be



67

Appropriate social skills require one to:

- realize a message comes in many forms
- identify when a message is being sent
- successfully decode the message
- produce an “action plan”
- implement the plan
- look for feedback to assess it’s “correctness”
- revise as necessary

68

Does this guy use these skills?



69

But I don't care!



70

Why is it important to care?

71

Individuals who recognized the need for improved social thinking had higher salaries than those who didn't recognize the need.

P. Howlin, J. Alcock, C. Burkin, (2005). An 8 year follow-up of a specialist supported employment service for high-ability adults with autism or Asperger syndrome. *Autism* 9: 533-549.

72

Those lacking social cognition had less positive employment experiences and showed more preference for solitary activities.

M. Jennes-Coussens, J. Magill-Evans, C. Koning (2006). The quality of life of young men with Asperger syndrome: a brief report. *Autism*. 10: 403-414.

73

Outcome in AS was good in 27% of cases. However, 26% had a very restricted life, with no occupation or activity and no friends. Why? Poor awareness of social thinking.

Cederlund, M., Hagberg, B., Billstedt, E., Gillberg, I. C., and Gillberg, C. (2007). Asperger Syndrome and Autism: A Comparative Longitudinal Follow-Up Study More than 5 Years after Original Diagnosis. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.38: 72-85.

74

But I only want to talk about the things I like



75

?

NO
Do teachers want the
same things out of their students
as their students
want from their peers?

76

What's important?

Adolescent Viewpoint	Teacher Viewpoint
nonverbal comprehension	turn taking
perspective taking	perspective taking
vocal tone interpretation	logical communication
	clarification

77

What's unimportant?

Adolescent Viewpoint	Teacher Viewpoint
eye contact	humor comprehension
narrative	slang usage
humor comprehension	nonverbal comprehension
topic maintenance	topic maintenance
slang usage	

78

How often do we communicate?

Yorkston, K., Eadie, T., Baylor, C., Deitz, J., Dudgeon, B., Miller, R., Amtmann, D. (2006)
Developing a Scale of Communicative Participation. ASHA 2006 Annual Convention. Miami Beach.

- 80% of waking hours are spent communicating

Listening **High**

Speaking

Reading

Writing **Low**

79

Neuroscience discovered...

- our brain's design makes it *sociable*
- it is drawn into a brain-to-brain linkup whenever we engage with another person
- this linkage allows me to affect you and you to affect me



80

How can that be?

81

Thank the amygdala



82

Which of the 6 human feelings
arouses the amygdala the most?

- Happiness
- Surprise
- Fear
- Anger
- Sadness
- Disgust



83

?

What's with the amygdala?

84

The amygdala reads emotions

- elation in the tone of someone's voice
- hint of anger around the eyes
- posture reflecting defeat

It then processes this information
subliminally, beyond the reach of
conscious awareness

85

The amygdala instantly recognizes
the emotion we see in others



86

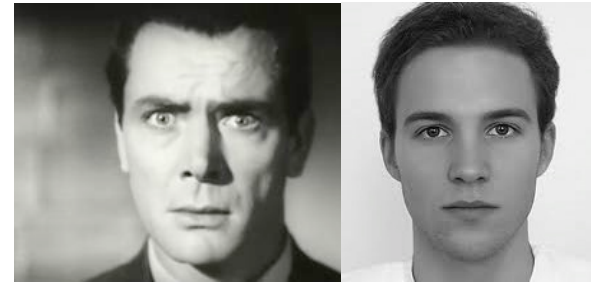
- the stronger the emotion displayed, the more intense the amygdala's reaction

Whalen, P., Shin L., McNerney, S., Fischer, H., Wright, C., Rauch, S. (2001). A functional MRI study of human amygdala responses to facial expressions of fear versus anger. 1: 70-83.

- when 2 people interact face-to-face, contagion spreads via multiple neural circuits within each person's brain

87

Which picture causes you more reaction?



88

- the human brain has multiple mirror neuron systems used to:
 - mirror actions
 - read intentions
 - read emotions

89

Social skills depend on mirror neurons



90

How fast does our brain make a pro or con decision about another person?



1/20th of a second

91

Let's return to "The Zone"

92

Ever feel out of place?



93

You used mirror neurons to help you analyze the situation

94

Friends can help too



95

So can your eyes



96

So, use your eyes, your amygdala,
and your mirror neurons to decide if
your dot is "In the Zone"

97

Because you don't want people to
put your dot "Out of the Zone"



98

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