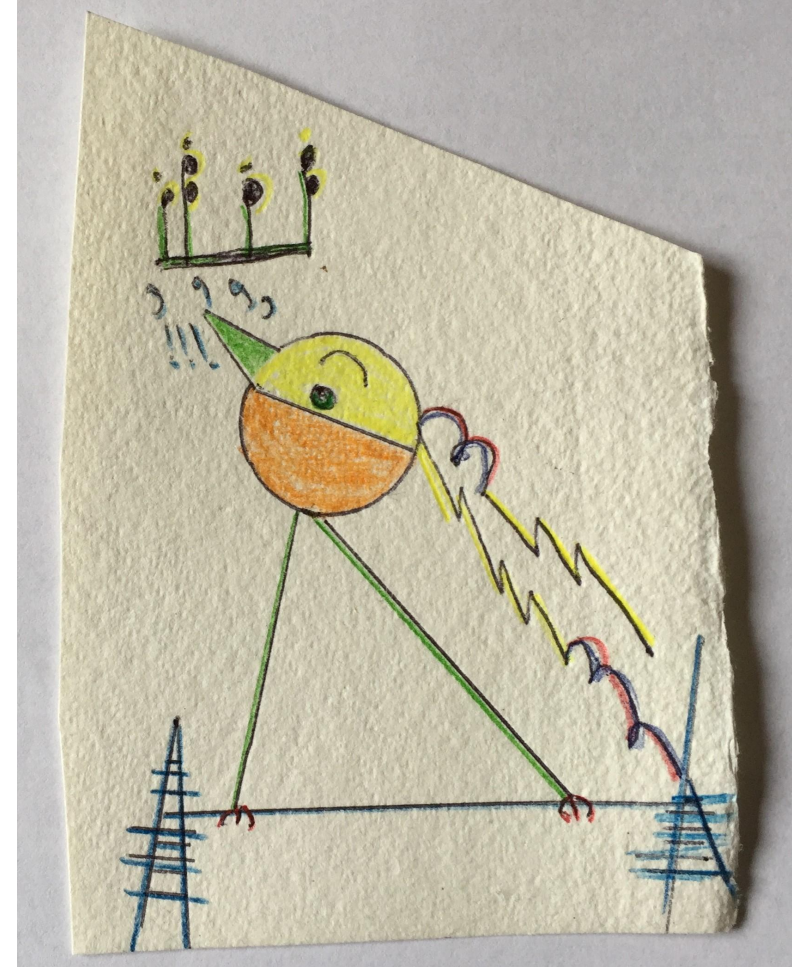
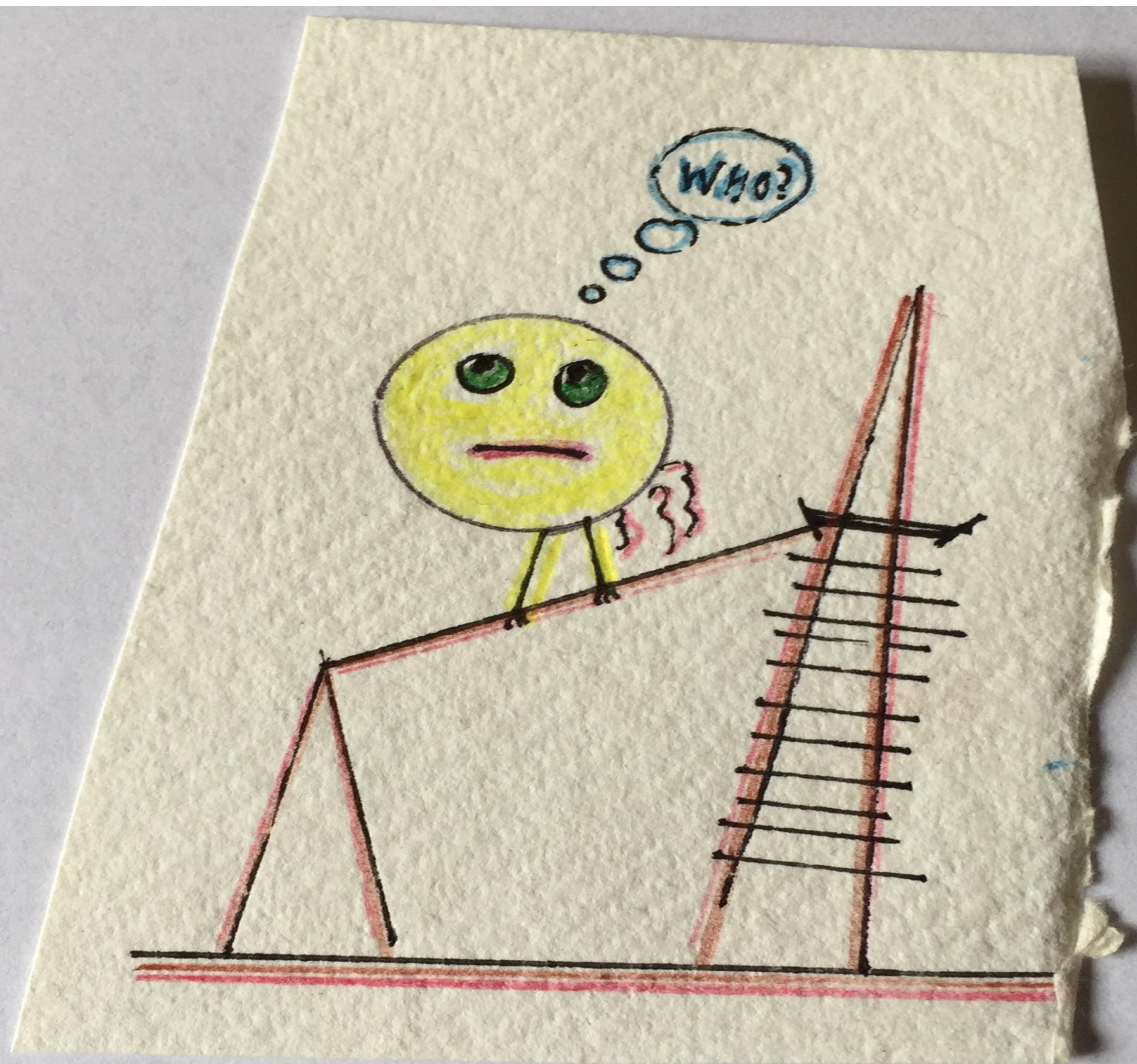


# The Identity of Disconnection

My name is Paul



# Hello!

# Hello!

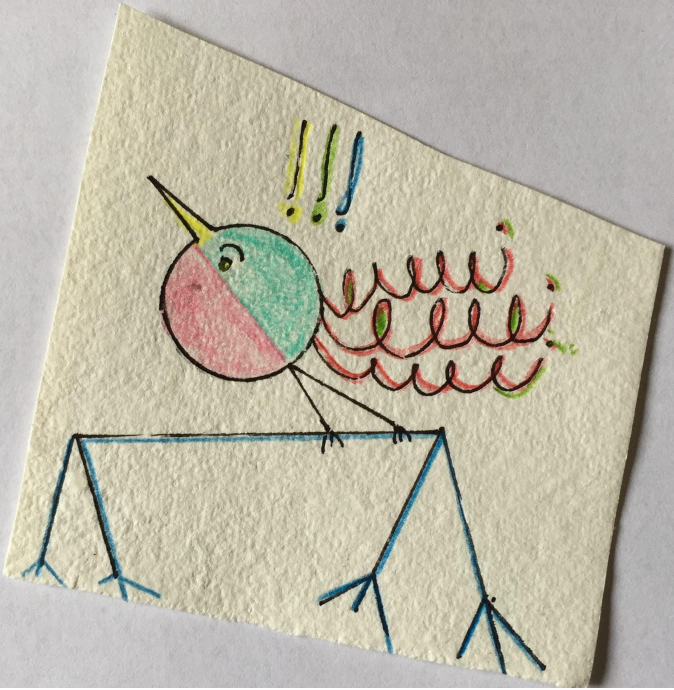
now go away

# Hello!

now go away

(connect)

(disconnect)



# Connection

a relationship in which a person or a thing is linked or associated with something else

a gift?

# What is connection?

“Any fact becomes important when it’s connected to another”

(Umberto Eco)

“We are all so much together, but we are all dying of loneliness”

(Albert Schweitzer)

“I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship”

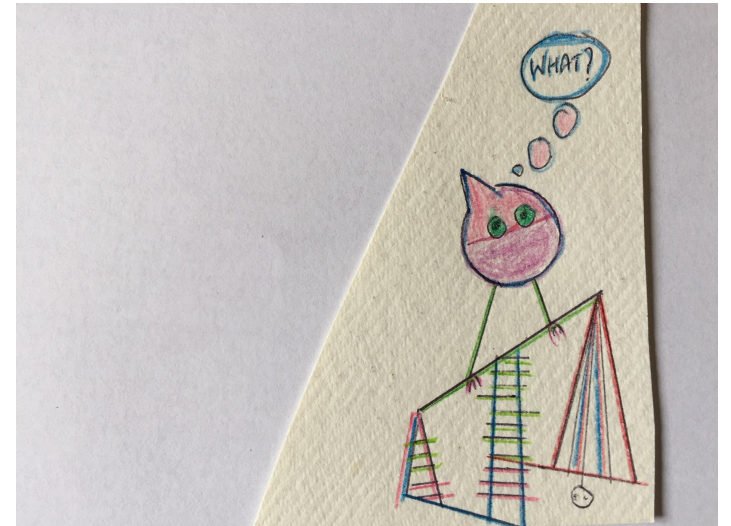
(Brene Brown)



# Disconnection

the state of being isolated or detached or of terminating a connection

a curse?





# What is disconnection?

“Being connected to everything has disconnected us from ourselves  
and the preciousness of this present moment.”

(L.M. Browning)

“I don’t know why people are so keen to put the details of their private  
life in public; they forget that invisibility is a superpower.”

(Banksy)

“Disconnect so that you can connect with what matters most”

(glib internet meme)

Is it, ‘Leave me alone, world, I want to get introspective’?

# Connections to what...or connections to who?

Various services that we need to exist:

- Health services
  - DWP
- Local government
- The market place in general - work
  - Housing
  - And others...

These connections can be problematic

# Connections to what...or connections to who?

More personal connections:

- Family
- Friends
- Neighbours
- Relationships
- Autistic people?
- NT people?

These connections can also be problematic

# Technology – connect, disconnect

- Social media or anti-social media?
- This can be amazing – it allows the creation of communities that do not require eye-contact!!!
- Unspoken etiquette, rules and bullshit
- Hostility...even in supposedly friendly groups about autism

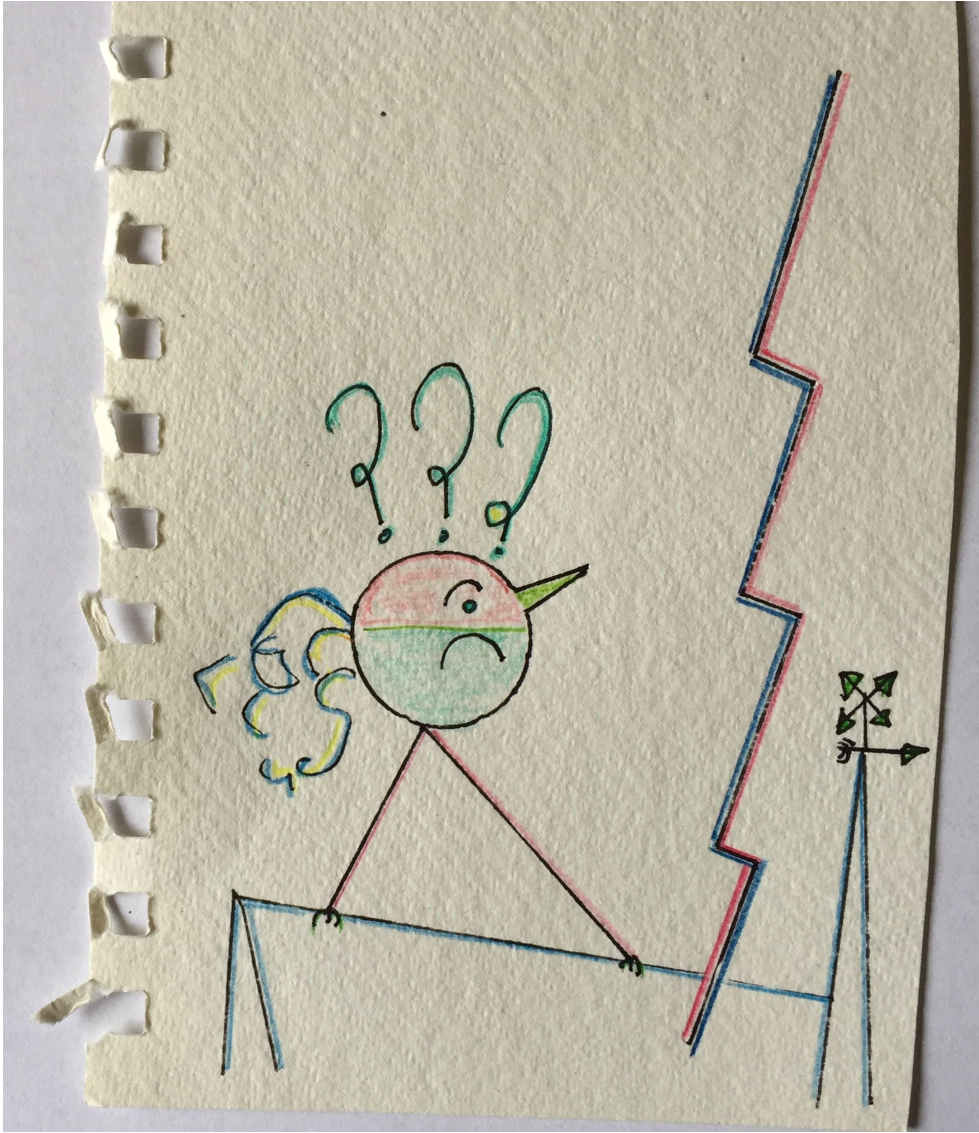


# What's the deal with these connections?

- Who benefits from the connections?
  - Where does the power lie?
  - Who are the gatekeepers?
- What's the agenda and who is setting it?
  - Who is being served?
- In terms of the organisations we connect to  
...what is their reason for being?

These are discussion points. I want to hear your views

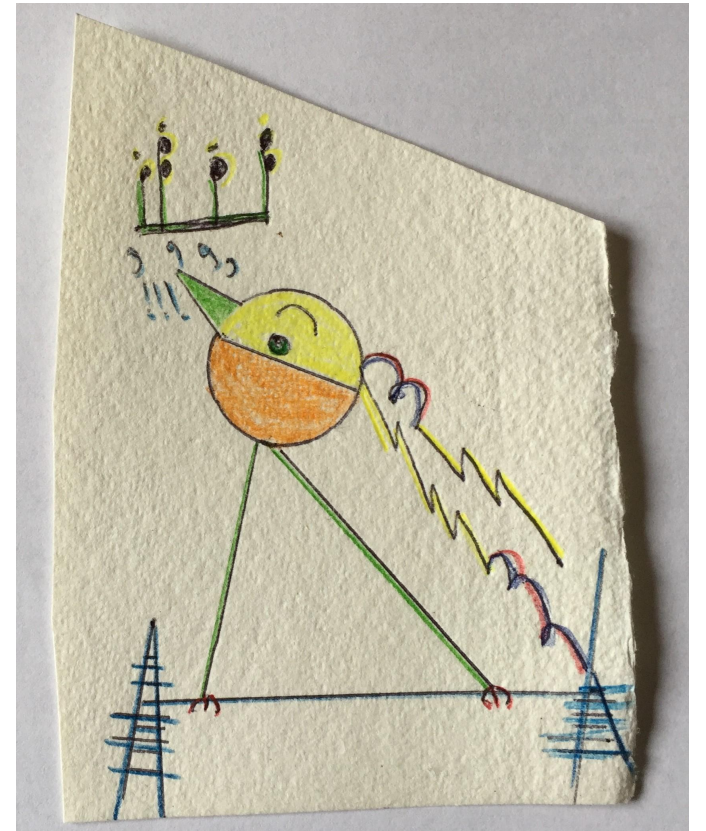






# Connection=Communication=Identity

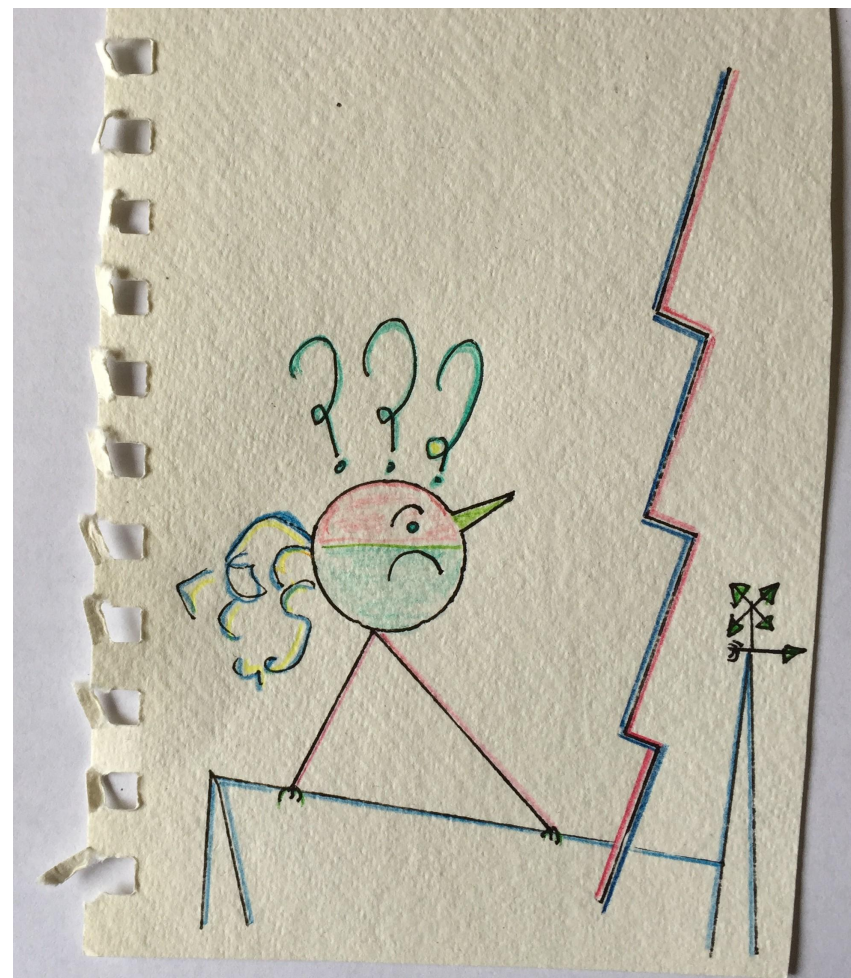
- Not always
  - My autistic identity was forged in the fires of disconnection
  - I don't have to 'belong' – or be connected
  - Sometimes I want to 'belong' – to be connected
  - Other times I reject connection



# Some last thoughts...

- Further discussion would be good

The things I've talked about apply to everyone  
Making...or rejecting...or subverting connections is a  
part of our autistic identity  
We are all unique and we are all the same



# You know the old saying...

Once you've met one neurotypical...

You've met one neurotypical

Disconnection  
is not

Alienation

Estrangement

Loneliness

Disconnection can be



Freedom from having to conform  
Liberation  
Tranquility

Disconnection: gift or curse?

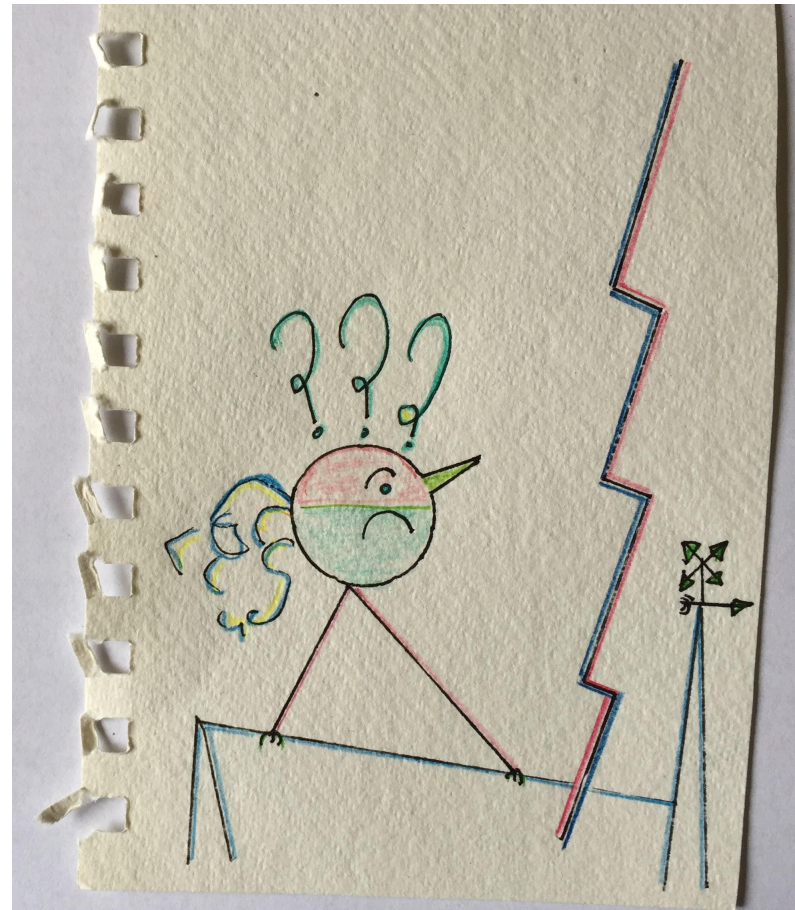
My girlfriend would laugh at this. I say this to her every day

Black or white?

Yes

Both

Please



I have been Paul.

You have all been lovely.

Mostly.