

## INTRODUCTION

Current empirical research suggests that aberrant brain connectivity characterises the neurobiology of autism<sup>1</sup>. It has been shown that modification of neural connections impacts the neurodevelopment of information processing, emotions and communication. However, it would have been impossible to understand the real impacts that these differences have on internal functioning without the direct implication of autistic adults. This lack of understanding of the unique needs of autistic people causes damage.

### SACCADE MODEL

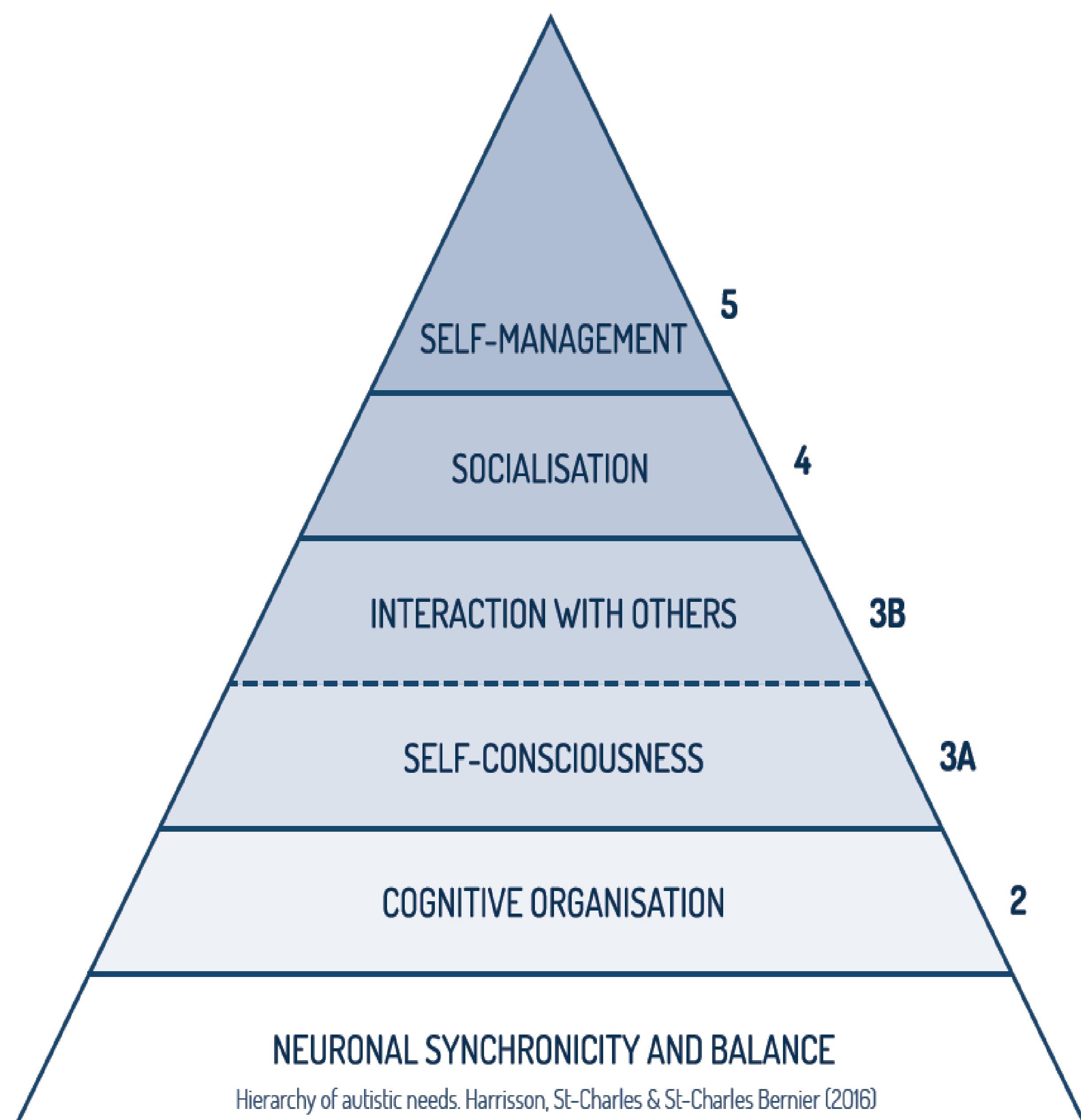
SACCADE is a cognitive developmental model built around the hypothesis of the internal functioning of the thinking structure of autism elaborated by an autistic person and a neurotypical person (Harrison & St-Charles 2,3).

The new understanding of autism proposed by SACCADE follows Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory<sup>4</sup>. This model is recognized for its relevance and its ability to integrate, with consistency, contemporary theories in various research domains concerned with autism.

By understanding the distinctive needs of an autistic individual, SACCADE's specific and unique interventions can address these needs and promote a balanced and harmonious development.

SACCADE's key interventions target the hidden aspects of autism (level 1, 2 and 3A) and enable autistic individuals to access their own organization of thought and their own emotions, sensations, and experiences. This access stimulates the stages of development and, as such, impacts the perceptible aspects of autism related to communication and social interactions, all the while fully respecting autistic identity.

### HIERARCHY OF AUTISTIC NEEDS

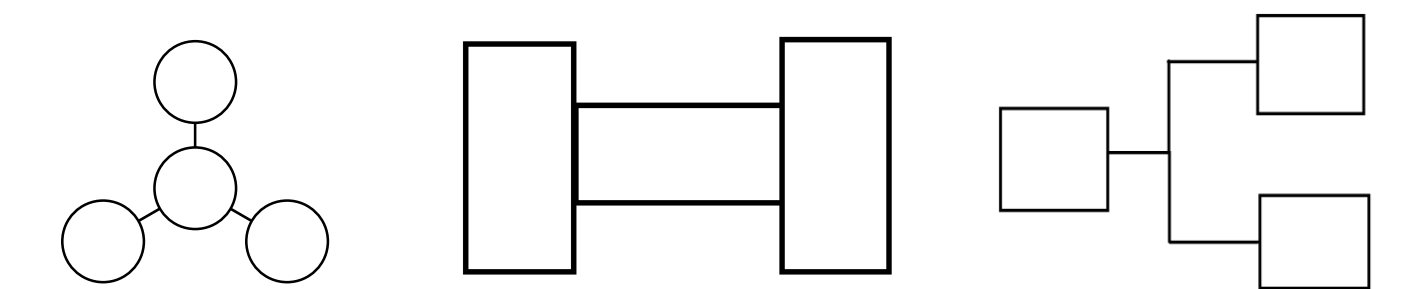


### INNOVATIVE CLINICAL INTERVENTIONS WITH CONCEPTUAL SACCADE LANGUAGE (CSL)

The clinical interventions techniques that SACCADE has developed are pedagogical and cognitive remediation techniques. Amongst them, the Conceptual SACCADE Language (CSL) follows recommendations stemming from research encouraging the use of visual codes for interventions with autistic people based on their enhanced perceptual functioning<sup>5,6</sup>.

Conceptual SACCADE Language (CSL) is a semiotic alphabet of graphic codes and signs used during communication. These graphic tools differ from simple pictograms in that they invoke visuospatial and executive skills.

Ultimately, the goal of intervening with these concrete and visual representations is to help organise information and thoughts in a more dynamic manner by creating links that are flexible. The links then enable a more generalised understanding and a conscious way of thinking, which, in turn, foster a harmonized development.



## CLINICAL RESULTS

SACCADE's pedagogical and cognitive remediation techniques have proven their value everywhere they have been implemented (in daycare and school settings, psychiatric hospitals, a private remediation clinic) to help autistic children and adults.

Based on clinical observations alone, the application of the model has shown the same success everywhere, mainly:



Lastly, it allows people with autism to access their full potential.

Ongoing research aims at measuring and qualifying the effects of interventions based on the SACCADE model.

## REFERENCES

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