

Convergent Research Map

The Sphere of Ordered Experience — Navigational Mind Framework

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Research conducted August 2026*

Preface: What This Research Is Doing

This is a terrain map, not a validation exercise. The goal is to identify where established traditions independently arrived at structurally similar positions to the Sphere, and to note where the Sphere moves beyond them or occupies ground they do not. Claims are labelled EVIDENCED (directly grounded in retrieved sources) or INFERRED (warranted logical extension beyond what can be directly quoted).

Construct 1: The Toye Clarification — Consciousness as Precondition, Not Hypothesis

THE SPHERE'S CLAIM

The falsification test is self-refuting when applied to consciousness, because every test requires a tester. Consciousness is the room, not an object in the room.

CONVERGENT WORK

Descartes / Cogito + IIT (Tononi)

The cogito — I think, therefore I am — establishes that the act of doubting is itself proof of the doubter's existence. Integrated Information Theory takes Descartes as its zeroth axiom: consciousness exists — a self-evident truth about experience that cannot be argued away from outside.

Husserl — Phenomenological Reduction

Husserl's epoché brackets objective reality in total, but cannot bracket the temporal flow of present experience. These recurrent features of the horizon-structure of consciousness cannot be meaningfully doubted. The Sphere uses falsificationist language to make exactly this point: consciousness cannot be one of the objects under test because testing is always already happening inside it.

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THE SPHERE ADDS

The Sphere's specific contribution is stated clearly in the document itself: not a discovery, but a sharpening — translating a philosophical point into the language scientifically minded people use (Popper's falsifiability). No prior source packages it in precisely that form.

Construct 2: The Centre — The Bare Fact of 'From-Here-ness'

THE SPHERE'S CLAIM

Experience has an anchor point — not a metaphysical self, not a soul, just a function: the fact that everything arrives as mine. A function, not an object.

CONVERGENT WORK

William James — Stream of Thought

James's stream of thought is a continuous, personal, changing, selective, object-directed flow — personal in the specific sense that experience always belongs to someone. His theory is proto-phenomenological: consciousness as lived, dynamic, perspectival, and interest-laden.

Heidegger / Sartre / Zahavi — Jemeinigkeit

Heidegger named this quality Jemeinigkeit ('mineness') — a non-thematic, pre-reflective quality that accompanies every conscious act. Sartre and Zahavi develop this as a non-objectifying self-acquaintance that precedes any reflective 'I.'

Husserl — Noematic Structure

The Sphere's 'centre as function, not object' maps onto Husserl's noema — the intentional content of experience, always organized around a perspectival point. Noesis and noema are two sides of a single intentional structure.

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THE SPHERE ADDS

The Sphere strips the centre of all ontological furniture — no substance, no soul, no persistent ego — arriving at a minimal functionalist position compatible with both physicalist and non-physicalist accounts of mind. This agnosticism is more explicit than Husserl's bracketing and more radical than James's pragmatism. [INFERRED]

Construct 3: The Interior, The Horizon, and the Boundary

THE SPHERE'S CLAIM

The interior is what is currently lit up and organized. The horizon is material that could enter but currently isn't. The boundary is the working surface where raw material becomes structured experience — and where structured experience can dissolve. Boundary stability is the key clinical variable.

CONVERGENT WORK

Husserl — Horizon-Structure

Husserl's horizon-structure of consciousness describes how experience is always surrounded by a penumbra of what is not currently thematized. What is not attended to is not absent — it constitutes the horizon of possible experience. The Sphere's 'horizon' and Husserl's horizon are structurally identical.

William James — Focus, Margin, and Fringe

James (1890) describes a 'centre or focus' and a 'margin' in the conscious field. Focus and margin can change places. This is the Sphere's interior-to-horizon dynamic — and James articulates it over 130 years earlier in strikingly similar language.

Winnicott — Holding Environment

Winnicott's holding environment describes the caregiver insulating the infant from stress, carefully regulating what enters the child's experience and at what rate. This is the Sphere's boundary stability applied developmentally. The therapeutic application — 'target the edge, not the content' — maps directly onto Winnicott's emphasis on the overall emotional climate.

Friston — Free Energy Principle

The Free Energy Principle holds that all living systems strive to minimize free energy — the gap between an organism's internal model and the actual state of the world. The Sphere's 'boundary volatility' maps structurally onto high prediction error states where incoming signals overwhelm the system's generative model. [INFERRED]

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THE SPHERE ADDS

The Sphere's contribution is to name boundary stability as both a clinical target and a variable that moves with identifiable factors: tiredness, stress, trauma, drugs, meditation, and relational context. This is more operationalized than James's phenomenological description and broader in scope than Winnicott's developmental focus.

Construct 4: Antevalence — The Structurally Indescribable

THE SPHERE'S CLAIM

Beyond the horizon is something not yet formed at all — raw material before it becomes possibility of anything in particular. It cannot be described because describing is organizing. Its existence is inferred from a structural fact: experience grows, and expansion must be expansion into something. This is the paper's own invention.

CONVERGENT WORK

Kant — The Noumenon as Limit Concept

Kant's noumenon is not a mystical object but a limit concept — posited not because we can access it, but because its existence is forced by the shape of what we can know. The function of the noumenon is critical: it marks the limit of experience without asserting anything positive beyond that limit. The Sphere explicitly names this Kantian move as its structural parallel.

Integrated Information Theory

IIT distinguishes between what can be integrated into conscious structure (Phi) and what lies outside integrated information — a region that cannot itself be characterized from within the system that does the characterizing. [INFERRED: structurally analogous to Antevalence — the system cannot describe what it has not yet integrated.]

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THE SPHERE ADDS

The Sphere's Antevalence is a structural argument, not a metaphysical posit. It arrives there from a phenomenological direction — the live experience of the not-yet-formed thought, 'hold on, I've got something' — rather than from formal information theory. The phenomenological and formal traditions arrive at the same boundary from opposite sides.

Construct 5: Other People — Real Influence Without Sharing

THE SPHERE'S CLAIM

Signals, not experiences, cross between people. Meaning is not transmitted — it is reconstructed by the receiver using their own ordering system. Alignment is rare, not default. Value is applied during ordering, not carried in the event. Real influence, without sharing.

CONVERGENT WORK

Von Glasersfeld — Radical Constructivism

Radical constructivism holds that knowledge cannot be directly transmitted from one person to another — it must be individually interpreted or constructed. Knowledge is invented, not discovered; it cannot be about objective reality, only about viability within one's own constructed experience.

Vygotsky — Interpretation of Stimuli

Vygotsky accepted Piaget's claim that learners respond not to external stimuli but to their interpretation of those stimuli. Language and culture are frameworks through which humans experience reality — but the act of understanding is always the receiver's own construction.

Winnicott — Transitional Space

Winnicott described an interpersonal space potentially discoverable in relationships — the transitional space — where nothing is known for certain and everything can be created. This space belongs fully to neither person. This is the Sphere's 'real influence without sharing': genuine relational contact constructed between people without either accessing the other's interior.

Merleau-Ponty — Field of Solicitations

Merleau-Ponty locates consciousness in the lived body's pre-reflective engagement with a world that shows up as a field of solicitations, possibilities, obstacles, meanings, and bodily powers — not first as neutral information. The Sphere's 'ordering' corresponds to this pre-reflective organization of the perceptual field. [INFERRED]

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THE SPHERE ADDS

The Sphere makes explicit what constructivism typically leaves implicit: value is applied during ordering, not carried in the event. 'Good and bad are not properties of events — they are operations, applied during ordering, by a person' is a stronger and more precise claim than standard constructivism typically makes. This positions the Sphere's account of intersubjectivity closer to Merleau-Ponty than to cognitive constructivism.

Construct 6: Boundary Stability and Therapy — Target the Edge, Not the Content

THE SPHERE'S CLAIM

Much distress may be a boundary problem, not a content problem. If the edge is on fire, editing the contents is not the repair.

CONVERGENT WORK

IIT — Trauma as Dis-integration

IIT applied therapeutically identifies trauma as creating un-integrated fragments — islands of memory that fail to join the main complex of conscious experience. Therapeutic integration means connecting these fragments to the larger structure, not merely correcting belief-content. This is the Sphere's position from a neuroscientific angle.

Winnicott — Regulation Before Repair

The good-enough mother insulates the infant from stress and regulates what enters experience and at what rate. The repair is environmental and boundary-regulatory — not correction of internal content. A precise clinical parallel.

Friston / Trauma-Informed Care

The Sphere's therapeutic implication — slow down integration, build tolerance for the not-yet-formed, steady the anchor at the centre — maps onto a coherent cluster: Winnicott's holding, Friston's prediction error reduction, and trauma-informed care's principle of 'regulation before processing.' [INFERRED]

DIFFERENTIAL — WHAT THE SPHERE ADDS

The Sphere unifies the developmental (Winnicott), computational (Friston), and phenomenological (James/Husserl) accounts of the boundary under a single clinical concept — boundary stability — and names the factors that move it. No single prior tradition does all three.

Summary: Where the Sphere Stands in This Terrain

Sphere Construct	Strongest Convergent Tradition	What the Sphere Adds
Toye Clarification	Descartes, Husserl, IIT	Falsificationist framing for scientific audiences
The Centre	James, Heidegger, Husserl	Stripped of ontological commitments — purely functional
Interior / Horizon	Husserl, James (focus/margin/fringe)	Named explicitly with clinical application in view
Boundary + Stability	Winnicott, Friston, Gestalt	Integrates developmental, clinical, phenomenological; names variables that move stability
Antevalue	Kant (noumenon as limit concept)	Phenomenological arrival at the same boundary; adds the 'felt, live, in your mouth' grounding
Other People	Von Glasersfeld, Vygotsky, Winnicott	More explicit: value applied in ordering, not carried in event; sharper intersubjectivity
Therapy Target	Winnicott, IIT, trauma-informed care	Names 'boundary stability' as operative clinical variable, unifying prior traditions

Closing Note

The document's acknowledgment of Kant, Husserl, and Merleau-Ponty as sources is accurate and well-placed. The research also surfaces William James (whose focus/margin/fringe is remarkably close to Interior/Horizon), Winnicott (whose holding environment is the clinical application the Sphere anticipates), radical constructivism (which shares the paper's account of intersubjectivity), and Friston's Free Energy Principle (which converges on boundary volatility from a computational direction the Sphere does not cite).

The paper's framing of its own contribution is accurate and appropriately modest: these are shared insights, sharpened and integrated under a vocabulary designed to be usable — not just philosophically coherent. The most distinctive and least-covered ground remains the claim that value is applied during ordering, not carried in the event — a statement stronger than standard constructivism and warranting independent examination.