

Pinner Philosophy Group**Philosopher's Christmas****Key thoughts from Autumn 2025 Term on “The Self”****Peter Keeble**

Philosophical nature of self	Jane O'Grady Guest	Are we separate from nature; nature of the soul/mind; Is the soul/mind eternal?
Carl Jung: Analytical Psychology: the Self, the Shadow and Archetypes.	Richard & Alexis	Is it mumbo jumbo – eg synchronicity, but idea that as a species we react similarly to certain stresses. How is this transmitted? Genes? Goal of self-actualisation and defeating the shadows within ourselves.
Is Materialism Resistible? And what does this mean for Me (Myself)	Patrick	Idea of a modular template for creating a comparator against which to categorise philosophies: What are we? (Material or mental or both?) and are ethics possible. “Materialists can choose to lead enchanted and moral lives.”
The Moral Self GUEST	Fauzia Rahman	Don't automatically assume other people are the problem – it may be you. Focus on what you can control. (stoical)
Personhood and the non-self: a history	David	There was a time when people started to think of themselves as separate beings, not just a part of the clan (Existentialism). There is an alternative Zen way in which this ego disappears: the non-self.
Half term		
Schopenhauer: Metaphysics, Beauty & Ethics	Peter K	We are not in control of ourselves since “We can will what we want but we can't will what we will.” ie we cannot control our constant desires.
Mini Sessions - What made me who I am?	Anna/Peter L/Jonathan/ Patricia/ Sheila	We may not realise to what extent we are controlled by unacknowledged social assumptions. School teachers can teach us by example. Relations with parents can be vital to your development as can your place among siblings.
Other Minds: Is there anybody out there?	Adrian	Idea of non-human minds (octopuses). How do we detect other minds? Wittgenstein – how do we detect our own minds – through collective language because of poor memories!) Andy Clark – we're prediction machines actively interrogating and adjusting to the world – not blank vessels.
Leibniz: The world and our place in it	John	Extraordinary polymath who sees all as entirely separate unities pre-programmed by God so that we appear to be part of the best of all possible worlds.
Freud: is there more to us than we think?	Peter L	A bit speculative and non-falsifiable but a useful way to look at ourselves: as bundles of separate components battling against each other.