

**ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION  
AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED  
ASPIA**

*Mutual acknowledgement and understanding  
of the Asperger marriage experience.*

**September 2008 – NEWSLETTER**

Our next regular support group meeting is  
**this coming Saturday September 6**

Usual venue – College of Nursing, Burwood  
14 Railway Parade, Burwood, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 2-5pm  
\$5.00 non-members; \$2.00 members

This month we are going to take the opportunity to have an informal discussion time again. We've had professional speakers for the last two meetings and will have another one next meeting. It is important to have informal meetings from time to time to de-brief, discuss previous topics and generally re-group.

Members, please remember to return your library books.

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**ASPIA Lunch Club** meets prior to ASPIA meeting  
**TOMOYA RESTAURANT**  
**119 Burwood Road Burwood**  
above the Avondale Hotel (opposite Hungry Jack's)  
From 12 noon – 2.00pm  
Great food and friendship

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**Other news and items ...**

**Catalyst and ABC Science Show**

Last week we received word that Asperger's Syndrome was to be a feature on both the ABC Science Show (radio national) and also Catalyst. Below are links to both.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/scienceshow/stories/2008/2343877.htm>

<http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/>

(Thank you to those who sent the links through)

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**ADHD & Asperger's Syndrome**

We've received word that Julie Peterson will be speaking for the ADDults with ADHD group on Saturday 13 September on the topic

**“Adult ADHD, Aspergers or Both?”**

2.00pm – 4.30pm

“The Muse”, Ultimo TAFE, Harris Street, Broadway  
Building C, on right when entering main gate in Harris Street  
Tea/coffee & chat afterwards

More info contact [info@add.org.au](mailto:info@add.org.au)

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**Next ASPIA meeting October 4**

Psychologist Eleanor Gittins will speak on  
“The Physiological Processing of Asperger's Syndrome”

**ASPIA INC (Asperger Syndrome Partner Information Australia Incorporated)**  
*Providing information, contacts and support for partners (and family members) of adults with Asperger's Syndrome*  
PO Box 57 Macarthur Square LPO, MACARTHUR NSW 2560 (Aus)

Enquiries: Carol Grigg 0408 817 828

Visit our website for more information and useful links

[www.aspia.org.au](http://www.aspia.org.au)  
[info@aspia.org.au](mailto:info@aspia.org.au)

### **Self-Assessment Questionnaires**

From time to time people ask me about a self-assessment questionnaire for Asperger's Syndrome.

The first link below is for the "Autism Spectrum Quotient" by Simon Baron-Cohen for adults.

<http://www.glenrowe.net/BaronCohen/AutismSpectrumQuotient/AutismSpectrumQuotient.aspx>

The second link below is "The Australian Scale for Asperger's Syndrome" for children,

by Tony Attwood and Michelle Garnett.

<http://www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger/aspergerscaleAttwood.html>

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### **Illawarra/Shoalhaven ASPIA Satellite Group**

This group is going well and the next meeting is on 27 September in Berry

For details, please contact Sylvia on (02) 4295 7327

or email Eleanor Gittins on [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com)

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### **Canberra Partner Support Group**

Several have expressed interest in a Canberra support group.

If anyone is interested please let me know via the ASPIA email address: [info@aspia.org.au](mailto:info@aspia.org.au) .

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### **ASPIA Members**

Please note we will be holding our AGM prior to our meeting on November 1

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### **Additional thoughts . . .**

During our last meeting I noted down that I'd like to mention the matter of loss and grief.

We usually think of loss and grief in relation to someone passing away, a diagnosis of a life threatening disease, or some significant life changing event involving the loss of something of great value to us.

For partners, the discovery of Asperger's Syndrome in our partner involves a whole range of feelings, which definitely include grief and a sense of loss. It's not a death, it's not a disease, and it's not a publicly recognisable loss. However, it is still a deep personal and private loss because all of our expectations, hopes and dreams suddenly have to change. Expectations of a normal emotionally reciprocal relationship. Hopes that daily family life can be negotiated straightforwardly and provide healthy nurture and support for each family member. Dreams about normal future milestones including retirement, etc.

Many of these things can still be possible, but they will take a different form to what was naturally expected. The path forward will be altered and the steps will need to be more deliberate. Feelings of loss and grief can seem like an engulfing fog, and may not be easily identified. It may help to talk to someone. I was greatly helped to work through a 10 week loss and grief programme where I learned a lot about myself, my values and what was preventing me from healing and growing as an individual.

Being able to verbalise what the loss means to you will help you to gain greater objectivity about your path forward. (Carol Grigg)

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