

ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION AUSTRALIA (ASPIA) INCORPORATED

(Formerly **GRASP** Partner/Spouse Support Group)

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

NEWSLETTER – December 2011

Our next support group meeting will be this **Saturday 3 December, 2pm – 5pm**

College of Nursing, 14 Railway Pde, Burwood, 2nd Floor

* **\$10.00 per casual visitor/non-member**

* **\$5.00 per member**

Please bring something to share for afternoon tea

We are thrilled once again to welcome **Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates**
to our meeting to answer our questions and facilitate a discussion and education session.

* PLEASE NOTE an increase in the Meeting Entry Fee, effective for the December meeting.

This has become necessary because ASPIA's funds have been absorbing
an increase in room hire of 400% since February 2011.

The decision to increase the meeting entry fee was made at the AGM on 5 November
and subsequent Committee meeting.

ASPIA's meetings are only suitable for **non-Asperger** individuals
ASPIA does not have the expertise to responsibly offer education or support to adults with Asperger's
Syndrome. Individuals with Asperger's Syndrome are advised to see copies of our previous
Newsletters for listings of groups specifically set up to address the needs of those with Asperger's
Syndrome. Thank you for your understanding.

ASPIA Lunch Club

ASPIA Lunch Club meeting before support group meeting

LITTLE NEPAL restaurant, Shop C, 135 Burwood Road, Burwood (Sydney)

From Burwood Station, go left & up the hill, a few shops past the Westpac Bank
and then cross the road. Arrive any time between 12noon & 2pm. All welcome.

Other partner support groups/contacts in Australia

Brisbane: **Asperger Partners Support Group (APSG):** Phone Helen on 0418 761 652

or email gaps.group@gmail.com

Brisbane/rural Qld: Visit www.aspiepartners.com

Northern Rivers, NSW: Phone Debbie on (02) 6676 0483, Email:

northernriversasdnetwork@gmail.com

Central Coast, NSW: possible informal group to start, contact ASPIA

Canberra: Phone Anita on 0434 165 604

Perth: Phone Roz on (08) 9284 5252, Email: rozsdesk@inet.net.au

Perth: aspiepartnerswa@hotmail.com

Melbourne: Visit forum at <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/aspartnr/index.html> .

Adelaide: Phone Heike Haffer on 0431 039 136, email heikehaffer@hotmail.com

Parents of women & older teen girls with AS: Contact Alison on rmil6566@bigpond.net.au

ASPIA Meeting Dates for 2012

*** Please note there is no meeting in January ***

February 4	March 3	April 7	May 5	June 2	July 7
August 4	September 1	October 6	November 3	December 1	

ASPIA INC

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Report: Workshop with Rudy Simone on 12 November

Rudy's presentation was extremely informative and helpful. We had 62 in attendance and feedback has been good. The constructive tone and outcome of this workshop has encouraged us to consider organising further couple workshops in the future.

Thanks to everyone in attendance for making it a great event.

Book Recommendation

"Asperger Awareness A Key to Success for IT and Technical Managers"

By Stephen Plowright, available through Lulu

<http://www.lulu.com/product/15573007>

Stephen and his wife are part of our AS & NT support communities in Sydney, so this book is an exciting addition to our shelves and comes highly recommended.

Thoughts ...

There are two things that are essential for an Asperger marriage to survive, recover or grow.

First is that the person with Asperger's Syndrome be willing to explore and accept the existence of Asperger's Syndrome in their personality and their relationship, and hopefully seek professional guidance. People with AS tend to cope better and help their partners and families cope better when they are pro-active in understanding and managing their AS characteristics better. I know that many partners reading this carry a lot of grief around the hope of this happening for their relationship.

Second, the non-Asperger partner must stop believing that their partner will become neurotypical if they just learn about AS, "get it", accept it, get diagnosed or if we try hard enough to convince them. It is imperative for non-AS partners to continue to learn and thoroughly understand the facts about AS and how it is manifesting in their own relationship. Then we have to allow our minds to make a shift into accepting the AS, that it is here to stay and that change will be slow and limited, even with the most co-operative AS partner.

Some great words of advice from the 123 Magic & Emotion Coaching Parent Training Course are to "avoid too much talk, and too much emotion" when dealing with our children. This is important for any relationship, but particularly with Asperger's Syndrome because of the core difficulties in processing communication and emotions. A good motto: Avoid too much talk and too much emotion.

A word of caution, especially as the pressure of the Christmas season mounts - if the frustration levels in your relationship have reached the point where either you or your partner are frequently resorting to acts of bullying or abuse towards each other, eg, shaming, humiliating, belittling in public, put-downs, yelling, criticism, needling, swearing, threatening, breaking or throwing things, physical harm, controlling, over-riding, intimidating, depriving, etc, then it is time to stop, think and make a decision about a temporary or permanent separation. It is not ok to remain in & contribute to a relationship that is characterised by these behaviours, even if you hold Christian or traditional beliefs about marriage. Christian beliefs are primarily about love, kindness and self-control. Harming a partner with attitudes, words or deeds is not ok for anyone, regardless of beliefs and regardless of one's neurology. No relationship can be recovered within that kind of atmosphere anyway. "Time out" can work for adults too!

On behalf of ASPIA's Members and Committee, I would like to wish everyone a calm and safe Christmas and New Year season, filled with special moments of joy and hope. Carol Grigg.

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