

ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION AUSTRALIA (ASPIA) INCORPORATED

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

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

NEWSLETTER – July 2011

Our next support group meeting will be on **Saturday 2 July, 2pm – 5pm**
College of Nursing, 14 Railway Pde, Burwood, 2nd Floor
\$2 Members / \$5 Non-Members (covers room hire, etc)

At this meeting we will view a **DVD of Professor Tony Attwood** speaking at an
ASPIA workshop event several years ago on the topic
"Asperger's Syndrome in Marriage & Long-Term Relationships".
Discussion to follow. Please bring something to share for afternoon tea.

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 page 2** of this Newsletter and seek out 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
Now at 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

Gold Coast: Phone Tricia on 0413 085 174 or email tricia.lemontree@gmail.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@iinet.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

Book Supplier – Footprint Books

For books on a wide range of topics relating to Asperger's Syndrome, including relationships,
visit Footprint Books (Sydney) www.footprint.com.au . Online ordering available.

ASPIA Meeting Dates for 2011

July 2	August 6
September 3	October 1
November 5	December 3

ASPIA INC

ABN 30 583 771 917

PO Box 57 Macarthur Square LPO MACARTHUR NSW 2560

Web: www.aspia.org.au Email: info@aspia.org.au

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Support groups and resources for adults with Asperger's Syndrome

Support Group for Adults with AS, 2nd Saturday every month – Burwood, Sydney

Contact Eleanor Gittins on 0408 954 358 or email janetgittins@hotmail.com

Support group for Adults with AS – North Shore, Sydney

Visit website for announcements www.jdpsy.org or call Jeroen Decates on 0402 028 588

AS Social Group “Social Steps” – Wollongong

Now on the first and third Wednesday of every month, 6.00pm – 8.00pm

The Palm Court Hotel, Corrimal. Please contact Samantha at asd.support@hotmail.com

Brisbane – AU-SOME Women and Girls' Group

Contact Camilla Connolly camillaconnolly@optusnet.com.au or

Rachael Harris Rachael.counsellor@gmail.com

Website www.camillaconnollyasd.com

Aspect also has resources for adults: Email: infoline@autismspectrum.org.au or Phone: 8977 8377
and a ***social group in Sydney for diagnosed adults*** New Calender of events available.

Contact Caroline Smith, the group Co-ordinator at carolinesmith@autismspectrum.org.au

Workshops on Relationships, social skills, sexuality – Liz Dore, www.relationshipsandprivatestuff.com

Newsletter Comments ...

- See **Sue Larkey's** helpful article about why AS people are so afraid of making mistakes, and also why they don't seem to learn from their mistakes. She calls it a difficulty with “cognitive flexibility”. http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=8LpOa&m=lj2ZfjUZM2v439&b=_JP9UQ7ujlBsAlz8swFtpw
- An old friend **Lorna** who is a mental health worker and grief counsellor made the following response to our newsletter “thoughts” last month – “...*your comments ... are far from bleak! They are realistic and in line with grief work and also recovery-oriented practice. Accepting the reality and feeling the pain of the loss (of the dream) are so important for moving on and healing in so many areas of life.*”
- **Jeroen Decates** frequently reminds us at meetings that “*Neurotypicals want to be happy; people with Asperger's Syndrome want an absence of conflict.*”
- In our June meeting, **Julie Peterson** and **Steve Den Kaat** used the analogy of a bucket to describe our ability to cope with everyday life and situations, explaining how the bucket of the person with Asperger's Syndrome is already almost full all of the time, and any additional stress or challenge will often cause it to overflow, with meltdowns, etc following. They went on to explain that sometimes it is actually necessary and better if the meltdown can occur because this allows for a defusion of the frustration, and enables the person with AS to calm themselves and settle back down to a manageable level of stress again. Not pleasant for the partner or family member, as we are all very painfully aware, but Julie and Steve reminded us how important it is that we try to work on not taking these reactions and meltdowns personally, because at a high level of stress and meltdown, everyone becomes irrational and IQ levels drop, including the person with AS. Julie & Steve did some wonderful role plays to demonstrate the build-up to a meltdown between an NT and AS couple, and then alternatives to try and avoid a situation reaching meltdown.
- At a support group meeting some years ago **Eleanor Gittins** gave us a hand-out on “Avoiding Meltdown” which is available through our website (information page) for \$2.20. Excellent guide.

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