

ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION AUSTRALIA (ASPIA) INCORPORATED

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

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

NEWSLETTER – October 2011

Our next support group meeting will be this **Saturday 1 October, 2pm – 5pm**
College of Nursing, 14 Railway Pde, Burwood, 2nd Floor
\$2 Members / \$5 Non-Members (covers room hire, etc)

Please bring something simple to share for afternoon tea.

For this meeting, Nola Norris will share some more gems with us, as follows:

- Recent findings from Autism Research – Heterogeneity; Genetic vs Environmental Causes; Longevity Studies. (Nola attended APAC 11 in Perth recently)
- How Neuroscience helps make sense of Aspergers, how does my Asperger partner think and learn? and, how do I think and learn?
- Asperger and Neurotypical cultures – learning to be a cross-cultural interpreter.
- And, from previous ASPIA discussion: Progress in relationships after many years - reflections from our Aspie journey.

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.alaska@yahoo.com.au

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

ASPIA Meeting Dates for remainder of 2011

October 1	November 5	December 3
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PLEASE ADD TO YOUR DIARY

Saturday 12 November 1pm – 5pm

Afternoon workshop with **Rudy Simone**

Author of “22 Things a Woman must know if she loves a Man with Asperger’s Syndrome”

This workshop will be held at the College of Nursing (current venue for ASPIA meetings)

In the Auditorium on Level 3.

Registrations Essential. Cost involved. Flyer to be distributed this week.

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](mailto:Eleanor.Gittins@optusnet.com.au) 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](mailto:Jeroen.Decates@optusnet.com.au) on 0402 028 588
- ***New listing* Forum-workshops for ASDian adults** on selected Wednesday afternoons at Hamilton South (NSW), 1.30pm-4pm. Call Leigh 02 4966 1717 or email aut_s_pport@yahoo.com.au
- **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.relationshipsandprivatstuff.com
- **ASTEEN: Teen social/support group**, including yahoo group
Contact Christine Ayo christineayo@optusnet.com.au Ph: 0413 781 626

Thoughts ...

Our September meeting continued the theme of useful hints and stress-saving strategies for everyday situations in a relationship with a partner with Asperger’s Syndrome.

Several more suggestions were made, but in concluding, one of our group members reminded us of a very useful and simple comment made by one of our most supportive Psychologists **Jeroen Decates**, which is that in relationships and life typical people want to be happy, whereas people with Asperger’s Syndrome want an absence of conflict. Therefore, absence of conflict may be the equivalent of “happiness” for them.

We went on to discuss that for someone with AS, things like a request from us, sickness in the family, a less than perfect performance or outcome, or something they can’t fix, control or manage could actually mean “conflict” for them. They actually may not have the verbal, cognitive or emotional tools to be able to respond adequately or appropriately to these situations of “conflict”, hence the reactions we find so confusing and distressing, and the sense that there are so many barriers in the way of managing or resolving issues in the relationship and home.

Jeroen also reminds us frequently that Asperger’s Syndrome and anxiety go hand in hand. Increased anxiety can lead to a strengthening of Asperger traits and behaviours. Carol Grigg.

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