

ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION AUSTRALIA (ASPIA) INCORPORATED

(Formerly GRASP Partner/Spouse Support Group)

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

NEWSLETTER – September 2011

Our next support group meeting will be this **Saturday 3 September, 2pm – 5pm**
College of Nursing, 14 Railway Pde, Burwood, 2nd Floor
\$2 Members / \$5 Non-Members (covers room hire, etc)

Our speaker for September is no longer available so I would like to have a Part 2 to last month's discussion on **Relationship Strategies that Work** (see "thoughts" page 2)
Please bring something simple 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.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@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

ASPIA Meeting Dates for remainder of 2011

September 3	October 1	November 5	December 3
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PLEASE ADD TO YOUR DIARY

Saturday 12 November (details still TBA), afternoon workshop with **Rudy Simone**
Author of "22 Things a Woman must know if she loves a Man with Asperger's Syndrome"

Also, we have been informed of a **new & more accurate AS diagnostic tool**

Ritvo Autism Asperger Diagnostic Scale – Revised (RAADS-R)

See <http://www.springerlink.com/content/fhj14075h450547q/>

Exciting news – one of our psychologists, and friend of our group, **Debra Ende** has published a book called "Making Sense of Aspergers: A Story for Children." Available through <http://shop.acer.edu.au> .
Congratulations Debra !

ASPIA INC

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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
- ***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.relationshipsandprivatestuff.com
- **ASTEEN: Teen social/support group**, including yahoo group
Contact Christine Ayo christineayo@optusnet.com.au Ph: 0413 781 626

Thoughts ... At our August support group meeting we had a discussion on practical relationship strategies that have worked. I noted a couple of interesting situations raised in the discussion, particularly significant because they were consistent with other feedback I've been receiving from partners by email and phone. The first one was that quite a few partners are now reporting progress in their relationships at home after waiting patiently for considerable lengths of time, sometimes several years. It seems the secret is in sowing the seed of suggestion with their AS (suspected) partner, calmly and firmly pursuing information and support for their own sake, adjusting personal expectations & attitudes, suggesting professional consultation, not being in their face, and just quietly waiting. I hope this may give hope to those who still despair.

The other thing that could give hope to partners, is that a number of women shared about situations where they've carefully and calmly planned towards either issuing an ultimatum to their partners or insisting on pursuing a pathway or goal that was important to their own personal development or well-being. They were prepared for a reaction, and weathered this through, but remained calmly determined that change needed to take place, for both partners' sakes, and also the family. One example was marital separation, which was carefully planned, and clear instructions given about what was expected from the AS partner. Failure resulted in actual separation, and now the AS partner is co-operating with her conditions in order to restore the relationship. Another partner insists on taking a holiday on her own each year, which she plans carefully and enjoys looking forward to. Another partner decided she was going to pursue further education in a chosen field, and followed this through. Another partner presented in a logical manner to her AS husband that it was clear she was the cause of his anger, that the anger needed to stop, so therefore she would need to leave. He responded positively & change has begun for them. There were other examples shared as well, and I do plan to distribute a more comprehensive list in the near future. What stood out to us was that the AS partners of these women, whilst reacting badly & intimidatingly at first, did in time settle down and accept the decisions of their partners, responding in most cases to clear-cut instructions or statements that were given calmly and firmly and were not negotiable. It was stressed in the meeting that it is never ok to regularly threaten to leave a relationship; in fact, this is emotional blackmail. The decision to leave should never be taken or talked about lightly. If you do decide to threaten a separation, it is imperative to describe what you expect from your partner, set a time frame, and then follow through and leave if they do not meet your conditions. Remember however to be realistic in what you expect, seeking professional guidance in order to manage the crisis carefully and wisely. Carol.

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