

# ASPIA Newsletter - August 2013

*"Mutual understanding of the Asperger Marriage experience"*

## **August Meeting**

Our next meeting will be this coming  
**Saturday 3 August 2013\***

**Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm**

**The College of Nursing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
14 Railway Parade, Burwood (Sydney)

\$10.00 per non-member, \$5.00 per member  
Please bring something to share for afternoon tea.

We will enjoy an **informal support group meeting** this month; an opportunity to relax & share, listen and exchange ideas and suggestions with others who understand.

I would also like to declare this meeting a **"library drive"**. Members or past members, please return your library books : ) Titles for others to borrow are very limited. We would also welcome any donations to our library - if you have a book you recommend and have finished with, perhaps you'd consider donating it to our library?

\*Please remember that ASPIA 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 this newsletter or our website for a listing of groups specifically set up to address the needs of those with Asperger's Syndrome. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Remaining ASPIA Meeting Dates for 2013**

	August 3	September 7
October 5	November 2	December 7

## **Personal counselling/mentoring for partners**

Phone, skype or email, \$30 per half hour.  
Carol Grigg, Dip Counselling, Member ACA  
To make an appointment:  
Phone or text 0408 817 828  
[www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au](http://www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au)

## **LUNCH CLUB**

**Held prior to our monthly meetings**

Anyone attending the meeting is welcome to come along between 12noon & 1.30pm and join others for a coffee or bite to eat at

## **LITTLE NEPAL Restaurant**

Shop C, 135 Burwood Road, Burwood (Sydney)  
(Directions: From Burwood Station, go left & up the hill, a few shops past the Westpac Bank and then cross the road.)

## **BOOKS**

### **ASPIA's Handbook for Partner Support**

Paperback:

<http://www.lulu.com/content/paperback-book/aspias-handbook-for-partner-support/12781936>

eBook (PDF) - immediate download

<http://www.lulu.com/content/e-book/aspias-handbook-for-partner-support/12936851>

### **Asperger Awareness: A Key to Success for IT and Technical Managers** (Stephen Plowright)

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/144673885X/>

### **The Audacity of Difference: Revealing our True Colours** (Carol Grigg)

This is my own title in which I share a little of my personal journey in an AS world.

Paperback:

<http://www.lulu.com/content/paperback-book/the-audacity-of-difference/13421417>

eBook:

<http://www.lulu.com/content/e-book/the-audacity-of-difference-revealing-our-true-colours/13422000>

**For other recommended titles, see our book list on the website - [www.aspia.org.au](http://www.aspia.org.au)**

### **Sydney Stockist of AS books, order online: Footprint Books, Warriewood (Sydney)**

<http://www.footprint.com.au>

## **OTHER PARTNER SUPPORT GROUPS in Australia**

### • **Central Coast, NSW**

This group will now meet **every 3 months**

**Next meeting - 21 September**

Empire Bay Garden Nursery & Café,

Poole Crescent, Empire Bay

Contact ASPIA [info@aspia.org.au](mailto:info@aspia.org.au)

### • **Newcastle, NSW:** Possibility of new group forming. Anyone interested contact ASPIA.

### • **Northern Rivers, NSW:**

Phone Debbie on (02) 6676 0483

Email: [northernriversasdnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:northernriversasdnetwork@gmail.com)

### • **Brisbane:**

**Queensland Asperger Partners' Support Group (QAPS):**

Phone Helen on 0418 761 652

Email [qaps.group@gmail.com](mailto:qaps.group@gmail.com)

### • **New - Toowoomba Asperger Partners' Support** (TAPS Group)

Phone Julie on 0402 592 689

Email [wjcrowell@optusnet.com.au](mailto:wjcrowell@optusnet.com.au)

### • **New - Tiaro, Wide Bay (Qld)**

Phone Pat on 07 4193 9239

Email [davies.pat@gmail.com](mailto:davies.pat@gmail.com)

### • **Perth:**

Phone Roz on (08) 9284 5252

Email: [rozskdesk@inet.net.au](mailto:rozskdesk@inet.net.au)

### • **Perth:**

Email Melanie [aspiepartnerswa@hotmail.com](mailto:aspiepartnerswa@hotmail.com)

### • **Melbourne:**

Visit forum at <http://aspartneraus.org/vanilla/>

or email Melissa [meraine@bigpond.net.au](mailto:meraine@bigpond.net.au)

### • **Adelaide:**

Phone Heike Haffer on 0431 039 136

Email [heikehaffer@hotmail.com](mailto:heikehaffer@hotmail.com)

## **GROUPS AND CONTACTS for Adults and Teens with Asperger's Syndrome**

### **"Joining Hans" Group for Adults with AS**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday every month** Burwood, Sydney

Registrations essential: Contact Eleanor Gittins

Ph 0408 954 358 or [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com)

### **Support group for Adults with AS**

North Shore, Sydney

Visit website for announcements [www.jdpsy.org](http://www.jdpsy.org)

or call Jeroen Decates on 0402 028 588

### **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](mailto:aut_s_pport@yahoo.com.au)

**ASPECT** also has resources for adults

email [infoline@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:infoline@autismspectrum.org.au)

or phone 8977 8377

**Aspect's Adult Social Group** – for adults with Asperger's or high functioning autism. Contact Caroline on 0409 603 582.

[adultsocialgroup@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:adultsocialgroup@autismspectrum.org.au)

For more information:

[www.autismspectrum.org.au/adultsocialgroups](http://www.autismspectrum.org.au/adultsocialgroups)

### **Workshops on Relationships, social skills, sexuality**

Liz Dore [www.relationshipsandprivatetestuff.com](http://www.relationshipsandprivatetestuff.com)

### **ASTEEN - Teen social/support group**

includes yahoo group Contact Christine Ayo

[christinefayo@gmail.com](mailto:christinefayo@gmail.com) Ph: 0469 577 723

or Lyn Starr [randlstarr@bigpond.com](mailto:randlstarr@bigpond.com)

Ph: 0408 445 019

## **Research & Survey Requests**

Please help by participating in research about the impact of diagnosis on a relationship.

Follow this link:

<http://bit.ly/ASD-COUPLE>



Katherine Victoria,  
Deakin University Melbourne

### **A note ...**

University research provides "empirical evidence" which will help to educate and inform the professionals who we turn to for guidance. Your contribution to a research project will, in time, help to overcome professional ignorance, which has hurt so many of us on our journeys to find the truth, and find help.

**Thought ...**

Sometimes when we calmly but firmly push through with a preference or plan of our own, we may find that our partner is able to eventually come to terms with it in spite of the meltdowns and resistance they display in the process. Bravely plan and persist. One challenge at a time. Calmly. Firmly.

I suspect that in the process of constantly obliging and adapting around our partner's needs and preferences (which to them are paramount, remember "theory of mind"), we inadvertently fail to define ourselves as individuals in their eyes, or our own. This also establishes a pattern that becomes "the way things are always done".

Eventually, we recognise we have lost our "sense of self", and we realise that they recognise us only as a passenger and enabler in their life.

Not only do we lose our sense of self, but the whole family loses out on the enrichment that we could bring to the home and life - our personality, individuality, warmth and gifts. What a sad loss.

One of our members recently sent through the following words by **Dr Phil**:

If you have to stop being all of who you are to be half of a couple, it's a bad deal.

If you give up your identity,

If you give up your thoughts,

Your feelings,

Your beliefs,

Your preferences,

Your needs,

You give up all of that in the service of another,

Then you've lost who you are.

The price is too high.

Thank you Dr Phil.

Carol Grigg, on behalf of ASPIA partners.

For those who'd like to see a good, simple explanation about "theory of mind" follow this link:

[http://visuals.autism.net/visuals/main.php?g2\\_itemId=76](http://visuals.autism.net/visuals/main.php?g2_itemId=76)

**Looking for feedback please ...**

A while back I approached the committee about us setting up an online discussion forum.

I personally have a fairly strong dislike for online discussion forums because I've seen how destructive they can be when not moderated carefully. Some people find it very easy to say things through a computer that they would never say to someone's face, and we all know about how this can become "bullying" with devastating consequences.

However, I recognise that ASPIA has about 500 people on our mailing list, and we receive about 1500 hits on our website every week but only a tiny percentage of these can physically get to our support group meetings. The rest continue on in isolation. Some may have found an online forum that is safe. Many still have no-one to talk to.

I keep re-visiting the thought of whether we could set one up, and for me to do the moderating. However, this potentially is very time-consuming when I'm already co-ordinating ASPIA in a voluntary capacity and working part-time as well.

I have considered whether I could charge a small subscription fee for joining the forum, and this could cover my time to moderate it, making it possible for me if I plan it carefully.

This forum would be separate to the private facebook group which is proving to be a valuable connecting point for financial members of ASPIA.

Should we consider setting up a more general discussion forum (maybe a google group or similar) with an open invitation to any partners wishing to chat (not just ASPIA members, but any non-AS partners)?

Could you please take a moment to send me feedback:

1. If we had a discussion forum, would you join?
2. If so, would you be happy to pay a subscription fee to join, say \$25.00 per year?

Please email me at [carolgrigg@live.com.au](mailto:carolgrigg@live.com.au)

I'll look forward to hearing from you before I explore the idea any further. Carol.