

ASPIA Newsletter - October 2013

"Mutual understanding of the Asperger Marriage experience"

October Meeting

Our next meeting will be this coming
Saturday 5 October 2013

Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm

The College of Nursing, 2nd Floor
14 Railway Parade, Burwood (Sydney)
\$10.00 per non-member, \$5.00 per member

Please bring something to share for afternoon tea.

Clinical Psychologist STEVE DEN-KAAT

Will be bringing us some more wonderful education on Asperger's Syndrome in relationships as well as answering our questions and facilitating discussion. Last time Steve attended our meeting he participated in a very realistic role-play, playing the part of an AS male in the midst of a typical conflict situation with a partner. His demonstration was eerily realistic, but powerfully informative as he and his co-presenter went on to explain what was taking place from the perspective of both partners. We look forward to Steve's presentation very much.

*Steve is the Clinic Director of his Practice **Diverse Minds Psychology Clinic** in Erskineville, Sydney.*

Steve obtained his MSc (psych) from Victoria University of Wellington, with his research in the field of Autism Spectrum Conditions (<http://hdl.handle.net/10063/713>). He completed his clinical training under the supervision of Professor Tony Attwood, Dr Michelle Garnett and Dr Hui Keow Lim.

Steve is a clinical psychologist who has a keen interest in working with adolescents with complex challenges including: attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, eating disorders, anxiety, and depression. Steve's main area of specialty is in the area of Asperger's Syndrome and autism spectrum conditions.

Bio, cont'd: Steve has provided diagnostic services and therapy in response to varying psychological needs. He has worked alongside children, adolescents and adults across the autism spectrum. In addition, Steve has presented across Australia and internationally in the area of autism spectrum conditions, with a focus on self-identity and self-esteem.

Please Note: This meeting is offered to non-Asperger adults only.

ASPIA's aim is to provide an emotionally safe place for partners who need support and education from a non-Asperger perspective. New attendees are interviewed on arrival to confirm motivation for attending.

If you have AS and you attempt to attend an ASPIA meeting you will be refused entry.

There are dedicated groups and meetings available specifically for adults with AS. ASPIA is not one of these. See our website & newsletter for information about AS groups.

Remaining ASPIA Meeting Dates for 2013

October 5	November 2	December 7
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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.)

Advance Notice to ASPIA members:

It is intended that we will hold our Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 1pm on the day of our November support group meeting (2nd November). Notices will go out soon.

WORKSHOP - 19 October 2013

Females with Asperger's Syndrome:

Tony Attwood and Michelle Garnett will be presenting a workshop on Girls and Women with Asperger's Syndrome in Campbelltown, Sydney on Saturday 19 October, 2013.

Follow this link for more information, including how to register:

<http://www.mindsandhearts.net/index.php/training-events/workshops-and-seminars/girls-and-women-with-aspergers-syndrome-sydney>

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 book titles, see our book list on the website - www.aspia.org.au

Sydney Stockist of AS books, order online:

Footprint Books, Warriewood (Sydney)

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

SUPPORT FOR PARTNERS

For recommended Psychologists, see the "Professionals List" on ASPIA's website

OTHER PARTNER SUPPORT GROUPS in Australia

- **Central Coast, NSW**

This group will now meet **every 3 months**
Met 21/9, Next meeting to be advised

Empire Bay Garden Nursery & Café,

Poole Crescent, Empire Bay

Contact ASPIA 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

- **Brisbane:**

Queensland Asperger Partners' Support Group (QAPS):

Phone Helen on 0418 761 652

Email qaps.group@gmail.com

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

Phone Sheena on 0418 790 216

Email the.taps.group@gmail.com

- **New - Tiaro, Wide Bay (Qld)**

Phone Pat on 07 4193 9239

Email davies.pat@gmail.com

- **Perth:**

Phone Roz on (08) 9284 5252

Email: rozsdesk@inet.net.au

- **Perth:**

Email Melanie aspiepartnerswa@hotmail.com

- **Melbourne:**

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

or email Melissa meraine@bigpond.net.au

- **Adelaide:**

Phone Heike Haffer on 0431 039 136

Email heikehaffer@hotmail.com

Personal counselling/mentoring for partners

Phone, skype or email, \$30 per half hour.

Carol Grigg, Dip Counselling, Member ACA

For appointments phone or text 0408 817 828

www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au

SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

For recommended Psychologists see the "Professionals List" on ASPIA's website.

Groups and other Contacts:

"Joining Hans" Group for Adults with AS
2nd Saturday every month Burwood, Sydney
Registrations essential: Contact Eleanor Gittins
 Ph 0408 954 358 or 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

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

ASPECT also has resources for adults
 email 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
 For more information:
www.autismspectrum.org.au/adultsocialgroups

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

ASTEEN - Teen social/support group
 includes yahoo group Contact Christine Ayo
christinefayo@gmail.com Ph: 0469 577 723
 or Lyn Starr randlstarr@bigpond.com
 Ph: 0408 445 019

Thought ...

We were reminded at our last support group meeting how much individuals with AS rely on order and predictability. Predictability helps them know what to do next.

Lack of predictability increases anxiety for them.

Recently I overheard an Aspie say in response to a fairly ordinary event "How could I predict that? What do I do now? I have to work that out."

Not only are they anxious, they are afraid of "getting it wrong" or making a mistake. They use their intellect to try to work out what to do. And they don't recognise situations where they can do similar to what they did a previous time either. Each situation is new and they have to work out the "right" response each time. How stressful this must be, particularly when typical people and also life tend to be unpredictable.

It has also been suggested that Aspies may actually flood with emotion a lot of the time, rather than being void of emotion. One can only imagine that this could leave them feeling quite uncomfortable and out of sorts on the inside, although they may not actually know what they are feeling, how to articulate what they are feeling or how to manage it. They often seem angry, but deny they are, so perhaps to us the body language conveys anger, and they may be feeling anger, but not actually recognise it.

If they are flooding most of the time without us knowing, this could explain why some Aspies seem to escalate from 0 - 10 in half a second without any warning, or they may "shut down" and disconnect.

Knowing they use their intellect, it makes sense that Aspies can learn that certain behaviours such as withdrawal or emotional escalation have the effect of stopping dead everything and everyone around them. What better way to get everyone to back off and get a situation back under control. Like a technique or tool, without the intent to harm anyone, just to have the status quo restored so they can cope again.

An analogy I thought of is like when radio frequencies are jammed. All interaction ceases. If anyone else's experience is like mine, I become fearful and disorientated when someone has a meltdown. Then I don't know what to do, and I'm effectively disabled. And the Aspie has the situation back to how they need it to be in order for them to know what to do next.

And to take this to the next step - then they're bewildered when we emotionally collapse and try to talk to them about what we believe has been at the very least a serious relationship crisis or at the worst some form of domestic violence.

Carol Grigg