

ASPIA Newsletter - March 2014

"Providing support to partners of adults with Asperger's Syndrome for more than 10 years"

ASPIA'S NEXT PARTNER SUPPORT GROUP

MEETING:

This coming **Saturday 1 March 2014**
2pm - 5pm.

The College of Nursing,
2nd Floor, 14 Railway Parade,
Burwood (Sydney)

\$10.00 per non-member, \$5.00 per member

Nola Norris will speak on the topic of
"**Identity**" in Asperger's Syndrome.

Nola has been a member of ASPIA since 2005 and is our web developer and "in house" Educator.

Nola is currently completing a PhD Thesis.

Please bring something to share for afternoon tea.

Please Note: ASPIA meetings are 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.

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 & page 2 of this newsletter for information about AS groups and support.

ASPIA Meeting Dates for 2014

	March 1
April 5	May 3
June 7	July 5
August 2	September 6
October 4	November 1
December 6	

ASPIA LUNCH CLUB

Anyone attending the support group meeting is welcome to come along earlier between 12noon & 1.30pm to join us for a coffee or bite to eat at the **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.)

Book Feature

What Men with Asperger Syndrome want to know about Women, Dating and Relationships by **Maxine Aston**

Troubleshooting Relationships on the Autism Spectrum A user's guide to resolving relationship problems by **Ashley Stanford**

Both of these books are by "tried and trusted" authors of partner books and are available from Footprint Books in Sydney
<http://www.footprint.com.au>

ASPIA's Handbook for Partner Support

For copies of our Handbook, and other recommended book titles, see our book list on the website - www.aspia.org.au

To purchase our Handbook anonymously, go to the ASPIA website and follow the link to Lulu.

Find ASPIA's public facebook page:

ASPIA Inc (Asperger Syndrome Partner Information Australia Inc)



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Aspia-Inc-Asperger-Syndrome-Partner-Information-Australia-Inc/293809577377381>

(copy & paste into your search field)

Important: Just remember that if you "like" the page, this will come up in your newsfeed and be seen by your "friends". Consider if you wish to disclose your interest in AS and ASPIA to those on your friends list.

SUPPORT FOR PARTNERS

Grief Counselling

Epping (Sydney)

Liz Pash is a Social Worker, Counsellor and Educator, with understanding of relationships affected by Asperger's Syndrome

Contact Liz on 0498 964 275 or
Email lizlpash@hotmail.com

Personal Counselling for partners

By phone, skype or email.

Carol Grigg, OAM, Dip Counselling, Member ACA
Carol has personal experience of an AS marriage (20 years) and 13 years' experience supporting partners through ASPIA.

For appointments phone or text 0408 817 828
www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au

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**
Dates: 15 March, 21 June, 20 September.

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

• Melbourne:

Visit forum at <http://aspartneraus.org/vanilla/>
or email Melissa meraine@bigpond.net.au

• Melbourne, also Blackburn

<http://www.aspergersvic.org.au/partners/>

• Adelaide:

Phone Heike Haffer on 0431 039 136
Email heikehaffer@hotmail.com

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.relationshipsandprivatetestuff.com

ASTEEN - Teen social/support group

includes yahoo group. Contact Adrienne De Morais on 0413 890 311, email ademorais@optusnet.com.au or Keren Day on 0416 182 531, email kerend@live.com.au .

Thought ...

Continuing on from my "Thought" in the February Newsletter, I want to talk some more about those deficits that we are either reluctant to talk about, cannot put words around or can't seem to convince anyone that they exist.

How do you describe something that's not there?

Sure, these days it's important in therapy to help people focus on their strengths because this is often the only tool we can find to help them move forward and embrace life again in constructive ways.

However, I don't believe the difficulties in a relationship affected by Asperger's Syndrome can be addressed adequately without first identifying the deficits and validating the impact these have on the relationship and family life. Then couples need suggestions about what measures can be put in place to patch or bridge the deficits to prevent harm, disadvantage or neglect in the lives of family members.

How do you explain to someone that sense of being "out of sync" with your partner? So hard to put one's finger on it. That awareness of a disconnect that prevents communication making sense either way and so therefore prevents agreement, co-operation, collaboration and resolution, the qualities of being in harmony with that one soul you chose as your life partner.

And the disorientation you experience when body language, eye contact or tone of voice aren't congruent with what appears to be taking place.

When ordinary things seem to take them by surprise, as though that universal instinct of anticipation and automatic response doesn't kick in and the situation is viewed as something new, creating lots of anxiety and somehow the need for new rules.

Those lost opportunities to nurture and develop the lives of others, particularly the children in the household, as though anything other than what they have personally learned and are interested in just doesn't exist.

The avoidance of activities, places or gatherings that are outside of what they enjoy or are interested in.

The refusal to undertake any tasks or gestures that are "just for the sake of the other person", although so often we witness them going out of their way for others in a community setting. This hurts so much. And then everyone tells us what a wonderful person they are. Yes, we know they are, but why are we so underserving, only getting the "crumbs" when we're the one they promised to personally love and cherish for life, before all others?

It's humiliating to have to ask for those life-giving hugs, and desperately lonely going without when we're sad, frightened or bereaved. And those words we so deeply crave to hear roll off their lips "I love you", having to be content to have heard it the day we married and maybe once or twice since.

How can a human soul heal or thrive within a relationship such as this if the deficits aren't recognised and addressed in some measure?

Surely the deficits give a starting place for therapy, and then a lifetime of goals to work on! How we ache for partners with the willingness to just "want to". Bit by bit, slowly, is fine.

Without growth, the spirit either breaks, dies or is forced to liberate itself. Carol Grigg.