

# ASPIA Newsletter - May 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 3 May 2014**  
**1.30pm for a 2pm start - 5pm.**

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

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

### **PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE TO OUR STARTING TIME**

Our formal meeting time will start at 2pm from now on to allow more time for our presenters. We invite you to come from **1.30pm for a cuppa & mingle first.**

Please bring something small to share for afternoon tea.

### **Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates**

will attend this meeting and continue his education on the differences between Narcissism and Asperger's Syndrome.

Jeroen's presentations are always enormously informative and helpful, and he will also allow plenty of time for questions and discussion about anything related to relationships affected by Asperger's Syndrome.

### **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**

	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 & 1.00pm 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**

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

This is our group's own self-published guide for partners, compiled by Carol Grigg.

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

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

## **FACEBOOK**

### **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](mailto:lizlpash@hotmail.com)

### **Phone Counselling for partners**

**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 as well as attendance at countless educational workshops.

For appointments phone or text 0408 817 828

[www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au](http://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](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 Sheena on 0418 790 216

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

#### **• 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: [rozsdesk@inet.net.au](mailto:rozsdesk@inet.net.au)

#### **• Melbourne:**

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

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

**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 Adrienne De

Morais on 0413 890 311, email

[ademorais@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ademorais@optusnet.com.au) or Keren Day on

0416 182 531, email [kerend@live.com.au](mailto:kerend@live.com.au) .

### **Further General Support Information:**

Contact the Autism organization in your state, capital city or local region.

### **Thought ...**

I'm writing this month's thought as I've come fresh from our April meeting where Natalie brought an amazingly meaningful presentation to us that helped us explore aspects of ourselves and how we relate to our partners.

Without hijacking Natalie's work or words, I just felt it would be good to bring a few thoughts through so that those who can't get to our meetings can benefit from the education we're blessed to receive there.

There are some aspects of Natalie's presentation that I cannot share outside of the meeting at this stage, but more will be revealed as Natalie develops her ideas.

A strong emphasis that came through is how extremely hard we all work in our relationships to get responses from our partners, often with little or no success. Natalie showed a short video to demonstrate how distressing it is when an infant cannot get her Mum's face to respond to her, even though the infant is trying everything she knows or that has worked before.

Natalie then shared a powerful analogy with poker machine players. When an individual's effort to get a response works sometimes, ie, the response is intermittent, it then sets up the kind of repeated behaviour that's behind playing a poker machine - the person keeps playing because it might work, they might win, they might be rewarded, because they have before, whereas if they never won at all they would lose interest and stop playing. Some years ago one of our members likened this concept to being thrown "crumbs", sometimes.

Natalie shared many illustrations, and in all of them we could see ourselves. It was alarming to see the way we try so hard and get very little benefit in return. We looked at why we are ok with that, why we are prepared to work so hard for so little, and what this is doing to us emotionally. We all

know how deeply drained and exhausted we are. We are certainly a special kind of people, we are compelled to be helpers and caretakers, and we expect little in return. It will be interesting to study us some more.

Over the three years that Natalie has been attending SPIA meetings she has noted how intelligent our group members are and reassured us that our intelligence is a strong protective factor for us coping with our situations.

She also reassured us that we are "cycle breakers" and have been a massive protective factor in the lives and development of our children, in spite of the difficulties we're so aware that our children have experienced with an ASD parent.

Natalie shared so much more, and we could have work-shopped it and asked questions and discussed it for a whole weekend. We are thankful that Natalie has agreed to bring us the next instalment later in the year.

Natalie emphasized over and over again that the motivation behind her presentation was to help us develop more awareness of ourselves which will in turn help empower us to make choices about how much of ourselves we continue to give.

Carol Grigg May 2014.