

ASPIA Newsletter – November 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 November 2014**
1.30pm for a 2pm start - 5pm.

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

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

Please bring something small
to share for afternoon tea.

Clinical Psychologist Steve Den Kaat

will be attending and presenting
on the topic:

“When a “special interest” has moral implications”

This is a deeply sensitive topic and we are
thankful to Steve for being willing to come
and engage with us in some frank discussion,
education and support in this matter.

Non-AS partners only

Remaining ASPIA Meeting Dates for 2014

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.)*

New Book Recommendation:

**The Autism Spectrum, Sexuality and the
Law** by Tony Attwood, Isabelle Henault and
Nick Dubin.

Available from Footprint Books

www.footprint.com.au

On Saturday 7 March 2015

Professor Tony Attwood will be
presenting a full-day Workshop in
Sydney on the topic of

Asperger’s Syndrome in Couple Relationships

www.aspia.org.au/events.html

Open to NT & AS partners, couples, friends,
family, professionals, anyone with an
interest in relationships affected by
Asperger’s Syndrome.

Venue: The Menzies Hotel, Sydney CBD

Early bird rate available until 15 Dec 2014

To view the flyer and to register, please
follow this link to the “events” page on the
ASPIA website:

www.aspia.org.au/events.html

Bookstall available on the day provided by
Lorraine from “Resources at Hand”.

Help us promote this event

We all continue to be demoralized by
insensitive or ignorant responses from
professionals, family members, friends and
others who don’t “get it”.

Education or personal experience are the
only ways they can learn.

Please pass the flyer on to doctors,
counsellors, psychologists, lawyers, social
media, family members, friends and anyone
or any organisation who could or should be
interested.

Or use this link in emails or on facebook, etc:

www.aspia.org.au/events.html

Thanks heaps.

Please visit our website for the following information:

Helpful Literature:

<http://www.aspia.org.au/information.html>

Recommended Psychologists, Counsellors and other Therapists:

<http://www.aspia.org.au/professionals.html>

Other Partner Support Groups in Australia:

<http://www.aspia.org.au/groups.html>

Support for adults with Asperger's Syndrome:

<http://www.aspia.org.au/groups.html>

Other support and useful links:

<http://www.aspia.org.au/links.html>

Events and workshops:

www.aspia.org.au/events.html

Thought ...

During the last month I've had lots of thoughts float through my head. Not that thoughts about AS float, more likely they pierce or clobber me in the head at the most unexpected moment and leave quite an ache in the heart as a result.

The thought that impacted me a lot during the last month and that I've continued to think about is to do with the lack of conflict resolution in our marital situations.

Most of us have reported feeling like nothing has ever been resolved over the entire duration of our relationship. This is of deep concern in any relationship of any duration, but some of these relationships have existed for twenty, thirty or forty years. How bleak. What have we done with all that stuff? Unfinished threads everywhere, tangled and

tight, cutting off the circulation to all that is healthy.

I started to think more about resolution and reconciliation. I think this is an essential need, even a compulsion on our part, to look for resolution, to resolve conflict, to reach a place of harmony again, of agreeing, of being on the same page, of one mind. We seek it out, initiate it.

How does the AS partner in our relationship respond when we try to initiate a resolution to some situation of conflict? Don't most of us feel drawn into combat with them rather than negotiation? Tit for tat. The situation escalates, becomes technical, one-up - one-down, emotions run high into rage; we cannot reason with them. And then we're called on to weather yet another meltdown, or carry on in their absence while they shut down. We can't revisit the issue. Another issue unresolved, leaving another raw and unhealed wound, forever.

I think sometimes I portray the AS person as having an impact on us in more passive ways rather than aggressive. I am sensitive to portraying Aspies as aggressive because this can be interpreted as them being "abusive" and this always has to be defined or qualified in some way to be fair (and safe to publish).

However, when it comes to conflict, I think Aspies have a compulsion too, though not for resolution in the way we do. I think they may have a compulsion to correct and to complete, and often in an aggressive manner. They tend to need to control their environment to create predictability for themselves and to reduce their own anxieties, and the people around them actually form part of this environment that needs to be controlled. It is my belief that they have a set way they need us to behave, like a script. And if we don't follow it, in the right way and at the right time, we are corrected. I'm sure we all know that feeling of being corrected, and for many us of it is so frequent that it becomes part of what we

take for granted. Remember the old report cards from school? “Responds well to correction.” Great. If only they knew. We all have that depth of character and humility that allows us to respond well to correction, but at what point is it taken too far? When we’re constantly corrected, and often aggressively, to conform to someone else’s script within the context of a relationship and home life, how much of ourselves is left?

And what about the resolution we so desperately crave for wholeness of heart?

Another unmet need.

Carol Grigg OAM, Dip Counselling

25 October 2014

Join our new Online Discussion Forum

I have established “ASPIA Support”, a Yahoo Group for partners of adults with Asperger’s Syndrome.

This is as a result of the regular enquiries we receive about online support for partners who have no access to support locally, or who do not have the personal freedom or health to get to a face to face group.

To ensure all applicants are genuine & to remunerate me for my time, there is an annual subscription fee of \$25.00.

I will personally moderate the group, answer questions and facilitate discussion.

This could also be a great opportunity to help isolated partners find other partners close by.

Join me today and help create our new online community by following this link:

www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au/Contact-me.html

Carol