

# ASPIA Newsletter - September 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 6 September 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 bring something small  
to share for afternoon tea.

#### **Presentation by Natalie Black**

**Topic:** Similarities in Personalities & Circumstances of Neurotypical Partners  
(continuation of popular theme  
from April meeting)

In this meeting Natalie will talk about specific ways we as NT partners need to be more vigilant around our boundaries, caring for our needs, validating ourselves, asking for what we want, and saying no. It appears that it takes a special kind of NT to partner an AS individual and we give more in our relationships than most, however it is important that that doesn't come at the cost of our health and well-being. Natalie will share some practical tips that have worked for her, and there will be opportunities to try some of these in the meeting. We'll also talk about how to recognize the signs that we might not be coping and need some help.

Non-AS partners only

#### **ASPIA Meeting Dates for 2014**

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.)*

## **Special book feature**

**Asperger's Syndrome from the Inside Out: A supportive and practical guide for anyone with Asperger's Syndrome**  
by Michael John Carley

I had the privilege of meeting Michael face to face during my recent visit to New York. I have known him via email and online for about 9 years, as President of GRASP, a support organization for adults with AS.

Michael is the most balanced and socially accomplished Aspie guy you could ever meet. Endearing and considerate. Happy to explain anything "Aspie" that I wanted to understand better.

Michael is a great role model for all males with Asperger's Syndrome. He stated to me that people with AS need to learn about themselves and Asperger's Syndrome first, before they learn about their relationship.

He recommends his book for helping individuals with AS to learn about AS and understand themselves better.

[www.michaeljohncarley.com](http://www.michaeljohncarley.com)

## **SUPPORT FOR PARTNERS**

### **Phone Counselling for partners**

**Carol Grigg**, OAM, Dip Counselling, Member ACA  
Carol can provide validation for partners as well as helping partners explore ideas and options for responding to relationship challenges.

For appointments phone or text 0408 817 828

[www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au](http://www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au)

## **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)

**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: [rozskdesk@inet.net.au](mailto:rozskdesk@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/>

## **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.relationshipsandprivatestuff.com](http://www.relationshipsandprivatestuff.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).

### **Thought ...**

Slowly eroding away ...

Many partners struggle with a deep and painful sense of loss of who they are, a sense of self. We talk about it in our group meetings and in our other conversations. It is a thread I also constantly note in my counselling with partners.

Notice it's a "sense of loss" which means it's something we once had, and now don't.

What is happening?

Perhaps it's helpful to think about some of the key things that help us gain a strong sense of who we are? Good bonding and attachment in our early lives of course is crucial, then as we grow older, being accepted for who we are, being genuinely

loved, having our feelings validated and our views respected, having our qualities reflected back to us by others who matter, being able to achieve and succeed in a range of tasks and activities, having our love received and enjoyed by the ones we love. I'm just thinking of these as I write, but have you noticed something? Apart from the ability to learn and master tasks and competencies, most of these things I've listed take place in relationship.

Do they take place in your significant relationship?

Perhaps you know you're genuinely loved in a "different" sort of way, but do you feel accepted for who you are? Are your feelings validated? Are your views respected? Are your personal qualities and positive characteristics noticed and reflected back to you with affirming words? Are your tasks and contributions within your family setting being valued? Is your love received and enjoyed by the one you love?

If you are not experiencing these crucial things in your relationship, then you have a reason for why your sense of self is slowly eroding away. We can have all the confidence in the world within certain contexts such as work, family of origin, other community involvements, etc, but we have a natural and essential need to be in relationship where we can love and be loved, intentionally and purposefully.

Carol Grigg OAM  
Dip Counselling