

ASPIA Newsletter – April 2015

“Providing support since 2003 to partners of adults with Asperger’s Syndrome”

April Meeting – this coming Saturday 4th April - back to normal!

Even though Saturday is Easter Saturday we will still hold our regular monthly support group meeting for partners.

To follow on from our workshop with Tony Attwood we will have an informal meeting to share the new things we have learned and have another look at some of the key points in his presentation.

Please join us at the usual time and place:

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

Time: 1.30pm for 2pm start, concludes 5pm.

Cost: \$10.00 for non-members, \$5.00 for members (membership is \$55 per year, includes library)

Please bring a small plate of afternoon tea to share.

ASPIA Lunch Club will run as usual prior to our meeting, and anyone attending our meeting is welcome to come along earlier, between 12noon & 1.00pm to join us for a coffee or bite to eat.

Where? Little Nepal Restaurant, Shop C, 135 Burwood Road, Burwood (Sydney).

Directions: From Burwood Station, go left and up the hill, cross Railway Pde at the lights, continue up the hill & a few shops past the Westpac Bank cross the road.

Also, sometimes a few of us stay on for dinner afterwards at one of the many local restaurants. Makes a day of it, which can be a very welcome break. Lots of time with others who “get it”.

ASPIA Support Group Meeting dates for 2015		
4 April		
2 May	6 June	4 July
1 August	5 September	3 October
7 November	5 December	

ASPIA’s online Yahoo discussion group

This online forum is growing and lots of great conversations are taking place. \$25.00 annual subscription. Visit ASPIA’s website at www.aspia.org.au/contactus.html to join.

ASPIA’s website contains information on other support groups, professionals, etc:

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

Recommended Psychologists, Counsellors, etc: <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: <http://www.aspia.org.au/events.html>

New Venue mid-year

Please continue to help us find a new meeting venue. Something in the same area of Sydney would be great, close to public transport and low-cost. Sometimes it’s word of mouth ...

Other up-coming events of interest

Sydney - July 17, 2015. Tony Attwood and Michelle Garnett will be presenting a full day workshop on Girls and Women with Asperger’s Syndrome. *“The seminar is designed to increase awareness and knowledge of the female presentation of Asperger’s syndrome (AS) and share strategies and ideas found to be useful in clinical practice.”* Visit www.mindsandhearts.net for further information and to register.

Sydney (Epping) – July 23, 2015. Tony Attwood and Speech Pathologist Bronwyn Sutton will be presenting a full-day workshop on “The App Guide to Emotions and Autism”, focus on children and teens 4 – 17 years. Visit www.learningappguide.com for more information.

Research Project through Macquarie University

“A Study about the nature of intimate relationships between people with Aspergers and their partners.”

Please consider supporting this study to help build up the existence of empirical research on relationships affected by Asperger’s Syndrome – it’s the lack of empirical evidence that contributes to partners being disbelieved when they speak to counsellors and psychologists.

Visit https://mgedu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_aaY4dWPvalk9jM1 or contact Naomi Millar-Powell direct at Naomi.millar-powell@students.mq.edu.au or on 0425 284 355.

Thought ...

How can one add anything to the words of Tony Attwood? We were educated and inspired and validated and challenged by Tony’s presentation at our workshop on Saturday 7th March. And perhaps I should add discouraged and grief-stricken for some or many too. It is no easy life, with no easy solutions.

There was a strong sense of warmth and identification among all those present and the ASPIA members who were in attendance were lovely hosts, caring for others and being a source of information and support throughout the day. I felt very proud to be part of our group.

We have added a number of new partners to our mailing list and expect a few new ones to attend our monthly meetings.

We have also added a few new professionals to our website list. One in Wyong (Central Coast NSW), and two in Canberra.

It was clear from Tony’s presentation that there is more material and professional help available now for couples and Tony discussed the possibility of returning with one of his colleagues to do a couples workshop for a limited number of participants. We will let you know when this is likely to happen.

Our own Sydney Psychologist Jeroen Decates is also working towards offering couples workshops, and already holds a couples group for those he is working with. Jeroen’s contact details are on the ASPIA website.

I’m afraid I’m a bit lost for words at the moment for writing a thought, it’s a bit like, “where do I start?”. One little snippet Tony said that’s helpful to know is that when your AS partner answers “I don’t know”, it may just mean, “I don’t have the words to tell you”. They have a lot of difficulty with vocabulary for emotions and self-reflection. They can also tend to feel they need to give the “right” answer and they don’t know what this is, so it’s better not to say anything.

The problem of “negativity” came up too. One person asking if Aspies tend to be negative because of all the difficulty they had growing up, but Tony said he sees it as actually coming with the territory. Aspies tend to have negative thinking and be pessimistic. He also said that many NT’s tend to be optimistic. I think this might lend itself to another whole discussion sometime.

On another note, I have been working on a new document that focuses on the communication difficulties in relationships affected by Asperger’s Syndrome.

I have called it “**Crucial Communication Clues**” and it is now available as a 10 page PDF document. It includes lots of “dot” points explaining the difficulties with communication, lots of pointers for how to have a discussion with your AS partner, as well as a couple of worksheets to use as an aid with your discussions.

This is available for \$5.00 – go to www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au/information.html to order by PayPal, or contact me direct for other purchase options carolgrigg@live.com.au

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President, ASPIA Inc