

# **ASPIA NEWSLETTER**

## **December 2015**

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

### **December Meeting - This coming Saturday 5th December**

**LOCATION: BURWOOD RSL CLUB, 96 Shaftesbury Road, Burwood (Sydney).**

We will be using the Private Room at the rear of the Bistro area on Ground Floor.

Time: 1.30pm for 2pm start, concludes 5pm.  
(Financial Members please arrive 1.30 for very brief AGM)

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

There is free parking underneath and in the street. For those who come by train, walk past the College (former venue) in Railway Pde, continue to the next corner and turn right into Shaftesbury Road. It’s a couple of blocks up on the left.

Don’t forget the usual sign-in for clubs, and unfortunately for those who live in the Strathfield / Burwood area you will need to join the club to enter. I think it’s only \$2.00 to join the club. The rest of us can enter as temporary guests.

We are obligated to use the club facilities to purchase our refreshments, so please do not bring food to share.

**Please note that in 2016 we may have yet another venue change.**

Please check the website before attending. [www.aspia.org.au](http://www.aspia.org.au)

### **Topic for December meeting**

#### **Reviewing our Self-care & Survival Strategies for the holiday season**

The December meeting is our final meeting for 2015. It is also the last one until 6th February 2016.

As we prepare ourselves for the challenges that Christmas, New Year and school holidays present, it is important that we re-examine our self-care and survival strategies.

I will bring copies of our Self Care Suggestions along for those who don’t have a copy.

Please come prepared to share any additional ideas that work for you, and we’ll enjoy some rigorous discussion time to bring 2015 to a great close.

Please stay on for a Christmas drink or dinner afterwards if you can.

#### **ASPIA Lunch Club prior to meeting:**

Anyone attending our support group meeting is welcome to come along from about 12 noon or so to join us for a coffee or bite to eat. Head for the bistro area and hopefully everyone will find each other. Then we can head to our meeting room at 1.30pm.

**Dinner:** The Club facility makes it really convenient to stay on after the support group meeting and have a drink and/or some dinner together. This is a nice way to end a great day with our ASPIA friends, and maybe a great way to finish the year!

<b>Remaining ASPIA Support Group Meeting date for 2015</b>	
5 December – Discussion – Self Care and Survival for holiday season AGM and Christmas Celebration	
<b>ASPIA Support Group Meeting Dates for 2016</b>	
6 February – Nola Norris	5 March
2 April	7 May
4 June	2 July
6 August	3 September
1 October	5 November
3 December	

### **ASPIA's online Yahoo discussion group**

Lots of great conversations taking place in an email style. \$25.00 annual subscription. Visit ASPIA's website at [www.aspia.org.au/contactus.html](http://www.aspia.org.au/contactus.html) to request to join. The forum is becoming a great place to discuss sensitive stuff that can't be published in newsletters, etc.

### **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>

### **Book Recommendations (repeated from last month)**

- **Marriage and Lasting Relationships with Asperger's Syndrome** (Autism Spectrum Disorder) by Eva A Mendes (foreword by Stephen M Shore), publisher Jessica Kingsley Publishers – available through Footprint Books [www.footprint.com.au](http://www.footprint.com.au)

### **Groups available for adults with AS and also couples**

Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates runs groups for adults with AS and also for couples, and Psychologist Eleanor Gittins is running an adult group in Surry Hills and a couples group in Menai. Please refer to the professionals list on the aspia website for their contact details.

### **"Thought"**

#### **Do our partners trust us?**

This is a good question, but very complex as members of our forum explored recently.

As with many aspects of relationships affected by AS, the matter of trust may vary wildly from one couple to the next, but I'll share the thoughts that I shared, that are related to my own experience.

My comment was that "I think their trust (AS partner) is closely linked to what their values are and how they believe we are complying with those."

My recent experience was with a partner who had values linked to finances and asset building, he was a hard worker and honest in his business dealings, but even though I was as honourable and transparent as I could be and contributed as much as I could and pulled my weight, I didn't let him be "in charge" of my stuff, nor did I follow his directives and therefore he persistently demonstrated suspicion towards me. It was crushing because I'm sure I contributed to our shared lifestyle far more than he gave me any credit for, and all the while my own asset (home) was left to slowly run-down because I didn't have the funds to maintain it.

So, as I said in my initial comment, it seems to depend on what they value and how well they perceive that we are complying with that as to whether they trust us.

I'm not saying everyone's situation will be the same. I know my ex-husband (I was married to him for 20 years) never seemed to trust me, but it wasn't about finances or assets with him. He was very ego-centric, and having me in his space made him feel very threatened, which I think many other partners find is true too. We expose their poor attitudes and behaviours and hold them accountable which they don't seem to forgive us for. I never felt like I had any credibility in his estimation, which tied in to his trust in me.

Added to this is something I wrote about not that long ago, about how they seem to build up a perception of us based only on our reactions or negative responses to their poor attitudes and behaviour and they don't balance up their perception of us by all our good qualities and all the amazing things we do do, particularly for their benefit. These seem unnoticed, and seem to be irrelevant to them and their estimation of our trustworthiness, or not.

So disheartening.

Carol Grigg OAM, Dip Counselling, MACA Level 2

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

### **Carol Grigg - Counselling Services in Sydney**

I am very excited to announce that I am returning to my home in Sydney in time for Christmas, and from mid-January I will be available for face to face counselling sessions.

A location for my practice is yet to be decided, though as part of what I offer I am considering providing some sort of travelling counselling service within Sydney and surrounds.

If you are interested in discussing an appointment time or location, please email me: [carolgrigg@live.com.au](mailto:carolgrigg@live.com.au)

Watch my website [www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au](http://www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au) for updates.

I continue to be available for phone or skype counselling sessions.



**Merry Christmas everyone!**