

ASPIA Newsletter – February 2015

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

Greetings!

Another year is underway, and we are looking forward to our monthly support group meetings again. Attendances increased considerably in 2014, and we look forward to the same in 2015 as we continue to provide opportunities for validation, education and support for partners. We look forward to you joining us on the 1st Saturday of every month (except January).

ASPIA Support Group Meeting dates for 2015		
7 February	7 March Please note: No regular support group meeting on 7 March as we are hosting <u>workshop with Tony Attwood</u> . All are encouraged to attend. Registrations essential.	4 April
2 May	6 June	4 July
1 August	5 September	3 October
7 November	5 December	

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

Time: 1.30pm for 2pm start, concludes 5pm. Please bring a small plate of afternoon tea to share.

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

Congratulations to Dr Nola Norris!

We wish to heartily congratulate our long-time ASPIA member, Web Developer and Educator **NOLA NORRIS**, on the achievement of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

Nola’s PhD Thesis is on **“A New Perspective on Thinking, Memory and Learning in Gifted Adults with Asperger Syndrome: Five Phenomenological Case Studies”** and is available for viewing or download at <http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/4242/>. Use the download button in the top right corner of the UOW page.

Nola adds: *“If you’d like to dip into the thesis I suggest you start with one of the five case studies, each of which is a self-contained narrative. The participants made fascinating and insightful contributions. The first case study starts on page 83. Each case study is a separate chapter. For teachers, the educational contribution is covered in chapters 9, 10 and Appendix C.”*

February Meeting: ASPIA Support Group Meeting this coming Saturday 7 Feb 2015

Nola will be presenting: **“The Big Picture: Putting the pieces together – understanding Autism and Asperger Syndrome”**.

Dr Nola Norris was inspired to begin her PhD after attending an ASPIA meeting.

The presentation by one of ASPIA’s regular presenters Psychologist Eleanor Gittins covered findings from neuroscience about the nature of Autism/Asperger syndrome.

Nola’s research draws upon neuroscience research and provides a new approach to understanding thinking, memory and learning in gifted adults with Autism. Nola’s PhD was conferred in December 2014.

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.

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.

Workshop on Asperger's Syndrome in Couple Relationships – registrations close 28/2/15

ASPIA is hosting a full-day Workshop on “Asperger’s Syndrome in Couple Relationships” on Saturday 7 March 2015 with world-renowned Educator, Author and Clinical Psychologist Professor Tony Attwood. We are continuing to offer the early bird price of \$195 per person, all refreshments included.

See our website <http://www.aspia.org.au/events.html> for information and to register.

We would encourage all to attend, and bring your partners if you can. Also, friends, family members, GP’s, therapists and anyone else you know who could benefit.

This event will be a highlight in ASPIA’s calendar and is an opportunity for a whole day of education and inspiration with one of the most experienced professionals in the field of Autism and Asperger’s Syndrome in the world. Great value, and for less than the cost of an average psychology appointment.

ASPIA has taken a financial risk committing to this workshop event, so we are also hoping that as many as possible can register and attend to ensure we can cover our expenses for the day.

Please help us promote this event wherever possible. Send the link around on facebook etc.

ASPIA’s online Yahoo discussion group

This online forum is growing and lots of great conversations are taking place. \$25.00 annual subscription. Visit my website at www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au/Contact-me.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 by mid-2015

We were shocked and distressed to find out in December that the College of Nursing is closing, the building has been sold and we won’t be able to hire our room any more after the end of June.

We are setting about to find another “home” for ASPIA’s meetings, preferably nearby.

If anyone is aware of low-cost meeting rooms that could be suitable, please let us know?

Thought ...

I am presently working on some new material based on the accumulation of my experiences and observations over a long period of time, and where my thinking is at now.

One thing I often talk about in my “thoughts” and other writings is the distressed and broken down state that partners are often in when they begin to attend our meetings. This conveys that these ones are actually not enjoying their basic human rights or having their essential needs met at home, as all partners know is true. I’m looking to write a little more strongly, and present some benchmarks for partners to use to assess their circumstances and help them advocate a little more confidently for themselves.

I have noticed that over time, partners lose their sense of what is ok and what is not ok within the relationship as they are worn down, and as the dysfunction becomes their “normal”.

To accompany my new article (which is very long and titled “Straight Talk for Partners: Is Common Ground Possible?”), I am putting together some tips about communication and creating some checklists and worksheets to help with practical application.

I will have to charge a little for this work as I am now totally dependent on counselling & writing for income. Carol Grigg OAM, Dip Counselling, www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au