

ASPIA NEWSLETTER

September 2015

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

September Meeting

This coming Saturday 5th September

BURWOOD RSL CLUB, 96 Shaftesbury Road, 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)

There is free parking on site and in the street which makes things a lot easier, although for those who come by train, it will be a bit further to walk. Basically walk past the College (former venue) and continue to the next corner and turn right into Shaftesbury Road. It’s a couple of blocks up on the left.

We will be using a meeting room on Level 1. 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.

Topic for this meeting:

Following our fabulous meeting in August when Clinical Psychologist Steve Den Kaat attended, we will have an informal discussion time for our September meeting.

There is always value in having a meeting where we can discuss what we’ve learned in previous meetings and share what’s been working for us. This is one of the great benefits of a support group, and a great opportunity to get to know other partners.

Something that seems to be topical at the moment is finding the courage to push things a bit further and take a stand when behaviours or attitudes are just not ok. We’ve been told by a few of the psychologists that just because it’s AS doesn’t mean we have to put up with unacceptable or abusive behaviour. If it’s not ok with us, then it’s ok to take a stand. Sadly, those on the spectrum have a tendency to avoid issues until it’s the 11th hour and 59th minute and the ultimatum is actually in progress. Sometimes it can be more effective to bargain for change when we are away from the situation.

Let’s talk about these things at our September meeting.

ASPIA Lunch Club prior to meeting: Lunch Club is now meeting at the RSL Club too. Head for the bistro area and hopefully everyone will find each other.

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. Then we can head upstairs to our meeting room at 1.30pm.

Dinner: The Club facility also makes it really convenient for anyone to stay on after the support group meeting and have a drink and/or some dinner together like we did after the June meeting. This is a nice way to end a great day with our ASPIA friends.

ASPIA Support Group Meeting dates for 2015		
	5 September - Discussion	3 October – Natalie Black
7 November – Eleanor Gittins	5 December – Discussion	6 Feb 2016 – Nola Norris

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>

Items of interest

- **Book recommended by a partner**

"The Journal of Best Practices: A Memoir of Marriage, Asperger Syndrome, and one Man's Quest to be a better Husband" by David Finch.

- **New Book "My Autistic Awakening" by Rachael Lee Harris**

"A fascinating story celebrating the gorgeous diversity of humankind, and to inspire all girls & women on the autism spectrum."

Rachael is a Counsellor/Psychotherapist with Asperger's Syndrome who has a practice in Brisbane. We highly recommend her. See Rachael's website <http://rlharrispsy.com/>

- **Research Project for us to support**

"An Exploratory Study of the impact of Autism Symptoms on Parenting."

Conducted by the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre, La Trobe University.

This research is relevant to the topic of our ASPIA meeting on 1st August. Please consider contributing to this study. Contact Natasha Kolivas on

nskolivas@students.latrobe.edu.au or visit the following link:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/otarc/research/research-themes/focus-on-families>

Groups for adults with AS and also couples

Remember that Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates runs groups for adults with AS and also for couples, and now Psychologist Eleanor Gittins has informed us that she is once again 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”

A couple of days each week I work as a Generalist Counsellor for a rural health service. It's been a great way to gain experience with a wide variety of personal circumstances and different age groups. I love it.

I was in a counselling session with a male about my own age a couple of weeks ago and he was explaining to me that he was a bit shy socially, and then he said something that completely stopped me in my tracks. A light-bulb moment. (Or another hit in the head!)

I believe I did very well staying composed and not letting on that he'd said something of great significance to me. However I did gently ask him to elaborate a little because it was helpful information in my work with him anyway.

He told me that he likes being around friendly and outgoing people because they do all the work.

Are you thinking what I'm thinking? Is this what was happening when we first met our partners? And is this a role we continue to fulfil for them? And for others?

My client did say that he found social situations and relationships difficult, but clearly he'd learned a very effective way to manage this. Without effort on his part. Using the effort of another.

Slightly annoying?

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