

# ASPIA NEWSLETTER - June 2016

## Next ASPIA partner support group meeting:

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June**

**AT: THE RUGBY BAR, CLUB BURWOOD, 97 Burwood Road, Burwood (Sydney)**

This is **NOT the RSL Club** in Shaftesbury Road, although it is in their group of clubs.

Club Burwood is a smaller club, and is on the corner of George Street, just a short walk down the hill from the railway station. **The Rugby Bar is downstairs.**

**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)

### **PARKING:**

The best option is the **John Street car park behind the Club (Wilson parking). \$4 daily rate for weekends.** Plenty of available spaces. Other options are mostly metered or too far away.

**LUNCH CLUB** is at the Club (from 12noon), and drinks/dinner after the meeting for those who can stay on. There is great benefit in getting to know each other informally over dinner or drinks.

## **What's happening at our JUNE meeting?**

**Long-time group member Natalie Black** will be presenting at our June meeting.

Her topic: **"Is there something about us that draws us to relationships where our needs are not sufficiently met?"**

Natalie will present a bit of a different focus around this topic related to attachment styles again, and will also explore some other topics, such as, what good therapy looks like and how to find it, and techniques for meeting our own emotional and practical needs. Time permitting, Natalie will also provide a bit of a refresher about the neurological aspects of ASD that she presented previously.

By way of intro, Natalie says: *"I am not yet a registered psychologist, but I have a BA in Psychology with Honours in 2013 and I have started a Master of Clinical Psychology in 2016. I am also a Crisis Support Worker at Lifeline.*

*Personally, I was married to an Aspie for 11 years and have also had many years of psychotherapy myself working on skills, including the techniques I will be going over in the presentation."*

(Additional Note: Bring something warm to put on during the meeting. The air conditioning in the Rugby Bar is freezing.)

<b>ASPIA Support Group Meeting Dates for 2016</b>		
4 June	2 July	6 August
3 September	1 October	5 November
3 December		

### **New partner support group in Port Macquarie**

Third Thursday of the month, 10am – 12noon, Port Macquarie Town Library.

Contact Meredith on 0428 904 007 or email [meredithllew@gmail.com](mailto:meredithllew@gmail.com)

### **Reminder about Divorce Partners who provided an informative session in our April meeting.**

Divorce Partners offer low-cost settlement negotiation packages for couples who hope to avoid the horrendous cost and adversarial experience of lawyers and the Family Court Process.

Their business is growing and they have representatives in most major cities now.

Contact them for information about how they may be able to help you.

Visit their website: [www.divorcepartners.com.au](http://www.divorcepartners.com.au)

Or Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/divorcepartners](http://www.facebook.com/divorcepartners)

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

Lots of great conversations taking place in an email style. \$25.00 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>

### **Movie Recommendation**

Heritage Films have released "Jack of the red hearts" - a film for Autism Awareness.

Visit: <http://www.jackoftheredhearts.com.au> for information about the movie and where it is being screened. Stars AnnaSophia Robb and Famke Janssen

### **Opportunity to hear Temple Grandin speak – 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 8am – 2pm at the Hilton, Sydney**

Contact Irabina Autism Services for information: [www.irabina.com](http://www.irabina.com)

### **Ability Links NSW**

One of our former members has sent us some information about Ability Links NSW who provide support to help people with a disability, as well as their families and carers to link into their community in ways that help them achieve goals. It is difficult to explain the concept in a few words, so please follow this link for more information: [www.abilitylinksnsw.org.au](http://www.abilitylinksnsw.org.au)

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

Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates runs groups for adults with AS and also for couples.

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.

**Research Study by Bronwyn Wilson (repeated from last month). Please contribute if at all possible.**

Bronwyn says: **“The purpose of this study is to explore communication patterns and resulting difficulties that can occur in the close relationships of adults with Asperger's Syndrome”.**

Bronwyn previously researched the need for prompting in AS adults, and presented her findings at an ASPIA meeting, which were very interesting and helpful.

If you can help with her next survey, please follow this link:

[https://ecuau.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6sNVH8l0WgVQsPH](https://ecuau.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6sNVH8l0WgVQsPH)

(Please click on the final “arrow” in the survey so your answers are recorded).

**Survey Request**

The co-ordinator of the website [www.theneurotypical.com](http://www.theneurotypical.com) is asking for partners who may be willing to complete the following survey please:

<http://www.theneurotypical.com/articles/survey%20%20for%20neurotypicals.docx>

**Thought – “Just one word would do”**

In all my conversations with partners of adults with Asperger's Syndrome I hear partners yearning for some form of acknowledgement from their Aspie partner. I know what they mean, I know what it feels like to have that yearning. Just one word.

One word that tells us they see us, that they understand how we're feeling, that they know what we need, that they recognise our need for connection, that they understand what we're saying, that they know we love them, that they value who we are, that they notice what we do, that they appreciate our care and all our effort, that we are important to them, that they care about us, that they're sorry for words or actions that hurt us, that they love us, that we matter.

That one word would make it all ok. Just one word. It seems so simple. But that one word would convey a world of meaning that our partners do not understand and cannot articulate. They look at us blankly, or argue the point, or think we're trying to compete with them. It's like we're asking them to suddenly speak fluently in a foreign language. A language they don't comprehend and have no words for. How can they see or measure what to them seems invisible?

Often our children are more fluent in the language of acknowledgement, of appreciation, of recognising another's contribution or significance. How joyful does it make our hearts when someone stops to say thank you? How do we live with joy when the one we've chosen to love goes through each day offering no acknowledgement of any way we've made a positive impact in their lives, and worse still, seems to notice only when they perceive we've impacted negatively?

I'm asking questions I can't answer. But it's better if we change our expectations. Changing our expectations isn't about letting our Aspie partner off the hook necessarily. It's about doing something to help us avoid our own repeated pain, disappointment and despair. Let it go, grieve for it, and expect only what's realistic. There may even be other relationships or situations where we've been hurt and also need to let go of the expectation to be known for who we are, or acknowledged for what we contributed. Once again, it may be the limitations of others we need to understand and accept.

It's a normal yearning to be acknowledged or valued, a normal need, one that neurotypicals understand and participate in, naturally. Once again, let's seek out, nurture and draw on the relationships we do have where there is a solid reciprocal quality present.

Carol Grigg OAM  
Dip Counselling

I provide phone and skype counselling for partners who need to talk. Please see my website [www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au](http://www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au)