

# **ASPIA NEWSLETTER - May 2016**

## **Next ASPIA partner support group meeting:**

### **This coming Saturday 7th May**

**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 MAY meeting?**

**Clinical Psychologist Jeroen Decates** will be presenting at our May meeting.

His topic: **More stories about Aspies and Illogicals.**

Our sessions with Jeroen are highly informative, always candid, and with a helpful dash of humour.

Jeroen is one of a few psychologists who've consistently educated us over the years since we began, and to whom we refer partners and couples for realistic support and counselling.

Join us for another great meeting this coming Saturday 7th May.

### **Report on previous meeting – April**

You'll remember we had a session with David and Steven from Divorce Partners. The session was fabulously informative, and has provided facts and hope for many who may need to consider separation.

Divorce Partners offer low-cost settlement negotiation packages for couples who want 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)

### **Exciting News: New partner support group starting in Port Macquarie**

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

First meeting - 19th May.

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

<b>ASPIA Support Group Meeting Dates for 2016</b>		
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 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**

The following book has been around now for a while, but has recently been recommended again as one of the best for partners:

#### **Life with a Partner or Spouse with Asperger Syndrome: Going over the Edge? Practical steps to saving you and your relationship**

Author: Kathy J Marshack, Autism Asperger Publishing Company

### **Sydney 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.

### **New Research Study by Bronwyn Wilson. 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).

### **I recently came across the following definition of the term "Autistic"**

***"self-absorbed, with little psychological awareness of the world around them"***.

Our partners may not be this severe, but it's a spectrum, and this is still relevant.

## **“Thought”**

I recently began to write the beginnings of another poem, but haven't developed it yet.

It began with thoughts of how painful it is to our core when we realise that there is no longer anything interesting in us to captivate our partner's attention.

When we realise we were just the special interest of the time. So adored. Such a priority. The centrepiece of the story. We felt so loved and loveable. We didn't know any different. Just thought we'd found that one soul that was made for ours and wanted to share our space, forever, together.

Now we sit neatly on the mantelpiece, no longer the centrepiece. Or maybe we're smiling from a frame on the desk.

We'd thought it was actually about us. But it ran its course. The exploration complete. Every angle covered. Learned all they could. Topic exhausted. Box ticked. Partner secured.

We feel invisible. Though certainly a useful item on the mantelpiece, we never gather dust.

Note I said “learned all they could”. The limitation is with them. Our relationships can only go as deep as they can go. They cannot know us deeper than they can be known themselves.

Our hearts feel tricked. We invested so much. We want to grow deeper, together. But living along the surface is all they can sustain. Gathering items for the mantelpiece, collections for the shed, knowledge for the head.

The diagnostic criteria states that AS characteristics become more and more apparent as social demands exceed their capacity to meet those social demands.

We are living with partners who have reached their capacity for emotional intimacy and interaction. They cannot go deeper to the level of meaning that we seek and need in order to thrive.

Our speaker at this month's meeting, Jeroen Decates, reminds us over and over again that we must find ways to have our neurotypical needs met – to be with those who “know us”, know our essence, and can sustain deeper interactions with us.

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)