

ASPIA

Providing support to partners of adults with Asperger's Syndrome since 2003

ASPIA Newsletter – November 2017

 **ASPIA's October meeting** with Gudula Dornseifer was another wonderful opportunity for further learning and enlightenment. Gudula had another new perspective to bring to our collective knowledge. We highly recommend Gudula as a professional for helping partners and couples work through the differences created by Asperger's Syndrome in relationship. See her website at www.goodwillrelations.com.au. See this month's "Thought" for some of the gems she shared.

Our next **ASPIA Partner Support Group** meeting will be held this coming **Saturday 4th November**.

Please gather from 1.30pm for a 2.00pm start.

The Presenter and Facilitator for this meeting will be our Web Developer **Nola Norris**.

Nola is a school teacher and has been a member of ASPIA, and ASPIA's web developer since her husband's diagnosis of Asperger syndrome (AS) in 2005. At that time, she was working with other teachers on the differences in learning for students with AS or high-functioning autism. To learn more about this, she undertook a research project and completed a PhD in 2014.

Nola is passionate about the rich insights into thinking in Asperger syndrome that emerge from recent neuroscience research and how this knowledge can make a difference to relationships. She will present on the topic "**Memory and learning: How are they different for people with AS?**" Along with clear explanations of the research, the session will also include discussion and opportunities to share.

Nola is now working in higher education with graduate and post-graduate teachers. She has presented her research at several conferences and seminars this year and is keen to reach educators and parents as well as partners of people with AS. To this end, she has established a website with further information – www.nelt.com.au.

Please join us at this **ASPIA meeting** for another great validating and educational opportunity.

ASPIA meeting location: Club Burwood at 97 Burwood Road, Burwood (Sydney) (corner George Street)

Who can attend: Partners and family members seeking support from the non-Asperger perspective.

Cost: \$10 for non-members, \$5 for members (membership is \$55 per year and includes several benefits including borrowing books from the library and being part of a private facebook group.)

Parking: The cheapest and closest parking is directly behind the Club in **John Street**. Wilson car park - \$4.

Lunch Club: Bistro area from 12 noon for those who'd like to chat over lunch before the meeting.

Dinner: Staying back afterwards for a drink or dinner has become popular with those attending meetings.

Anxiety Support Group in Five Dock

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Those struggling with an anxiety disorder have been invited to contact WayAhead Anxiety Disorders Info Line on 1300 794 992 if you'd like to join their support group. Or email supportgroups@wayahead.org.au

ASPIA Meeting Dates for remainder of 2017

- November 4
- December 2

ASPIA's Meeting Dates for 2018

- No meeting in January
- February 3
- March 3
- April 7
- May 5
- June 2
- July 7
- August 4
- September 1
- October 6
- November 3
- December 1

*** PLEASE SAVE THE DATE * - Saturday 10th March 2018 - Sydney**

**ASPIA will be hosting a full-day Workshop
for partners and couples with**

TONY ATTWOOD AND MICHELLE GARNETT

Venue: Burwood RSL Club
All other details are yet to be confirmed

Other places where you can stay in touch with ASPIA

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Aspia-Inc-Asperger-Syndrome-Partner-Information-Australia-Inc-293809577377381/>

Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/Sydney-Partners-of-Adults-with-Aspergers-Syndrome-ASPIA/>

Yahoo: We have an online discussion forum (\$25 subscription) – see our website www.aspia.org.au

Email: info@aspia.org.au

Website: please visit our website for information and articles, recommended professionals, and a range of other information and useful contacts and links – www.aspia.org.au

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Thought

A few of the interesting things we learned during our support group meeting with Gudula Dornseifer in October:

- Individuals with AS are particularly sensitive to shame. They haven't learned to manage the feeling of embarrassment and shame and their best defence is to attack. It's a reaction to discomfort, bringing comfort. They learn early to seek their own comfort/soothe their discomfort, and they do this by blaming others. Neurotypicals regulate their own discomfort, they know how to fix it.
- An individual with AS needs much more validation to feel good; they start at a much lower baseline, and find it hard to feel ok. They are already depleted and don't recover. Anger and adrenaline give "uppers". Being angry and upset maintains a feeling of being alive, rather than feeling depressed. Revenge is an "upper".
- Problem solving takes place in the language centre of the brain.
- Gudula suggested that we try to meet the Aspie in their logic, and then explain. They may then respond.
- She stated that there is no justification for abuse, that Aspies are capable of stopping it. They do it because they get away with it. We may have to be prepared to use some form of leverage to stop it – a bargaining position.
- They may use humour as a diversion.
- Their internal world is a mess.
- They are task focused rather than connection focused.
- May be more affectionate when they feel better, and when they can feel more in control of what's happening.
- Unfortunately the partner becomes the symbol of their inadequacy and shame, even when we don't say anything. We're the only one who sees them for what they really are.

Remember there are dozens of Newsletter Thoughts available for reading in previous newsletters preserved on our website – www.aspia.org.au/newsletters.html

My best wishes to all, Carol Grigg OAM, Dip Counselling, Member ACA,
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