

# **ASPERGER SYNDROME PARTNER INFORMATION AUSTRALIA (ASPIA) INCORPORATED**

(Formerly **GRASP** Partner/Spouse Support Group)

*"Mutual acknowledgement and understanding  
of the Asperger marriage experience"*

## **NEWSLETTER – August 2011**

Our next support group meeting will be this **Saturday 6 August, 2pm – 5pm**  
College of Nursing, 14 Railway Pde, Burwood, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
\$2 Members / \$5 Non-Members (covers room hire, etc)

### I would like to use this meeting for a **group brainstorming** on **Useful Hints & Stress-Saving Strategies for every-day situations**

Previous group brainstormings have successfully put together the  
"ASPIA Brochure" and also the "Self-Care Suggestions"  
which have been enormously helpful to partners everywhere.

If you cannot attend this meeting, your suggestions are still extremely valuable,  
so **please email them through to [aspia@live.com.au](mailto:aspia@live.com.au)** so we can include them.  
Please include permission to use your contribution (anonymously) in ASPIA literature.  
Those who can attend, please bring something simple to share for afternoon tea.

#### **ASPIA's meetings are only suitable for non-Asperger individuals**

ASPIA does not have the expertise to responsibly offer education or support to adults with Asperger's Syndrome. Individuals with Asperger's Syndrome are advised to **see page 2** of this Newsletter and seek out groups specifically set up to address the needs of those with Asperger's Syndrome.

Thank you for your understanding.

#### **ASPIA Lunch Club**

ASPIA Lunch Club meeting before support group meeting  
**Now at LITTLE NEPAL restaurant, Shop C, 135 Burwood Road, Burwood (Sydney)**  
From Burwood Station, go left & up the hill, a few shops past the Westpac Bank  
and then cross the road. Arrive any time between 12noon & 2pm. All welcome.

#### **Other partner support groups/contacts in Australia**

**Brisbane:** Asperger Partners Support Group (APSG): Phone Helen on 0418 761 652  
or email [gaps.group@gmail.com](mailto:gaps.group@gmail.com)

**Brisbane/rural Qld:** Visit [www.aspiepartners.com](http://www.aspiepartners.com)

**Gold Coast:** Phone Tricia on 0413 085 174 or email [tricia.alaska@yahoo.com.au](mailto:tricia.alaska@yahoo.com.au)

**Northern Rivers, NSW:** Phone Debbie on (02) 6676 0483, Email:  
[northernriversasdnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:northernriversasdnetwork@gmail.com)

**Central Coast, NSW:** possible informal group to start, contact ASPIA

**Canberra:** Phone Anita on 0434 165 604

**Perth:** Phone Roz on (08) 9284 5252, Email: [rozsdesk@iinet.net.au](mailto:rozsdesk@iinet.net.au)

**Perth:** [aspiepartnerswa@hotmail.com](mailto:aspiepartnerswa@hotmail.com)

**Melbourne:** Visit forum at <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/aspartnr/index.html> .

**Adelaide:** Phone Heike Haffer on 0431 039 136, email [heikehaffer@hotmail.com](mailto:heikehaffer@hotmail.com)

#### **ASPIA Meeting Dates for remainder of 2011**

August 6	September 3	October 1	November 5	December 3
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ASPIA INC

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## **Book Supplier – Footprint Books**

For books on a wide range of topics relating to Asperger's Syndrome, including relationships, visit Footprint Books (Sydney) [www.footprint.com.au](http://www.footprint.com.au) . Online ordering available.

## **Support groups and resources for adults with Asperger's Syndrome**

- **Support Group for Adults with AS, 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday every month – Burwood, Sydney**  
Contact Eleanor Gittins on 0408 954 358 or email [janetgittins@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgittins@hotmail.com)
- **Support group for Adults with AS – North Shore, Sydney**  
Visit website for announcements [www.jdpsy.org](http://www.jdpsy.org) or call Jeroen Decates on 0402 028 588
- **AS Social Group “Social Steps” – Wollongong**  
Now on the first and third Wednesday of every month, 6.00pm – 8.00pm  
The Palm Court Hotel, Corrimal. Please contact Samantha at [asd.support@hotmail.com](mailto:asd.support@hotmail.com)
- **Brisbane – AU-SOME Women and Girls' Group**  
Contact Camilla Connolly [camillaconnolly@optusnet.com.au](mailto:camillaconnolly@optusnet.com.au) or Rachael Harris  
[Rachael.counsellor@gmail.com](mailto:Rachael.counsellor@gmail.com) Website [www.camillaconnollyasd.com](http://www.camillaconnollyasd.com)
- Aspect also has resources for adults, email: [infoline@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:infoline@autismspectrum.org.au) or Phone: 8977 8377  
and a **\*social group in Sydney for diagnosed adults\*** New Calendar of events available.  
Contact Caroline Smith, the group Co-ordinator at [carolinesmith@autismspectrum.org.au](mailto:carolinesmith@autismspectrum.org.au)
- **Workshops on Relationships, social skills, sexuality – Liz Dore, [www.relationshipsandprivatestuff.com](http://www.relationshipsandprivatestuff.com)**
- **ASTEEN: Teen social/support group**, including yahoo group  
Contact Christine Ayo [christineayo@optusnet.com.au](mailto:christineayo@optusnet.com.au) Ph: 0413 781 626
- **\*New\* Facebook Group (Brisbane) - Brisbane Asperger Syndrome Adults**

**Thoughts** ... When discussing AS partnerships recently with one of our partner-friends in Melbourne, I was reminded of how in our meetings we often note that our AS partners typically fall into one of two types or representations of expression, ie, aggressive/controlling and over-engaging, or passive/avoidant and detached. Like two extremes. It has also been observed in our meetings that partners often fall into one of two types of expression too.

Many who attend group meetings are unusually lacking in confidence for their age, intelligence, life experience and vocation, and can seem quite down-trodden. Others are far more verbally and emotionally dominant, sometimes unusually aggressive and reactive. It occurred to me that perhaps this could be related to how the non-AS partner's original personality type has changed or adapted to cope with the long-term effects of sharing life with a partner with one or the other type of AS expression, and are we seeing a corresponding extreme? My personal experience was with a controlling, over-engaging AS partner and I was emotionally & verbally beaten down, powerless, imploding with grief and quiet rage and shattered in confidence. Perhaps those whose experience is with a passive/avoidant, detached type of AS partner may have become more aggressive and outwardly frustrated after years of trying to force engagement with an apparently unresponsive partner? Maybe I'm being overly simplistic, but always thinking ...

I've mentioned before that the years of not knowing about AS, not understanding what was going on and not knowing how to respond constructively, have done untold damage, no matter what our personality type. We've done our best at every point, and yet watched and felt our dreams, life-joy and sense of who we are crumbling away every day. This creates confusion, frustration, a sense of helplessness and a deep sense of loss. For the sake of our emotional healing, we must remember how important it is to allow that ever-present bitterness to evolve into grief as we grow in our understanding of AS. Carol.

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