

# ASPIA

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

## ASPIA Newsletter – July 2018

 Our next ASPIA partner support group meeting will be this coming **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July** and our Presenter will be **Dr Stiofán Mac Suibhne, an Osteopath** who will speak on **"Mindfulness and Self-compassion for Resilience – an overview of the science and techniques"**.

**Stiofán** comes highly recommended by one of our long-time ASPIA members and current committee member Lin Parkes. Please join us from 1.30pm for a 2.00pm start.

This topic is in keeping with ASPIA's focus on Self-Care. I like the term "self-compassion" that Stiofán has used in his title, and I'm sure this concept will resonate with many other partners as well.

### **Some biographical information provided by Stiofán:**

Education and Training "My first degree was a BSc (Hons) Molecular biology (University of London). I subsequently undertook accountancy training and worked as a manager in the UK's NHS (public health system) & health/social care NGOs. I trained as an osteopath at the London School of Osteopathy, qualifying in 2001.

In 2003 I completed the British Medical Acupuncture Society's training course. In 2008 I gained a Post Graduate Certificate in Western Acupuncture (AUT University Auckland) and in 2014 a Masters in Rehabilitation. I undertook the Breathworks-UK Mindfulness teacher training programme 2011-2013. I am currently procrastinating over a PhD."

Clinical Practice "I am a registered Osteopath practising in a GP surgery in Abbotsford, NSW. I teach mindfulness as a technique to help patients manage chronic health conditions, pain and in palliative care contexts or as a resource for resilience."

Please join us at this **ASPIA meeting** for a great opportunity to learn more about how to strengthen our self-care efforts.

**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 - \$5.

**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.

### **ASPIA's remaining Meeting Dates for 2018**

- July 7
- August 4

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- September 1
- October 6
- November 3
- December 1

## **eBook Recommendation**

"Between you and me: personal stories from neuro-diverse couples", by Different Together. Follow link: <https://books2read.com/betweenyouandme>

## **Other ways 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](http://www.aspia.org.au)

**Email:** [info@aspia.org.au](mailto: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](http://www.aspia.org.au)

## **Thought**

Nola's presentation at our June meeting was everything that we expected it to be, and more.

I'll share a few powerful snippets of information with you, and then provide a link to Nola's hand-out on her website, which she's generously made available to all of us.

- Neurodiversity means diversity in cognitive profile and learner characteristics.
- Asperger's Syndrome will have a global effect on the relationship, and on a global scale.
- The AS individual will only ever trust their own truth. This can explain why partners feel they have no credibility.
- Theory of mind is knowing that other people have minds and different ways of thinking. The ability to distinguish between own and other's thoughts. AS assume others will have the same like, dislike or preference as their own.
- The AS individual is "in the moment", a prisoner of the moment. They can't imagine themselves in a different emotional state as now. They have poor theory of their own mind, completely in the moment, can't imagine himself/herself in any other moment.
- They find it difficult to move or change emotionally because they can't imagine being different to how they are right now.
- We don't really understand how the individual with AS processes. He/she can only process what he/she is experiencing. The partner's experience will be viewed as wrong.
- When there's a lack of process, there needs to be a release – hence, meltdowns and shutdowns. They can't self-regulate and bring themselves down (emotionally soothe).
- AS have a tendency to remember what's wrong or incorrect in a situation.
- Nola has taught us much about episodic memory, which is very weak in individuals with AS. Episodic memory needs context (source memory) – location, time, affect, etc. AS don't have source attribution – they don't know before and after (which is encoded in every memory for NT). When we attempt to start a conversation with them, we need to start with their own idea or thought, and then lead from there.
- If we try to talk to them about episodic memory, they won't know what we're talking about.
- AS do not have future or prospective memory – imagination for the future. They only remember what has happened already. This may explain their lack of optimism.
- The tendency to control is about creating predictability.

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- They do not have "bigger picture" thinking.
- They are stuck in the present. A simple change (anything) is difficult. Prepare them for the transition.

The link to Nola's handout (thank you Nola): <http://nelt.com.au/resources/workshop-presentation-notes/>

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

[www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au](http://www.carolgriggcounselling.com.au)

On another note: I keep forgetting to announce that with our June meeting, ASPIA celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! Congratulations to us all! Thank you for being part of it.