



Aspiehelp / The Aspire Trust

July 2018 Newsletter

Edited by Anna Melling

Aspie Roundup 2018, In Our Office, Workplace Bullying Study, Nutrient Study,
How to Fight the Winter Blues, Winter Events in Christchurch

Aspie Roundup 2018

The November Aspie Roundup is in the planning stage.

The Roundup will take place on Show Weekend this year—**16 & 17 November in the Kowhai Lounge at our location in Cashmere.**



It seems, at this stage, that there will be a focus on Asperger's and the arts—primarily the written word. There will also be a lot of other topics covered. Richard Cullingworth will be presenting his work on disability-friendly architecture and Debbie Ball will be contributing a video on homeschooling on the spectrum—for starters! In addition, Julie will be making a presentation on the subject of her research.

There will also be a special workshop on a “future for aspies”, plenty of time for questions, discussions and networking, plus lunch and snacks.

Feel free to email us with any queries—info@aspiehelp.com

Julie has completed her course

Congratulations to Julie, who now has a Diploma in Psychology and Counselling!

Upcoming Fundraising Sausage Sizzles

Here are the dates for the upcoming Sausage Sizzles at Fresh Meats Barrington (Barrington Mall):

Saturday the 18th of August
Saturday the 8th of September
Saturday the 22nd of September
Saturday the 13th of October
Saturday the 27th of October

If you're in the area, come and visit, say hello and perhaps buy a sausage!

We are always grateful for volunteers to help out with the sausage sizzles, even 2 hours now and then is very helpful.



In Our Office

Winter bugs have been chipping away at us quite a lot but with the return of the sun, things are feeling more hopeful.

Planning for the Aspie Roundup is well underway although there has been a change of Event Manager—hopefully temporarily—from Andrea/Maria to Leith! There will be a range of very interesting presenters and attendees and great conversations to be had!

Some presentations will be video clips from other places and people who can't be present, and another new movie from our fantastic movie making member, Michael Woods.

We learned about somatic therapy which has been so beneficial for a couple of our clients and are looking to use it for another. People with PTSD locked into their bodies can benefit from this.

Good in the Hood presented us with a useful \$880.00 ! We are so grateful for their continued support.

Julie and Leith also attended a meeting with the “Train the Brain” people, who use interesting methods to improve vapour learning skills for people and children who are lagging a bit in certain areas. They are quite expensive but claim good results.

Julie and Leith also went to an Altogether Autism Regional network meeting at which Paula Jessop spoke about neurodiversity and being part of the Disability Network.

Leith also attended a meeting with a lawyer helping a client, and this has resulted in a generous donation to our funds, unlooked for and so welcome!

Julie and I are finding it very difficult to keep our social events at night running- after a busy day at work, coming out at night is just too hard for us! Question: is there someone who would be prepared to take over running this event, do you want it at all? or would another format be more attractive? e.g. a daytime one in the weekend?

Answers please by text or email!



*Our staff from top:
Leith, Julie, and Anna*

Social evenings

These are on hold for the foreseeable future.
See above for more details.

Our Patron is Stephen Mark Shore, PhD.

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Women who have experienced mental health difficulties and bullying in the workplace

Sue Purdie is a PhD student at the University of Canterbury. She is conducting a study into workplace aggression or bullying. Sue asked me to emphasise that she is very mindful that many people with Aspergers or neurodiversity do not identify with having mental health issues, but if people choose to do so for the study then they would be welcome.

“My research project will investigate what women who have been psychiatrically labelled and who have been bullied have to say about their experiences in relation to colleagues and/or managers, not clients or service users.”

I am including the information and consent sheets with this newsletter for those who may be interested.

Nutrient study

Some of you may be interested in this study by Julia Rucklidge at the University of Canterbury. It is not targeted towards aspies, but I am including it as many of us have mood and anxiety issues. Info from <https://www.facebook.com/mentalhealthandnutrition/>



facebook link

“We are thrilled to announce the launch of our latest study looking at the impact of nutrients on mood and anxiety in a community population. We have just published the protocol for the study and referrals need to be made through your GP. If you are....

- Aged 18-65 years
- Living in the Canterbury region
- Not currently taking medication for mental health difficulties
- Feeling anxious, worried or low in mood

“Please discuss the study with your GP. They can refer to us through the website: <https://mmp.net.nz/>”



mmp.net.nz

“This randomised controlled trial is exploring whether or not micronutrients may improve symptoms of anxiety and depression in adults...Participants will be randomly assigned to one of two groups, either the treatment group (who will receive micronutrients) or the placebo group (who will receive an identical product that contains no micronutrients). Both groups will take placebo or micronutrients for 10 weeks. Neither the participant NOR the investigators will know which group participants are in until the end of the study. However, at the end of the RCT phase (after 10 weeks), ALL participants will be offered the opportunity to take the micronutrients for a further 10 weeks, regardless of which group they were in. That way, everyone who participates in the study has the chance to try the micronutrient intervention.”

How to Fight Winter Blues

As days get shorter and the temperature drops, it's not uncommon for the winter blues to set in. All you want to do is stay in, curl into a ball, and eat. These tips, however, will help brighten things up!

Steps

1 Have your bedroom lights turn on a half hour before you're supposed to wake up. One of the symptoms of winter blues is increased difficulty getting up in the morning, even if you've had plenty of sleep. Plugging a bright, fluorescent lamp into a timer and having it turn on before your alarm goes off will help simulate an artificial dawn.



2 Expose yourself to sunlight as early in the morning as you can. You want to maximize the number of hours you experience daylight. Wake up early, and lift the curtains or go outside as soon as you get out of bed.

3 Use artificial light. Many people invest in a light box, which simulates the sun's natural rays, emitting 2,500 to 10,000 lux (a normal light fixture emits 250 to 500 lux). They work by reducing the release of melatonin in the brain. For best results, use a light box daily, in the early morning, and for 30 minutes to two hours at a time. Many people see improvement in about 2 weeks.

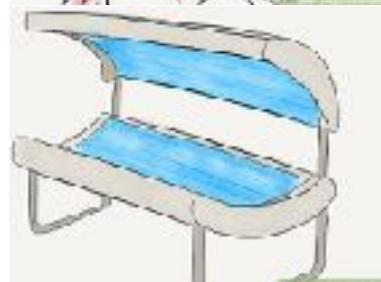
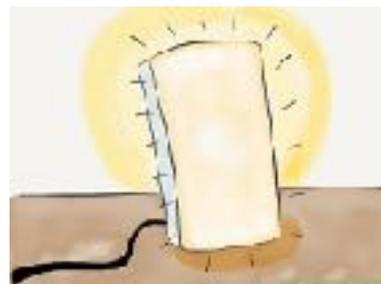
You can use the light box to effectively lengthen the day: use it before daylight, after the sun sets, or a combination of the two. Increasing the day length by two hours should be effective.

Light therapy boxes aren't regulated, so if you pick one out without the recommendation of a doctor, look for ones that have been tested in peer-reviewed clinical trials and have smooth diffusing screens that filter out UV rays.

Unfortunately, light boxes aren't cheap. In some cases, they are covered by health insurance.

Alternatively, you can get full-spectrum light bulbs at a hardware store. Just make sure they emit a minimum of 2,500 lux.

In a pinch, using a tanning bed for 5 minutes also helps.



4 Exercise. Did you know that one hour of aerobic exercise outside (even when it's cloudy) has the same therapeutic effects as 2.5 hours of light treatment indoors? This is because it raises serotonin levels, which tend to get low when you have the winter blues.

5 Watch your cravings! When your serotonin levels are low, one of things your body tends to do is to crave food high in carbohydrates, especially high-sugar foods like junk food and soda, because they raise serotonin levels.

6 Take a multivitamin containing vitamin D-3 daily. Vitamin D is created by the sun's rays on the skin, and therefore declines during the winter. Although studies on the effect of vitamin D supplements on seasonal depression have come up with varied results a good multivitamin will also help with energy levels.

7 Take up a winter activity. Taking up an activity that can only be done in the winter is a good way to look *forward* to winter, rather than hating it. Cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, winter hiking & cycling, ice skating, sledding, tubing, winter photography, playing/ listening to music, winter nature observation, or astronomy, all are good ways to enjoy winter. Embrace winter, and it cannot be your enemy!

8 Set a goal. Your goal can be anything you want it to be. Buy a calendar with fun (SNOW FREE) photos. Mark the first day of spring on the calendar, and then, every free day that you have after that, write down a fun, outdoors thing that you can only do in warm weather. For instance, vow to take a camping trip one weekend, go on a hike another, or have a backyard party on still another. Set a goal until that date, such as going to the gym five times a week, improving your grades, or tackling a hefty novel series.

9 Break out of a rut. In winter, where every day seems cloudy and cold, its easy to fall into an impossible routine. Shake things up with ease, by wearing a bright n bold color of makeup, styling your hair a totally new way, or by reaching out to a lost friend.



10 Dress for the cold. Many people say they hate winter simply because they're cold all the time. If this applies to you, then re-examine your wardrobe and make sure you're appropriately dressed. Make sure your hands, feet and head are kept warm. Long underwear can also work warming wonders.



11 Cozy up your home. Paint your walls with warm, vibrant colors. Change a sterile, white kitchen into a sunny, yellow retreat or transform a drab, beige living room into an inviting, verdant haven. Hang colorful artwork and toss around whimsical pillows. A few little touches can really help you cope with the winter blahs.

12 Accept the season. Even though winter may not seem so terrific, it brings a lot of things. The joy of the holiday season is carried throughout the winter. Many television shows only come on between the Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox. Sports such as basketball are often only played November - March. Sledding, snowball fights, snowmen, hot chocolate, blue jeans, and roaring fires simply aren't the same in the scorching heat of August. Keep a positive attitude, and the cold months will fly by.

ARTICLE PROVIDED BY [WIKIHOW](#), A WIKI BUILDING THE WORLD'S LARGEST,
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The above article is written for a Northern Hemisphere audience. Replace August with February, Basketball with Rugby etc!

Looking for fun events to attend this winter?

Christchurch Bridge Club

Do you enjoy cards, like challenges & want stay mentally alert? ...then discover Bridge with the Christchurch Bridge Club.



Chch Bridge Club

They are running a FREE beginners course, starting on 22nd of July 1pm-4pm. It runs for 10 weeks, and you will get a full set of notes. If you are interested, contact their office on 366 1516 or office@chchbridge.co.nz to put your name down. Venue: 21 Nova Place, left off Barbadoes St, before Kilmore St.

New Zealand International Film Festival

We have the film festival starting soon
<https://www.nziff.co.nz/2018/christchurch/>
2nd - 19th of August.



NZIFF

Their program for Christchurch will be online on the 9th of July.

CCC Events



Have a look at the CCC Events page:
<https://www.ccc.govt.nz/news-and-events/events/>



CCC Events

There are a lot of markets coming up, including the Matariki Night Market at the Arts Centre—6th and 7th of July from 4pm-10pm.

Eventfinda

There are also a lot of events to be discovered at Eventfinda
<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/whatson/events/christchurch-city>



EventFinda