



Aspiehelp / The Aspire Trust June 2018 Newsletter

Edited by Anna Melling

First Roundup information, Upcoming Sausage Sizzles, 70's Disco Night, In Our Office, Adults on the Spectrum: These Are Your Feet on Asperger's

Aspie Roundup 2018

We will be holding our next Roundup in the **Church House at the Cashmere Presbyterian Church**.

This will be on the **16th and 17th of November**.

More details will be provided as they become available.

Upcoming Fundraising Sausage Sizzles

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

Saturday the 23rd of June

Saturday the 18th of August

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.

(contact the office in advance if you want to help out)



Winter Solstice - Social Night

Next Aspiehelp event is on Wednesday 20th June, the night of the Winter Solstice!

70's Disco Night

Whether or not you enjoyed the 70's disco scene the first time around, perhaps you will enjoy this "70's Disco Night":

Friday 29th of June

6:30 - 8:30pm

Hohepa Canterbury

23 Barrington St

021 782 7661

christchurch@starjam.org

Gold coin donation for entry.



In Our Office

It has been a busy, varied and interesting month.

First of all, Julie finished her course for a Diploma of Psychology and Counselling... yay!! This has been a long and hard task, and she thoroughly deserves this qualification.!!

We met Dr Annie Southern at the beginning of May. She is an autistic, and has recently graduated with Ph.D in Health Science. She knows the support organisations in Christchurch extremely well, and is currently employed to audit Comcare. We are looking forward to reading her findings and conclusions! Annie has also agreed to join our Board of Trustees, filling the vacancy left by Dean Sutherland. He has a lot of family matters on his hands but remains vitally interested in Aspiehelp.

Maria Hoff has been appointed as volunteer Event Manager for the Aspie Roundup and has hit the ground running. She has been inviting potential speakers and making up a data base of interested people. The website is <https://www.theaspieroundup.co.nz/>.

Joanne Dacombe, a doughty Autie advocate from the North Island, was in Christchurch over a weekend to attend a Conference about Education and Disability. She was commended by MP Chris Hipkins for the part she played in this significant event. We had a great old catch-up about the NZ Autism scene and all our mutual acquaintances!

We have had a couple of clients off the back of our visit to Motueka, which was very gratifying, and the Architect who specialises in Disability issues, Richard Cullingworth, (who lives in Motueka) will be speaking at the Roundup as well.

Dr Olive Webb gave a workshop “living with Autism” on the 26th, in the Kowhai Lounge, which was attended by about a dozen people. It was well received.

Illness has been taking bites out of us of course. Hope you are all keeping well and warm.



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

Social evenings

Our regular social evenings are on the first and the third Wednesday of the month, in Cashmere from 7pm - 9pm.

We have board games, hot drinks and biscuits, and a selection of books from the Aspiehelp library available at every meeting. Please bring a \$2 donation.

The next meetings are on the 20th of June, 4th of July and 18th of July.

Aspiring members should make an appointment to meet Julie and Leith first.

Our Patron is Stephen Mark Shore, PhD.

The Aspire Trust, Inc is a registered Charitable Trust. Charities Services registration number is CC46192.

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Adults on the Spectrum: These are your Feet on Asperger's

Cary Terra

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<http://www.aspiestrategy.com/2013/02/adults-on-spectrum-these-are-your-feet.html>



When I first started working with adults on the spectrum there was no literature to refer to, and certainly no treatment guidelines. It was a brand new frontier, and so exciting. I haven't lost that sense – that there's an ever-expanding landscape of discovery when it comes to working with adults on the spectrum. Part of the constant novelty lies in the complexity of the mind; our personalities and coping mechanisms emerge through a complicated interplay between environment and genetics. Of course we all know this. But most of us consider autism to be a strictly neurological disorder, with observable behavior

manifestations. After working with hundreds of adults, I'm beginning to have my doubts.

What emerges after working with so many adults on the spectrum are patterns. These patterns reveal common threads between everything from client histories, to their private philosophical musings, to their choice of partners, to their sexuality, to the way they sit. I'm not talking about anything near 100% consistency, of course. But I am talking about unmistakable trends, the likes of which I've not seen in other populations. I'll be writing more about these trends in posts to come.





But for this short post I'd like to focus on one rather endearing trend: what adult clients do with their feet. After seeing lots and lots of adults on the spectrum I couldn't help but notice how they tend to sit. Not all of them, mind you, just many more than I had ever seen when working with varied populations.

Since sitting in this manner is not socially sanctioned for adults (yes, even our sitting postures are guided many unwritten social mandates), it's unusual to see adults, both men and women, sitting in this position. Some of them let me take pictures of their feet. I've

got almost fifty of them! All the same position. It's not a groundbreaking clinical observation, just a fun one, and one example of how people on the spectrum can transcend social expectations and teach us about ourselves. Apparently sitting with your feet like this is really comfortable. I've tried it now, and it made me remember how many comfortable things we give up when we enter the world of adulthood and social referencing. The ability to be disconnected from social norms can cause problems - we hear lots about that - but it can also preserve behaviors that are timeless in their comfort and charm.



See our this post referenced on The Atlantic: <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/>

Read Cary Terra's other blog posts at:

<http://www.aspiestrategy.com/>



"I am a psychotherapist in private practice in Seattle, Washington. I specialize in working with adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. They teach me how to love."