Newsletter

adelphicare.org

God-centred care
for everyone

God is love

In this issue…

Do we know how to help Autistic people?

One of the most challenging experiences I have had was when I was invited to work with a colleague on a research project that documented the experience of a lady who was about 30 and had been diagnosed as being autistic. She had given birth to a child and the project involved documenting her perinatal experiences – the time from early pregnancy to about 3 months after birth.
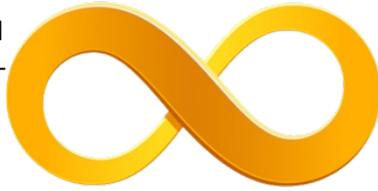
One of her most common problems was having to be helped by people who lacked understanding of her many needs. This is fairly common in autistic people. Autistic people are reasonably common in society and can be children, men and/or women. Because Christadelphians live in society, it is probable that some of us are autistic or know someone who is. **Do we know enough to help them in a useful, understanding and compassionate way?**

We are grateful to Rhiannon Bourke for providing material that will help us to a greater understanding of autism and to be more effective at helping autistic people.

Shannon's first article provides a basic introduction to the nature and complexities of autism. The second looks at practical ways we can understand and help autistic young people, and the third article provides practical assistance in identifying the disorder and working with people who have it in our ecclesias. There are also AI summaries of the documents if you do not have time to read the full texts.   (Editor)

"Autism is a condition that affects how a person thinks, feels, interacts with others, and experiences their environment.. Every Autistic person is different to every other. This is why autism is described as a 'spectrum'."

(Aspect Australia)

#1: https://www.adelphicare.org/documents/118-autism-101.pdf

#2: https://www.adelphicare.org/documents/119-autism-guide.pdf

#3: https://www.adelphicare.org/documents/120-for-ecclesias.pdf

Challenges for Youth

We are grateful for those who responded to the questions raised in the last Newsletter. We received responses from 'young' people in the range of 16 – 87 years! This was a big demonstration of the way some people in our community are very concerned about the challenges facing youth. Responses were very compassionate, understanding and helpful. Some articles are being prepared for the next issue of the Newsletter in December, God willing.

Carer's Corner

One of the cornerstones of pastoral or spiritual care is call *Reflective Practice*. This involves carers in a personal, emotional way, reflecting on their own spirituality in a broader Biblical context, and also in a broader secular context. These three types of reflection can help carers be more understanding of themselves in a living context. They need to understand more about themselves before they can assist others more effectively.

At the same time, one of the purposes of pastoral care is to assist other people to reflect on their own spirituality. Spirituality is very personal. In order for us to achieve a greater approach to care, we need to develop skills to lead people into personal reflection for themselves and in their broader context.

Reflective practice involves us in thinking about the way we relate to someone for whom we are caring. For example, after we have had a caring conversation we can ask ourselves, did we say the most appropriate things, or could we have expressed ourselves more sympathetically or helpfully? Did we take the opportunity to talk over spiritual issues if the other person raised them?

Or, could we have raised some spiritual issues ourselves to help the other person reflect on the important things in their life? The simple diagram on the left shows that this practice demonstrates that doing (or saying) and reflecting is a cyclical and continuing process.   (Editor)

Do   Reflect

From -

https://www.adelphicare.org/visitor/resources/pastoral-visitor-program-handbook.pdf p.19

(Please note - you may need to cut and paste the addresses into a browser to access the documents.)

Want someone to talk to? Phone this Australia-wide Christadelphian Helpline **08 8270 4115** (free-call in Australia)

Service provided by the Christadelphian Support Services of South Australia.