

I don't know

Many times over the 20 years of our support group ASPIA we held many public workshops where we were blessed to have Professor Tony Attwood and Dr Michelle Garnett as our Presenters. To learn about Tony and Michelle's current work (2026) see www.attwoodandgarnettevents.com

I wrote down a couple of thoughts from a workshop that was held in 2015, and one little snippet that Tony said it's helpful to know is that when your ASD partner answers "I don't know", it may just mean, "I don't have the words to tell you". They have a lot of difficulty with vocabulary for emotions and self-reflection. They can also tend to feel they need to give the "right" answer and they don't know what this is, so they tend to think it's better not to say anything.

Another topic that came up in that workshop was the problem of "negativity", one person asking if people on the spectrum tend to be negative because of all the difficulty they had growing up. Tony said that he sees it as actually coming with the territory. People on the spectrum tend to have negative thinking and be somewhat pessimistic. He also said that many NT's tend to be optimistic, in fact he stated with a grin that he thinks NT's also have a disorder, that of "optimism". I guess because it can cause us to be unrealistic at times, believing against the evidence, or to easily see what we believe is "potential" and to believe that anything is possible. Something to ponder.

Carol Grigg, August 2015

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