

# **“All men are like that”**

**by Carol Grigg OAM**

“All men are like that”. Do you ever catch yourself saying this?

All men are like what?

We all have our stereotypes for “all men ...” (or “all women ...” for that matter), but what are we really meaning when we utter this throw-away line?

Demeeaning towards men I would say, but what I'd really like to suggest is how dismissive this may seem to a woman who with weary and aching heart is seeking an ear to hear and a soul to trust; daring to attempt to put words around something she can't really describe; hoping you might have some clues to help her.

“Oh, all men are like that!”

She slips silently back into her world of confusion and isolation; self-doubt gripping her again. Disbelieved, treated with skepticism, judged as malicious; because after all, “He's so intelligent ...”, “He's a good provider ...”, “He's so helpful ...”, “He has friends ...”, she hears “What is your problem?”

She's been asking herself this for years, altering, adapting and adjusting herself till she barely recognises herself any longer. The problems persist, as does the self-blame.

So hard to put in a nutshell. Nobody sees. Words and meaning misconstrued; nothing resolved; prescribed ways of doing things; one way; interests and obsessions; his agenda; unusual priorities; social gaffs; unintentionally hurtful words; emotional disconnect; constant need for prompts; change or challenge creates catastrophe; oblivious to another's state; mechanical sex; innocent comments seen as attack; her love cannot win; her preferences disregarded; she parents alone; complies with rules; carries the load; co-operates with correction; loses touch with her friends; sees the world going by, while silently and compliantly she continues dutifully on, searching for something to make sense; “he's not a bad man”.

... Another home ignorantly and innocently struggling with characteristics consistent with mild traits of Asperger's Syndrome (on the Autism Spectrum). Not all men are like that. In fact, it may be a man describing similar characteristics in his female partner.

Without knowledge, understanding and support they will eventually implode; individually and collectively. More broken lives, without knowing why.

Your awareness and understanding could make all the difference.