



**Autism Behavioural Intervention  
Queensland (ABIQ) Inc.**  
presents

**Donna Williams**  
“Cat people and Dog people”

**Sunday 12 June 2005**  
1.30pm – 5.00 pm

**Target participants:**  
parents of children with autism,  
professionals, educators, teaching  
assistants, support workers

QUT Kelvin Grove Campus  
Room to be advised upon registration

**ABIQ Member Prices**  
**ABIQ Family members: free**  
**Professional/Student/School members: \$22pp**  
Tea break refreshments will be provided

This event is being subsidised with funds raised  
by the Arms Global for Autism Charity Golf Day.  
ABIQ thanks QUT for providing the venue.

## The Workshop

Dogs are usually very social animals, they openly show their feelings, they usually crave and are grateful for attention, are usually eager to meet new people, fine with crowds and strangers, trust others, adventurously take on new experiences and don't mind an 'in your face' style of praise and connection. In fact, dogs are a lot like most non-Autistic people, maybe that's what they see in them. When non-Autistic normality is described as a 'dog-eat-dog' reality, there's something in that. Certainly, it's the social animals, the verbal conversationalist, the hand-shakers and contact makers who get to the front of the line and are considered examples of valued 'normality'.

Cats are different. They often keep their feelings to themselves, they are self owning, self contained, like islands. They will take, when you aren't looking, when there's no strings attached or when you seem uninterested in their response, they generally avoid strangers and new experiences, preferring what is routine. Cats will often choose the most avoidant person to sidle up to or sit on. Given the choice of social inclusion, most cats prefer their own company. There are bolshy cats, bombastic ginger Toms, but interaction is strictly one way - on their terms.

There are very real reasons why the cat's reality is closer to that of many people on the Autism Spectrum, why, metaphorically, they are like 'cat people'. There are equally explainable reasons why non-autistic social and communication reality more greatly resembles that of the dog, metaphorically, they are like 'dog people'. What's more, understanding those differences means we can translate from one reality to the other and build bridges between the two. This lecture is all about doing that.

## About the Presenter

Donna was born in the rock and roll years, in the inner city mangle of urban Australia in the days when 'autism' was unheard of even though the condition had always existed. She described herself to be "like someone on LSD and cocaine who had never touched the stuff".

Then in the chaos and disorientation she wrote her autobiography, Nobody Nowhere in a desperate last attempt to understand where she'd been and ask if there might be some hope beyond what she'd struggled to construct as 'life'. The book, the first of nine in the field, got left behind in the UK at the time and accidentally became an international bestseller and the first mainstream publication of an autobiography of someone who came to be diagnosed 'autistic'.

*"But I'm more than an 'autie'. I'm Donna (it took me most of my childhood to connect with that name or that any name was inherently linked with the feel of a person). I'm wild and wooly, with an incredible naughty streak, prone to phobia and compulsion with a great determination to strive for balance and detachment yet a great love of connection and discovery."*

Donna is a consultant to schools and presents workshops and lectures, catering to the Education Authority, Social Services, the National Health Service and the Autistic Societies as well as the general public.

**Donna Williams –  
Cat & Dog Workshop 12/6/05**

**Register before 30 May 2005**

- Places are limited.
- Register early to avoid disappointment.

## To Register:

1. Contact ABIQ on 3264 2582 or [enquiries@abiq.org](mailto:enquiries@abiq.org)
2. On confirmation of your booking, complete the form below and send to PO Box 7053, Brendale 4500

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ABIQ Membership Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Includes refreshments*

ABN Number: 21344641592