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**Website:**

Tourette Syndrome • OCD • ADHD  
Sensory • ODD • IED/ 'Rage'

**Publishing:**

*Nix Your Tics! Eliminate Unwanted Tic Symptoms:  
A How-To Guide for Young People*

## **SELF-ADVOCACY IN ACTION!**

**NOTE — WHEN THE TWO OF US (who both have TS) MOVED INTO A NEW COOPERATIVE HOMES COMPLEX, THIS WAS AN ARTICLE WE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER.**

**IMPORTANT ELEMENTS WE FELT SHOULD BE IN THIS ARTICLE WERE:**

- to give *some* facts about TS, but not overwhelm
- to correct any possible myths that may cause concern
- to not be defensive or have a “chip on the shoulder”
- to use some humour to put people at ease
- to offer an open invitation to ask questions

**November, 1998**

Greetings from Duncan and Shannon in Unit 40 (a.k.a. those new blond folks.....)!

Now that we are nicely settled, we wanted to take an opportunity to introduce ourselves to you all. As Shannon is from Victoria, British Columbia the last few months have been hectic, full of packing, job applications, insurance forms, and driving. But now we can finally take a breath, marvel at our breathtaking new home (and our good fortune at finding it), and begin meeting our new friends, fellow Alfred Haenchenites!!

You may have noticed some odd mannerisms in either Shannon or myself on our moving day, or since. In particular you may have heard a high-pitched barking and been shocked to find that it isn't the new neighbour's dog – it's the new NEIGHBOUR! Shannon and I both have Tourette Syndrome (TS). TS causes involuntary tics and twitches, both motor and vocal. TS is not dangerous, nor does it make us disabled – in fact, Shannon is a supervisor at a group home and I am a Ph.D. candidate in psychology. Neither Shannon nor myself are embarrassed about our TS, but we have found that telling those around us about TS helps us to feel less self-conscious, and helps others feel less uncomfortable too. We have both been quite active in promoting awareness of TS also, and would be happy to address whatever questions or concerns any of you may have. That means feel free, but not obligated, to approach us. Remember: our barks (and yelps, and hoots, and....) are worse than our bites!!

Cheers,

**FAR FROM LEADING TO ANY PROBLEMS WITH LIVING IN THIS CO-OP, WRITING THE ABOVE LED SOME PEOPLE TO APPROACH US WITH EXTREMELY WARM COMMENTS AROUND HOW WE HAD HANDLED THE SITUATION. WE WERE INVITED TO SIT ON A NUMBER OF COMMITTEES, THE CENTRAL OFFICE WAS DONATED MONTHLY FOR OUR SUPPORT MEETINGS, AND A NUMBER OF PARENTS CAME FORWARD TO ADMIT THAT THEIR OWN CHILDREN WERE EXHIBITING SYMPTOMS OF TS. BY THE TIME WE MOVED, OTHERS IN THE COMPLEX HAD BEEN DIAGNOSED AND HAD JOINED THE TSFC!**