



Dr. B. Duncan McKinlay
Psychologist

London, ON, Canada
email. duncan@lifesatwitch.com
url. www.lifesatwitch.com

Website:
Tourette Syndrome • OCD
ADHD • Sensory • ODD/ 'Rage'

T(r)IC(k)S #9: The Positives Of Disinhibition Part I!

“To fully appreciate, understand, and embrace your TS you must recognize it as the full quality of oneself that it is, with the potential to be either a powerful ally or a crippling nemesis”, was what I left you with last time. In recent years Tourettic disinhibition has been linked with rape and murder. Yet in recent months that same Tourettic disinhibition has been linked with the heroic prevention of those very same acts. TS is, as the saying goes, what you make of it.

Everyone knows the negatives, so I won't belabour those. It is the positives, of which there are just as many, that want for recognition. Just as other qualities, such as being tall, have direct benefits (e.g. you can reach high shelves) and benefits borne of how that quality is reacted to in our society (e.g. because height in males is considered attractive, you have more romantic opportunities), disinhibition provides its gifts both directly and indirectly too. This instalment of T(r)IC(k)S will concentrate on only the direct gifts – there are far too many advantages to fit in one article (it will be a bit of a chore to keep it to two in fact!)

Directly:

☑ **We're creative!** Not just in terms of being artistic (though often we do each possess a strong talent in drawing or singing or playing an instrument or acting or writing, etc.) this includes creativity in problem solving and invention (did you know 'we' created the first dictionary?). Often we see things from a unique or original perspective, which is why so many people with disinhibition disorders have been considered very intelligent.

☑ **We're intelligent!** We see unique relationships between people and things. It can be argued that cleverness is a type of mental creativity: a flexibility in putting various thoughts together in ways no one has ever thought of before. When a poorly inhibited brain tends to unintentionally fire all sorts of things off together all the time, we can't HELP but make neuronal connections between them. This leads to what neuropsychologists would call “dense neuronal networks” or, in layman terms, lots of brains!

☑ **We're perceptually acute!** We're observant. We may not always be able to CONTROL where our attention or thoughts go, but that doesn't mean these things work poorly on wherever they land. In fact we can be really handy in noticing or thinking things no one else is devoting attention to: finding things that are lost because we are in a different mindset, or providing information after-the-fact on things that those 'normies' weren't paying attention to because at the time they seemed irrelevant.

☑ **We're fun!** If you're at a party, being next to the socially uninhibited person (read disinhibition) is the place to be. We are spontaneous, we have a fast and witty (there's that creative intelligence again) sense of humour, and we can work a room like you've never seen before. So many times I've gone out, given in to my impulses with abandon on the dance-floor, and found myself by the end of the night surrounded by previously restrained normies, visibly relieved that someone has provided through example the permission to 'let loose'.



**Dr. B. Duncan McKinlay
Psychologist**

London, ON, Canada
email. duncan@lifesatwitch.com
url. www.lifesatwitch.com

Website:
Tourette Syndrome • OCD
ADHD • Sensory • ODD/ 'Rage'

☒ **We're energetic!** Some time ago I made the decision that if I wasn't going to be able to contain this energy spilling out of me, at least I would commit that energy to things that wouldn't get me into trouble or fill my mind with silly "itches" and emotions. Since then I have invested myself into enough pursuits with intensity and passion to make the eyes of many of my colleagues pop. I never dreamed I'd be this far along in my professional aspirations at 27 – I've got my TS to thank for that.

☒ **We're honest!** We're down-to-earth. As a good friend once told me, I'm refreshingly 'real'. Openness and forthrightness again is directly related to disinhibition – we are, quite simply, incapable of inhibiting the truth long enough to put forth a façade. This applies to (school)work as well – whereas normies can commit to doing something in which they have no interest and then do a poor job at it because of their indifference to the task, we just won't commit to it in the first place. Hence EVERYTHING we take on is accomplished wholeheartedly since for us to be CAPABLE of doing it we must be interested in it. Then watch out world!!

Where we tend to get into trouble is when we interact with a world that assumes that no one speaks at face value. We take what they say literally and to heart since that is how we are; meanwhile they are reading all sorts of innuendo and ulterior levels into our plain, no-strings-attached communications. Call me crazy but it seems to me that OUR way of saying what you mean and meaning what you say leads to much less opportunity for confusion and much less wasting of time through misreading subtle signs in the whole silly game. Certainly I've met enough normies who find my approach an appealing change. Anyone else with me??

☒ **We're stubborn!** There's a fine (perhaps arbitrary) line between perseVERance (when society deems being stuck is a GOOD thing) and perSEVerance (when society deems being stuck is a BAD thing). People who dug their heels in and refused to be swayed in their beliefs or principles have accomplished some great things in history. So have people that refused to quit, who through creativity (hmmm) systematically found ways around each barrier in their relentless quest until success was finally achieved. Are these people filled with such lofty qualities as determination, courage, and stamina? Sure. Can a healthy dose of neurology help drive the nurturance of these qualities? You betcha!

☒ **We don't hold a grudge!** We don't harbour resentment. They say in politics the best quality to have is a short memory. With the number of things that bolt through my head and across my plate in a day, I'm lucky to remember whom I spoke to that day let alone what they said to me. It's not that disinhibition lifts me above such pettiness as grudges. It just guarantees I can't retain whatever it is I'm supposed to hold a grudge about long enough to follow through!

So many blessings, so little space!! Will conclude next time my friends!

cheers!
Duncan
October 2001