

Scattered Thoughts.....From a TS Parent

My 11 year old daughter has Tourette Syndrome. She is an amazing person. I love her so much! Her associated disorders are strong OCD and I guess you would say a short fuse. She has incredible energy. I love that about her. The OCD is the most difficult part. As her father I do my best to understand the OCD component of TS. I have been actively involved with our local hospital here in Mississauga where we live and I intellectually understand OCD. I am not really sure if I truly FEEL how she feels when she is obsessing.

That's the strange thing about TS. The tics do not bother me or my wife at all. I like her quick mind. I love the wild, mature, and complicated sense of humor. She can pull together an immediate situation, something from the current news, and her own perspective and make it funny. She makes Jay Leno's and David Letterman's joke writers look like amateurs.

We are treating the OCD medically with an SSRI, since this can be very debilitating at times. At one point in our history we tried to treat the tics and outbursts with a neuroleptic. It did help to medicate away the tics and outbursts, but it also was starting to medicate HER away. We discontinued this course of treatment for that reason.

If you were to ask me if I wish her TS would go away, I do not know how to answer that question. I do wish the times where she gets stuck on thoughts that torture her would stop. It is terribly painful to watch her suffer like this. I do not understand OCD. Personally, I have trouble trying to stay on any given topic without my attention wandering to any number of other things. I have noticed that when her OCD is not strong but is in the background, she has so much energy, her attention shifts to numerous topics, and for some reason, she tics alot **more**. My wife and I believe that when the OCD is strong it even overpowers the tics. When she is ticing, she is at her best. How strange.

I love spending time with my daughter. She has finally gone to bed tonight after her and I watched "Who's Line Is It Anyway" together. I think she appreciates the quick minds of the people on this show. I can envision her doing a show like this someday. Let's be frank, "Normal" people can't think fast enough to do improv comedy. I guess that is their disability that they have to live with!

The tough philosophical and spiritual question I ask myself all the time is this: If I could wave a magic wand and make my daughter's TS go away, would I do it? I don't know. I definitely would not want any part of her personality that may have been molded by Tourette Syndrome to disappear.

Thank you for letting me share this with you.

John Schmor