

**TOURETTE'S  
ETC.**

The image features a brown, textured background. Overlaid on this background are numerous red scribbles and drawings. These include several stylized human figures with spiky hair, some appearing to be in motion or shouting. There are also abstract, chaotic lines and shapes scattered across the page, creating a sense of disorder and intensity. The text 'TOURETTE'S ETC.' is printed in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font, centered horizontally and partially obscured by the red markings.



# TOURETTE'S ETC.

em(ily) barrett

what

is

tourette's?

my

experience

the

help

i

can

give



# WHAT IS TOURETTE'S?

Information sourced from Tourettes Action

what

my

the

is

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experience

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abdominal tensing blowing out of nose  
 abdominal tensing blinking  
 abdominal tensing grunting lauGhi  
 abdominal tensing head jolting  
 abdominal tensing full body tensing  
 abdominal tensing Grimacing  
 abdominal tensing grunting  
 abdominal tensing grunting  
 abdominal tensing squealing echoing certain sou  
 abdominal tensing lauGhing  
 abdominal tensing touching objects symmetrically  
 abdominal tensing short hum arm jolting  
 abdominal tensing short hum arm jolting  
 abdominal tensing short hum  
 abdominal tensing short hum

# SYMPTOMS/CHARACTERISTICS

Tics (involuntary sounds and movements) are the main characteristic. There are other tic disorders, but for tourette's, multiple motor tics and one or more vocal tics must be present for at least 12 months, though not always concurrently.

Tics can be simple (head jolting, grunting) or complex (touching objects/people, repeating phrases).

Most people associate TS with swearing (coprolalia), but only 15%-20% have this.

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Many people with TS experience a physical premonitory feeling / urge preceding a tic. Recognising this feeling and ignoring it can help suppress tics for a while, but often makes it worse. It's only reduced by performing the tic. For some, the tic has to be performed multiple times before it 'feels right'.

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Tic attacks are bouts of severe, continuous, non-suppressible and disabling tics that can last from minutes to hours.

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# CO-OCCURRING CONDITIONS

Up to 85% with TS experience co-occurring symptoms:

**ADHD**

**OCD**

**Anxiety**

**Anger**

**Executive functioning difficulties**

**Sensory processing difficulties**

**Depression**

**Autism spectrum disorder**

**Sleep problems**

# MY

# EXPERIENCE

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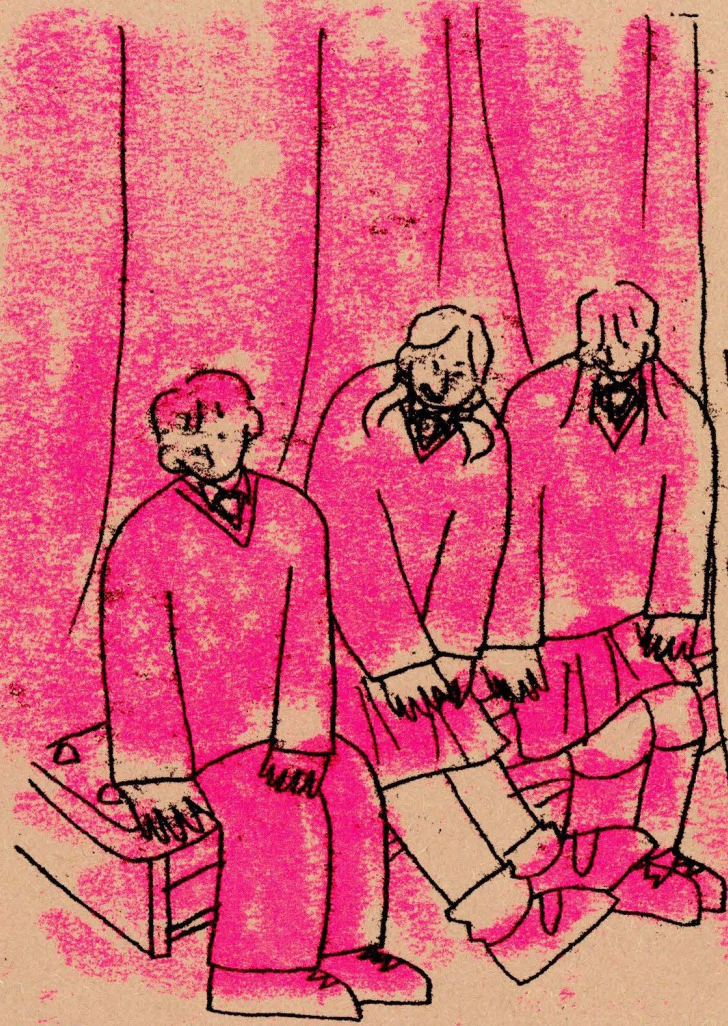
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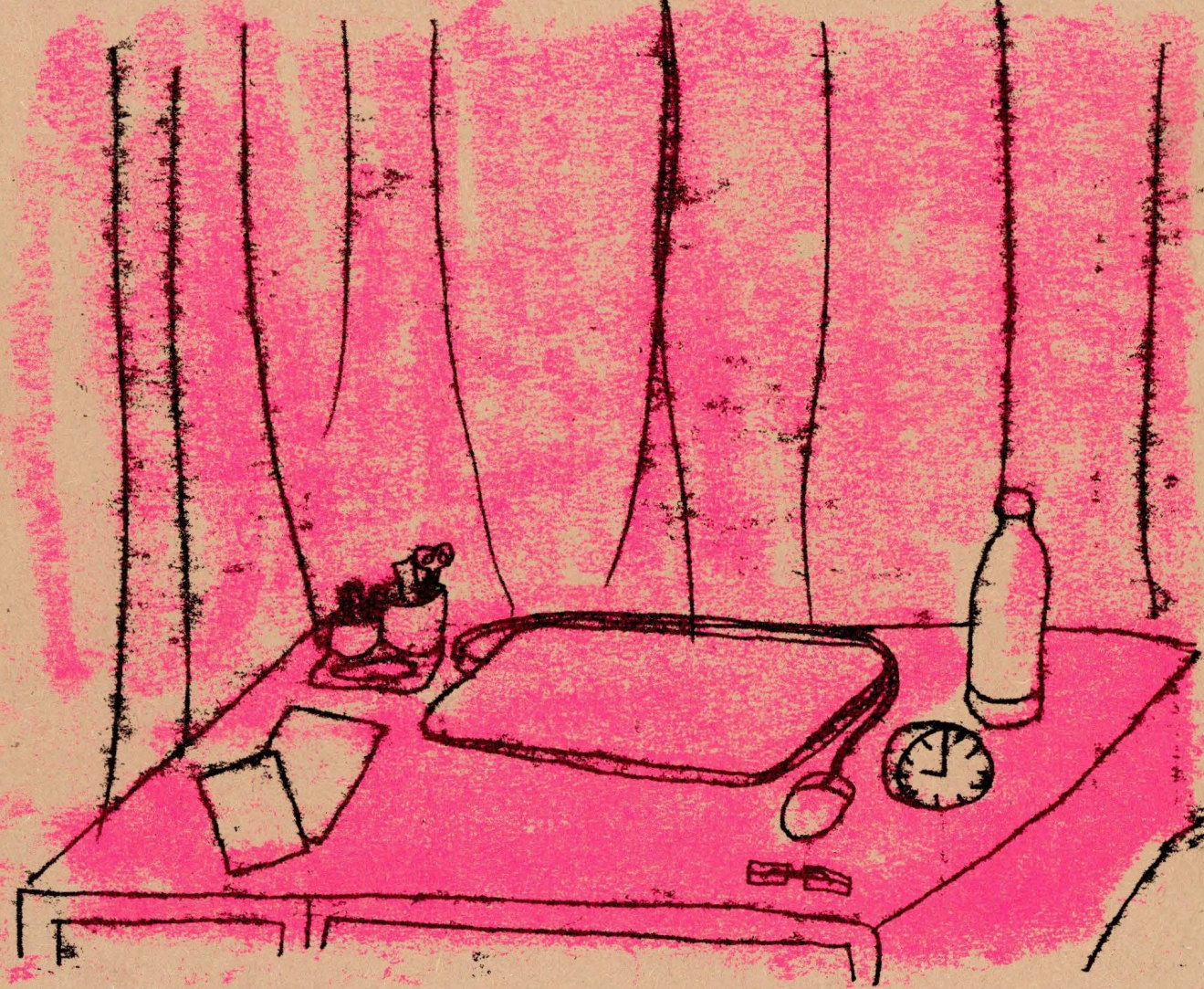


It was only a few years ago i realised that what i did were tics. that i had tourette's. my parents never picked up on it, or at least didn't consider it anything to be concerned about or diagnosed. i wish they did though. i wish i didn't have to go through most of my life thinking i was weird and alone in this.



when i've complained about bad tics to my mum she suggests i try relaxing. i wish it were that easy. distractions often help though. to focus my energy elsewhere.





much like i can't imagine waking up and seeing the world clearly, i can't imagine not having turrets. you mean your whole body doesn't tense up when you're excited?



anger doesn't explode out of you destructively? you can do everything completely uninterrupted?

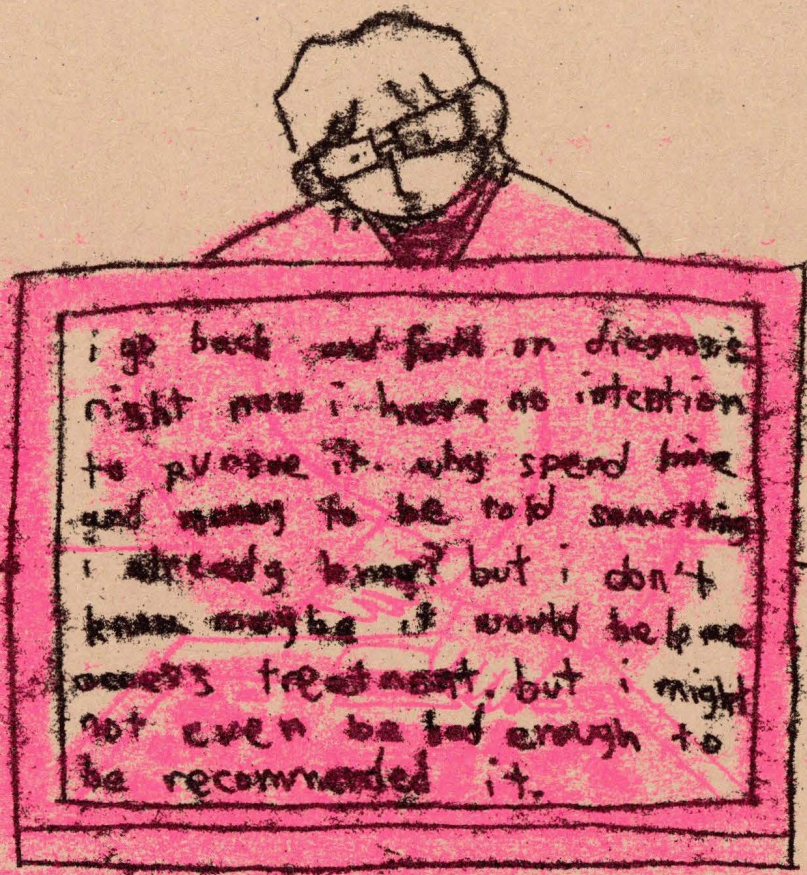
the help i can give





it always makes me feel weird when people say they can't even tell i have tourette's. while i'm grateful to have it less severe than others and so can live my life relatively unchallenged, it just makes me doubt myself. is my tourette's even bad enough to talk about? it affects me, but usually in private. i don't want people to think i'm making a big deal out of nothing or faking. being aware of how people may perceive me affects my tics. some 'private' tics i never do in public, some 'public' tics i rarely do in private.





i go back and forth on diagnosis  
right now i have no intention  
to pursue it. why spend time  
and money to be told something  
i already know? but i don't  
know maybe it would be pre-  
ventive treatment, but i might  
not even be bad enough to  
be recommended it.

**THE HELP  
I CAN  
GIVE**

the help i can give



SO

YOU

THINK

YOU

HAVE

TOURETTE'S?

putting a name to something is a good first step, the validation i felt when my experiences lined up with the description of 'tics' on the NHS website was a great relief.

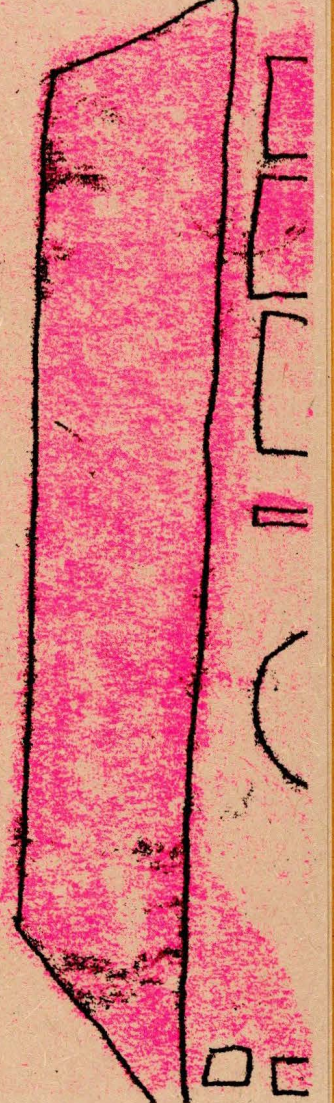
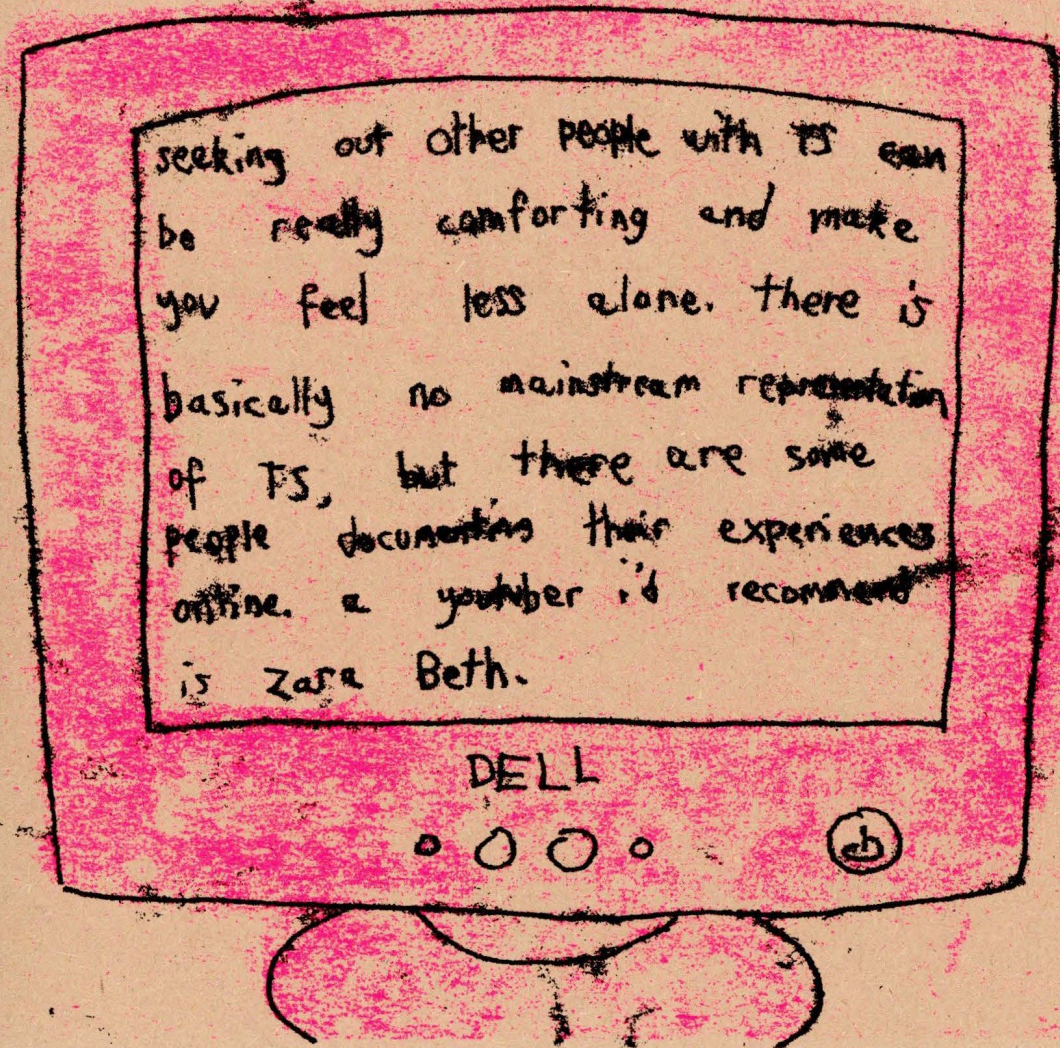
it's your choice if you want to be diagnosed. many people with TS were diagnosed as a child, but if, like me, you weren't, consider what a diagnosis could do for you.

talk to your support system, and if you decide on diagnosis, talk to your GP who can refer you to a specialist. Tourettes Action also has a list of specialists throughout the UK.

Tourettes Action has really good resources and information, and is often what i refer to.



sometimes i look at the tawrettes tag on tumblr to read posts of people talking about their own experiences or raising awareness. sometimes i read those same posts over and over. there is much comfort in knowing you're not alone. that you're part of an unknowingly large group who understand.





# THINGS THAT CAN HELP

seeking specialised advice from a professional is best if your tics are bad, but tips to manage them can be found online and through others with TS.

distractioning yourself by concentrating on something else can work well to reduce tics for a while. things like:

- exercise & sport
- listening to/making music
- stim toys
- making art

if a certain tic is bothering you, try redirecting it by doing something else. i can sometimes calm my abdominal tensing tic by humming.

tics are worsened by stress and tiredness. being aware of what worsens your tics means you can avoid or be prepared for environments that may exacerbate them.

for more painful tics like banging or jolting, you can protect yourself with padding and help the pain with braces and/or a hot water bottle. seek out mobility aids and any other disability accommodations if you think they would help.

TS is a disability and there's no shame in asking for help.



**this is my perspective and experience.  
everyone is different.**





@batsanrats