Tourette’s Syndrome

Let’s talk about it

Tourette's Syndrome (or Tourette Syndrome, in more medical settings) is a condition that's often misunderstood. Many people think that it's just about swearing, but that's actually quite rare (it's called coprolalia). It's mostly about tics, which are sounds or movements that someone can't easily stop.

It's important to bear in mind that managing tics all day can be exhausting. Tics can increase when someone is stressed or tired, and trying to hide those tics can make it more difficult to focus. On top of this, other people can be judgmental about Tourette's, especially when they don't understand that it's not voluntary.

So how can you be a good ally to someone who has Tourette's Syndrome?

- Don't draw any attention to their tics
- Be patient if a tic happens during a conversation
- Focus on what the person is saying rather than the sounds
- Remember that tics aren't a choice or a habit, and the person can't choose how their tics show up

Useful links

- NHS: Tourette Syndrome
- Coprolalia