

Rage Attacks & Tics in Public - Collab with Quinn from It's Tic Time

Quinn: My name's Quinn. I have a YouTube channel called "It's Tic Time" and I'm here to speak about rage attacks and tics in public with Romy.

Romy: Hello! I'm Romy and I have a YouTube channel called "Ticcer's Unite."

Quinn: So, rage attacks are basically what it sounds like, it's a whole load of rage that you can't control. People think it's normally like bad behaviour or they can confuse it for autistic meltdowns and things like that when it's completely different. You have to try your best not to get angry with the person who's having the rage attack even though they can really do damage and hurt you, because people with rage attacks normally lash out at people that are closest to them. In my instance, it was my mum and I was put into care for it. It can be really scary, but I think if you're diagnosed or you're seeing a doctor or a neurologist I think it can be really helpful and under control if you have the right sort of medication or therapy, and I do think rage attacks get a lot better when you get older as well - that's what I've noticed. Because also when you get older if you're going to lash out and hurt people there's no second chances really because the police aren't going to see it that way. They're not... Tourette's is very misunderstood in loads of different ways because people who hear Tourette's just think of people who swear and have tics but it's a whole lot more than that with the OCD side

of it, the rage attacks, and the intrusive thoughts and the mental tics, but I'll let Romy say something.

Romy: I think rage attacks, as you said they are incredibly destructive and it isn't bad behaviour. Some doctors might not understand it and may tell someone that it's just a behavioural problem when it's really not the individual doing it. Saying that they're badly behaved can actually really harm someone's self-esteem because they don't understand why they can't control this. It can have an impact on the family, it's really heartbreaking that you were put into care for it at a young age. I'm really lucky that nothing like that happened to me. My psychiatrist threatened to put me in a care home when I was twelve but thankfully it never went further than that. I feel like it does have a huge impact, like sometimes the rage attacks are a lot worse than the tics themselves at times because they're just so destructive. You mentioned that rage attacks are different to autistic meltdowns, would you like to elaborate on that and say what the difference is?

Quinn: So, with autistic meltdowns they can be more under control in a way - they are normally caused by something whereas rage attacks can just come on all of a sudden and it can literally just be so much as... like with me even if my mum breathed a certain way and it was too loud it used to send me into a rage attack; or I would be fine, sat in my bedroom and then I would instantly just go down and attack people and things like that - there's normally not a cause for it, whereas an autistic meltdown there's normally a cause for it like sensory overload.

Romy: Would you say rages are more violent sometimes?

Quinn: Yeah, I used to hit and punch, I put holes through everything, I broke numerous phones and I have done a lot of damage - I pushed my mum down the stairs and I wasn't diagnosed so we didn't know what was wrong with me and my rage attacks actually came on before my tics did. I only had one tic like this and obviously they just thought that was because I was autistic, so my rage attacks came on before most of my tics did except for one.

Romy: That must be really, really difficult. Did you just think you were badly behaved when you're not?

Quinn: Yeah I was put under CAMS and they just said that I had psychosis and then I was put on mental health medication.

Romy: You've definitely been through an awful lot with your rages. You said something about it getting better with age. Do you still have them or are they just lesser?

Quinn: Really rarely. I'll swear at people and people normally just see me as abusive or something - I've lost a lot of friends because of it, because I just get so angry, but it isn't like I can help it. But I don't have rage attacks to the point where I hurt people physically anymore.

Romy: I'm glad that they have got milder for you and less violent because that must be really, really difficult to deal with. Thankfully, I don't have any rage attacks anymore. They stopped when I was twelve, from a mix of cutting out food dyes and taking medication (but I don't take medication anymore - I still don't have the rages because the inflammation in my brain's gone down), but I'm just really lucky that I don't have it anymore, but I know when I was younger it was really difficult and I think my family definitely found that the hardest thing to deal with even though I had loads of other things as well, because they would say it was like walking on eggshells - anything would trigger me off and I'd become really violent and start hitting and kicking and stuff, so it's definitely a very big thing on the people who are involved.

Quinn: Yeah, there's only one video on YouTube about rage attacks and that was like a documentary thing...

Romy: Tic Tic Boom?

Quinn: Yeah, and not many people speak about it because it's a bit... I don't know if I should say controversial but mainly I feel like people wouldn't want to be friends with them anymore. I have a good support system of people. I have rage attacks a lot, violently - not hitting people but I get out of cars and slam doors and go missing. I feel like what am I meant to say like in public if that happens? Because it happens a lot in public. What do I say - "I've got Tourette's"? They'd just look at me and be like "That isn't Tourette's though."

Romy: I think some people, as you say they just don't know that Tourette's isn't just tics, it does often come with lots of other things as does PANDAS / PANS and other things that cause tics. If you have tics you're likely to have other issues as well. I think that it is really important for people to understand that it isn't just that, it's so much more. It can be really difficult and like you said about how some people may shy away from talking about it because they worry that people may not want to be their friends, I think what's helped with that is knowing that it isn't my fault - that's how I've been able to speak about it more, knowing that it is a neurological thing and not a reflection of my character. I know that some people do have issues with their self-esteem because of the rage attacks, they feel very remorseful for it, they feel like it's their fault, like they're a bad person when they're really not - it's just something that happens in their brain.

Quinn: Yeah, I think that people with Tourette's should definitely... this may be a bit controversial but I feel like they should definitely have some sort of therapy, even if it's just to speak about struggles because a lot of people with Tourette's as well have mental health issues, and also because they feel like no one understands them. I feel like rage attacks are very not spoken about enough and should be spoken about more than they are because it happens to a lot of people, and it's not a rare thing either.

Romy: I think if more people are raising awareness of rage attacks less people will be accused of being bad people - which is really sad but I feel like that does happen. You said something interesting about people

with Tourette's being offered therapy, that could potentially be helpful in the early stages when people are learning to accept themselves and learning how to manage co-occurring issues. What has really helped me is actually meeting others in the community, that's been the most therapeutic thing. Because when you meet others you can learn from them about management strategies and know that you're not the only one who has not just the tics but the other symptoms as well.

Quinn: I think that a lot of people with Tourette's actually don't want to do that kind of thing and they don't want to meet others with Tourette's because they're scared that their tics will get worse. I feel like people that don't have support and maybe don't want to meet others with Tourette's, that sucks so bad as well because... actually meeting other people with Tourette's is risky too because you don't know what you're going to come home with next. Like I never used to have paralysis tics until I met my friend who has paralysis tics and now my legs paralyze themselves and I have leg tics and now I'm having to go in a wheelchair. I just feel some people want to meet others in the community - I do, I like doing that, but other people don't and I feel like if they don't and they don't have a massive support system or anyone who understands them except for their parents, who aren't going to understand all of it, then I feel like they should definitely have some sort of therapy or maybe speak to someone who has Tourette's but (as it can get better as you get older) doesn't have it as severe anymore, and ask their advice maybe.

Romy: That's a really, really good point actually. I do see that we do pick up tics from others - the "tic swap." That is actually a big risk and that is a good thing to point out. Sometimes the pros outweigh the cons but sometimes if your tics are naturally really severe and then you're around more people with tics you could just pick up like a ton and then... sometimes it's short-lived, sometimes you pick it up and then have it for a while. I know one tic I picked up I had for years so that is definitely something to take into consideration as well.

Quinn: That's really all the advice and all I have to say on the matter, and I definitely feel like if you struggle with rage attacks you should speak to a doctor because they can be really harmful and you can harm yourself during rage attacks as well.

Romy: Yeah, and also more importantly a doctor who understands, a doctor who isn't going to say it's a behaviour issue. Definitely find a doctor who's actually knowledgeable on it.

Quinn: Definitely. Do you have any more to say?

Romy: I think all the points you made are really insightful and really good so I'm really grateful to you for sharing that and I think the other thing we were going to talk about is managing tics in public - is there anything you'd like to say about that?

Quinn: See, I actually suppress my tics in public, which is not good but it's like an automatic thing. Especially when I'm by myself - when I'm with others with

Tourette's I don't because I feel safer but I am scared of getting beaten up in public because I have racial tics, I have homophobic tics, I have a pretty severe coprolalia as well so I feel when I go out with people I'm fine but when I'm by myself then I suppress them a lot, and you definitely shouldn't suppress your tics because it's very, very harmful and that can also cause rage attacks too and tic attacks.

Romy: Yeah, I remember for me the suppressing definitely triggered rage attacks. It kind of feels like the urge to tic is building up and has to come out in some way. When you say you suppress automatically I've heard of that as well it's like subconscious suppression. I used to have that when I was younger quite a bit but I think I got more confident as time goes on, but the thing with the coprolalia can be a concern sometimes and that's what really makes people worry about going out sometimes. I know someone was saying about that to me, they worry about the people with tics and Tourette's who have those sorts of tics, it can be really difficult. I used to have a card that I took out with me to try to show people but sometimes that's difficult to show people if they are far away and yelling at you. I think I've only had one really bad situation in public with someone basically just yelling "Do you know how stupid you look at me?" because I was ticcing and I explained I have Tourette's but they didn't believe me. It's a tricky one because it can be really anxiety provoking to tic out in public but at the same time it is really harmful to suppress, so I think finding ways to educate people on it can be helpful sometimes.

Quinn: I know that we had a bad experience together at Tesco.

Romy: Oh yeah!

Quinn: With that man.

Romy: Yeah.

Quinn: I feel like I get a lot of people staring at me too and I feel that if you're out in public then you shouldn't look around and see if people are staring at you because it can make your tics a lot worse.

Romy: Oh that's what I do! I'm like "are they looking at me?"

Quinn: So that's what I do too and it's really bad and I think that people shouldn't even care, but it can be dangerous for people with Tourette's. On a more serious matter I know a young boy literally died the other day because he got bullied. He was ten and he committed suicide in a Tourette's community.

Romy: Yeah, I heard of that.

Quinn: We are getting more accepted but not really. It's like little, tiny improvements at a time and that's it, and I feel like we need to really be accepted more because it isn't our fault and we genuinely can't control it, and a lot of people also think that we're saying what we think as well, which is absolute crap.

Romy: Yeah, tics are definitely not what we're thinking. When we have coprolalia, they aren't things that we want to be staying at all, we don't agree with the coprolalia. Like you say it's heartbreaking that things like that happen, kids committing suicide because of the way they are treated. It's heartbreaking and as a society I'm thinking acceptance of Tourette's has increased a bit because you know all the people may be on TikTok or people in the media with Tourette's - maybe that helps with acceptance but there are still issues and that's why we have to keep advocating and empowering people with tics and Tourette's and supporting people, and having no tolerance for bullying and discrimination, and being able to do something about it is really important.

Quinn: Yeah, so do you have any more to say on that? I don't have a lot to say about tics in public because I just suppress them in public. I feel like that is not helpful.

Romy: It's really hard to unlearn suppression. I've seen stuff about trying to teach people to suppress, thinking it would help them but I think actually the most important thing is unlearning the suppression because then we are more confident in ourselves and don't have the horrible tic attacks and rage attacks later on as well. It takes time to actually learn to not suppress. As I said, I sometimes look around and stuff but I think I've actually been doing that less now. Sometimes I'm completely oblivious to people staring at me but I remember when I was in secondary school I would look around to see if someone's noticed my tics but I think over time I have become a bit more

confident, so I think that can happen - the more you get used to it the more confident you are and therefore you're not going to let yourself be treated horribly by others. Obviously it's never anyone's fault if they're treated horribly, but I mean when you're more confident you'll stick up for yourself more.

Quinn: Yeah. That is all I have to really say on tics in public because I feel like everyone, if you go out just be yourself and screw what other people think really.

Romy: Yeah, definitely!

Quinn: Yeah, I don't think you should suppress them at all but yeah that is all I have to say really.

Romy: I think it's difficult not to suppress but it helps to remember that your tics are neurological, they're not your fault, you don't have to suppress for others' comfort because that will harm you and you don't deserve that. Other people's reactions mean more about them than they do you because we can't help it. That's the sort of thing I keep in my mind sometimes. But yes, it's been really lovely to speak to you and you said some really insightful things. Would you like to say where people can follow you on like TikTok or YouTube or wherever you want to say.

Quinn: Okay, my TikTok is "It's Tic Time" (the name's been changed so it's "It's Tic Time" now), and my YouTube is obviously I've said it at the beginning it's the same it's "It's Tic Time" and the TikTok is a group account and the YouTube is just my account.

Romy: My stuff is pretty much the same name - my YouTube is Ticcer's Unite, my Instagram is Ticcer's Unite, my Facebook is Ticcer's Unite, although my TikTok I don't use it anymore but I did have a different name I think it was Soultic, but I don't really use that much anymore. But yes, basically just Ticcer's Unite. It's been really lovely to speak to you, thank you very much.