



Getting Personal: Stories of Life with Tourette Syndrome,
edited by Michael G. DeFilippo

How can we better understand what is so often the highly personal and idiosyncratic phenomenon called Tourette syndrome (TS)? There certainly are commonalities of symptoms and feelings among those of us with the disorder, but there are also very individualized combinations of the many facets of TS.

To share with other and with ourselves better understandings of these unique combinations is often a necessary part of our healing and acceptance. The new book, **Getting Personal: Stories of Life with Tourette Syndrome**, edited by Michael G. DeFilippo (Second Chance Publishing, Tennessee, 2003) gives us a valuable resource for helping many to better understand Tourette syndrome.

This book is comprised of 21 vignettes by those with TS. In compiling these brief narratives, Michael DeFilippo (diagnosed with TS about two years ago) "has let these folks tell their stories without interruption from me" (from the preface). The result is an educational, easy-to-read appreciation for both the differences and commonalities of lives with TS.

These stories are the words and sounds and feelings of those who try to live with TS in many different phases of life. The voices of these stories come from the heart and can be understood by many of all ages and walks of life. Some stories may resonate more with adults, some more with younger people. In some stories, one may hear frustrations or pride or in a few an almost Zen-like acceptance of disorder and the life lived through it. The reader can start or pick up at any point in the book, or read it through from front cover to back, and come away with new appreciation for what those with TS can experience. Again, true to its title, many writers offer contact information so the reader can return this sharing.

If a first reading of the book gives a justifiable sense of repetition among the stories, take the time to hear the individuality of each story and soon the repetition emerges into uniqueness. As DeFilippo concludes "(the book) is a coming together of souls; a merging of experiences". This "coming together of souls" who have the distinction of knowing TS so personally is a wonderful addition to all our lives.