

## Tinky finds a (loving) home.

Sometimes things are just meant to be. Like when Josh was laid off from work and he began working at Shanty's House part-time. Josh has long been an animal rights activist and it was through that work that he met Michelle Walther and became acquainted with the cat rescue mission of Shanty's House.

Working 20 or so hours per week at Shanty's House, Josh quickly got to know the cats and they got to know him. One of his favorites, Tinkerbell (aka Tinky), usually made a bee-line for the evening meal wagon. Josh called her the Lone Ranger because she was willing to separate from the colony to get pole position on Rachel Ray's Shrimp and Chicken Pawttenesca cat food. Besides the food, Tinky took a liking to Josh and every so often Tinky would even seek out Josh's company before mealtime.

After talking it over with his wife Maggie, they decided to adopt Tinky. Josh knew Tinky was not a true feral, more likely a housecat that had suffered the trauma of abandonment. Still, Josh was uncertain how quickly Tinky would adjust to a new home. At first, Josh put Tinky in a small bathroom and Tinky settled into the far corner of the shower. Remarkably after only three days Tinky decided to come out on her own, earning Josh the title of "cat whisperer" among the staff at Shanty's House. Tinky joined the other two cats in the house and claimed her territory in the bedroom. Even Josh was surprised by the short adjustment period.

**Here are Josh's thoughtful techniques for a successful adoption.**

1. Find a small, safe place for the new cat.



2. Allow the new cat and the existing cats to get to know each other without direct contact. In Tinky's case, the cats interacted through the gap under the bathroom door.

3. Have the existing cats associate the new cat with something positive. Josh fed all the cats at the same time and placed the food on both sides of the bathroom door.

4. Rotate cats toys to reinforce familiarity.

5. Establish an overall routine. Josh visited Tinky for 30 minutes everyday, in much the same way he did at Shanty's House.

6. Finally, recognize that the cat has to be the one to make the decision to join the

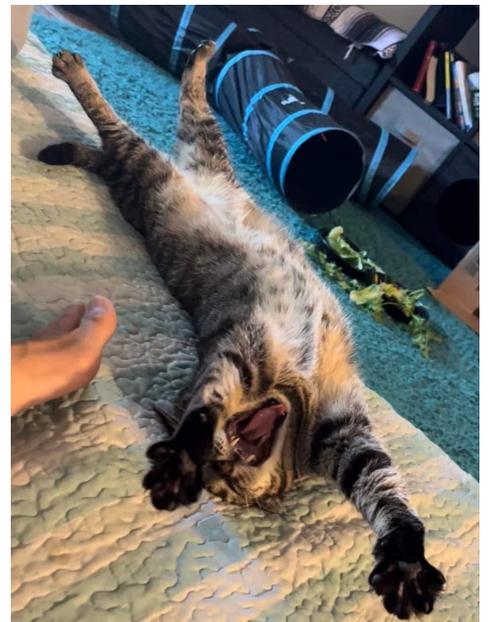
household. Josh's experience is quite unusual, most folks should expect the adjustment period to take weeks or even a couple of months.



**Josh and his wife Maggie would soon find themselves with an even bigger challenge that would put their adoption guidelines to the test.**

It was Maggie who noticed the posting on Facebook about a Siberian cat named Duffy that was unable to walk on his own. He was living with an elderly couple suffering from increasing dementia. He desperately needed to be placed in a new home. Maggie followed the posting daily, but found that no one was willing to step forward and adopt him.

Eventually Maggie and Josh realized that they needed to be the ones to provide Duffy with a new home.



At first, it was very difficult to care for Duffy. When he arrived, his fur was really matted so Josh and Maggie went to work cutting, combing, and reassuring him. He needed to be hand-fed and provided water with a syringe. He was unable to walk to or use a litter box which complicated things. Instead, he used a pee pad and needed clean-up help after pooping.

Once things stabilized a bit, Josh and Maggie took Duffy to the vet. The vet suspected a neurological disorder but needed to do very expensive tests in the hope of making a true diagnosis. Not sure what to do, Josh and Maggie just decided to do what they do best. They gave Duffy lots of good old-fashioned TLC and support. Maggie did weeks of physical therapy with Duffy which consisted of guiding his hind legs through a normal range of motion with gentle pressure, and supporting Duffy when he attempted to walk on his one. The therapy went on for 3-4 weeks. Little by little Duffy made progress. Eventually, Duffy began to walk on his own and to use the litter box. He started eating and drinking without assistance.

Today, Duffy still staggers a bit when he walks, but he even runs occasionally when playing with Tinky. Maggie and Josh describe the recovery as nothing short of a miracle — and they love being pet parents to two wonderful cats.

