

About Tom Iland



Tom Iland has worked hard to overcome challenges presented by his Autism Spectrum Disorder. His achievements include graduating from Cal State University Northridge, becoming a Certified Public Accountant, and working in corporate America. Tom is now pursuing a professional career as a speaker and trainer sharing insights and practical advice with the Autism community.

Tom has contributed to the autism and disability community through service and leadership. He has spoken openly about ASD for more than a decade, educating the public through speaking engagements and magazine articles. He has done numerous interviews on TV, newspaper, radio and the web. Since he was a teenager Tom has been a part of different training teams to help inform the police about autism. Tom collaborates with his adult sister Lisa, a social coach, to discuss and share information about sibling issues, and with his mother Emily Iland on autism safety projects, including BE SAFE The Movie and Experience Autism™.

Another example of Tom's collaborative efforts is his active involvement for the last 15 years with the Yes I Can Program for Social Inclusion, which helps typical peers make overcome fears about "differences" and make friends with students with exceptional needs. Tom has been a strong voice in Yes I Can, offering a proactive antidote to bullying that has reached thousands of students in Santa Clarita, CA.

Tom's innovative solutions include sharing practical "insider" information with others about transition to adulthood, college, work, independent living and romance. He shares what he has learned from experience, and hopes his insights can help other people with disabilities and their families have an easier journey. For example, Tom speaks to parents and students with disabilities while they are still in high school. He helps them prepare for the reality of college and talks placement tests, the benefits of dual-enrollment, and other options they might now know about. Students and their parents have thanked him for his helpful advice and appreciate his perspective as a person with ASD.

Tom is a role model to others who want to make their way in the world by working hard and believing in their abilities. Tom has also achieved his personal goals including driving, living in his own apartment and having a girlfriend. Many parents and teachers have said that Tom gives them hope and inspiration to work hard to create a good future for their children and students.

Tom is creating a social media presence to network with others. He writes a blog to guide and inspire others and is working on a new book on transition to adulthood with two other authors. Tom also promotes the development and success of others by talking with teens in the support group he used to attend and meeting with other young adults in his community (a city of 250,000 people outside Los Angeles). His mantra is "Know Yourself. Love Yourself. Be Yourself." He expands on these very positive message for self-advocates in his writing and presentations.

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