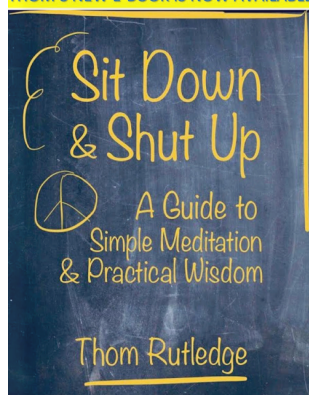


Addressing the Elephant in the ~~Room~~ Oval Office

THOM'S NEW E-BOOK IS NOW AVAILABLE



There is nothing political about this book but I am going to take a moment before we get started to acknowledge that since November 2016 it has become increasingly difficult (impossible) to disregard the connection between what I do for a living and the insanity of what is going on in our nation.

George W. Bush was good for my business, not because of economic policies but because of the anxiety his administration inspired in people. For the first time in my career, talking politics in a session was not straying off topic; it was something clients needed to address. But that was nothing compared to the fears so many clients are expressing now about the current administration.

In my book, *Embracing Fear*, I begin by teaching how to differentiate between healthy fear and neurotic (not-so-healthy) fear. Some may consider the following assessment a product of political bias and I cannot credibly deny that. But more relevant to the subject matter of this book, it is clear to me, as a psychotherapist, that fears created and fueled by the current administration, far-right supporters and FOX News, are untethered from facts and supremely neurotic. And those who are, individually and collectively, expressing fear about damage being done and threatened to our democracy, are, with some exceptions of course, grounded in reality. In other words, we have plenty of good reason to be feeling healthy fear, fear that we experience in order to motivate us to take action, which gratefully, many of us are doing.

Sit Down & Shut Up began as a book cover I shared as an April Fool's joke many years ago. I thought "sit down and shut up" as instruction for meditation was pretty funny. Only when I began hearing from people who wanted to order the non-existent book did it dawn on me that I may have stumbled onto something worth exploring. Even then, I didn't really take the idea too seriously. Instead, I wrote a few entries to go with the book cover and shared them with clients, workshop participants and on social media.

Over the past year and a half, faced with an increasing need for help with what I imagine should be called, "Trump Anxiety Syndrome (TAS)," I have been using the initial entries for my April Fool's joke and writing more and more of these for clients and for readers of *Embracing Fear* who contact me asking for help with TAS. And thus, you are now reading this little e-book.

Back to the beginning: other than this introduction, there is nothing political about this book. I certainly hope that what follows can be helpful to anyone dealing with anxiety, restlessness or just interested in establishing a daily meditation practice. But I want to dedicate the book to all who may be experiencing legitimate TAS, to whatever degree. My intent is to provide a good blend of provocative thought, instruction and humor that will offer tangible comfort for whatever ails you.

I also dedicate this book to Donald J. Trump, just because so many of us would love for him to sit down and shut up.

Thom Rutledge
-Thom Rutledge

July 31, 2018