

TALKING TO DENIAL:  
*Taking Full Advantage of Recovery's Arch Enemy*

KEYNOTE • AUGUST 18, 2018  
Thom Rutledge, LCSW



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PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PRESENTATION

TALKING TO DENIAL

TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE OF RECOVERY'S ARCH ENEMY

Basics of Thom Rutledge's INTRApersonal Change Process

- The Myth of Singularity: Understanding that the nature of consciousness is multiple, not singular is the foundation of this approach. Once we can explain and demonstrate to clients that the one-self contains many selves, we can offer a new, more accurate, problem definition that will then present new tools for problem solving.
- Basic Separation: Teaching clients how to translate the experience of "possession" to "relationship." Doing this not only gives clients a new perspective of their addiction, self-condemnation but also offers a space for a new recovery identity.
- The Power of Awareness: Don't just tell, SHOW. When concepts are presented in visual ways, awareness becomes more indelible. Imagine being in a pitch dark room with no information about your surroundings. Lights come on for just 3 seconds. How much more information do you have?  
*Chinese proverb: What I hear, I forget. What I see, I remember. What I do, I understand.*
- Deceptively Simple: The concept and practice of separation is only the beginning. Our job is to work with clients to discover nuance. Devil is in the details and that is also where we will find the solutions.
- Collaboration: The nature of effective therapy is collaboration. Emphasize this to clients. The better they understand that their active participation is not only welcome but actually needed, the more they will be invested in the work.
- Influence vs Control: Discover and facilitate the INTRApersonal conversations and power struggles within clients. This will keep the power struggle out of therapist/client relationship. Maintain a "co-therapist" relationship with clients whenever possible.
- Three (3) Primary Voices: 1.) Addiction/Bully/Saboteur 2.) Wisdom/Recovery/Positive Inner Parent 3.) The Decision Maker (Client's Central Identity) Other INTRApersonal relationships (Self- Condemnation, Perfectionism, Inner Child, etc) can be introduced as they become relevant.

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Visit Thom's web site for more information about his books and for free downloads (handouts and articles)

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## Thom Rutledge's INTRApersonal Therapy Model

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Intrapersonal psychotherapy directly addresses each person's unique internal structure of consciousness with metaphor, active imagination, role-play, psychodrama, journaling, visualization, and other creative methods. Based on an understanding that the nature of consciousness is multiple, rather than singular, a client is guided to translate perceived interpersonal and situational conflict into intrapersonal problem definitions. The philosophy of "healing from the inside out," is pivotal to this therapeutic approach.

Intrapersonal relationship dynamics, in most cases, accurately mirror a person's relevant interpersonal patterns. For instance, a person who is in a negative relationship with others who are critical or condemning of her will be guided to explore an intrapersonal relationship between her authentic self and some sort of "inner-bully" that agrees with external criticisms. Or, a person experiencing an addiction or an eating disorder is taught to see herself "in relationship" with a personification of her "inner-culprit."

Intrapersonal therapy focuses on these internal "codependent" relationships, with the intention of strengthening the client's ability to differentiate "self" from "problem," and teaching him to use the ability to make such a distinction to accept full responsibility for decision making in his life. By personifying inner "characters" to represent conditions and problems such as addiction, eating disorder, anxiety, excessive self-criticism, the therapist is able to bring to light cognitive patterns that inhibit growth and change. By teaching clients how to identify and separate from "toxic" characters (negative beliefs about self and/or environment) and how to create --- or enhance --- "positive," supportive characters, intrapersonal therapists are able to help the client discover, define and develop (called "3-D" process) an authentic identity that includes both strength and appropriate vulnerability.

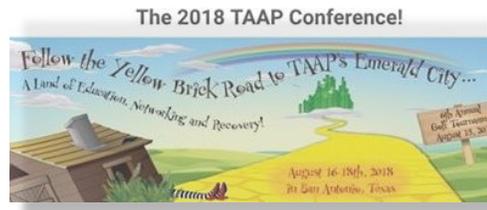
If you, or someone you care about, has an interest in Intrapersonal Therapy, or if your organization has an interest in an onsite training seminar, contact [thomrutledgeauthor@gmail.com](mailto:thomrutledgeauthor@gmail.com)

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## A CONFRONTATION

**A**s long as you perceive recovery as being imposed on you, by family, friends, therapists, doctors, even the world-at-large, you will remain in the power struggle that is always available just on the outskirts of the recovery that you say you want. Some people live their lives there. In and out, back and forth, never fully committed, certainly never determined to do whatever is necessary to recover from what is toxic and to do whatever it takes to create the lives they choose to live --- to recover the truth about themselves.

*Authentic recovery will not grow from things you reluctantly, even resentfully, think you are supposed to do. This is all about discovering where you want to go, learning everything you can about how to get there and then deciding to make that trip because it is what you want. It is always your choice and only your choice.*

*It will not work for you to claim you want to do something, then complain that you are being made to do it.*

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## LEAD SLED DOG

Imagine you are one of a team of six big, strong huskies harnessed in single file to a sled full of provisions for the winter. Now imagine that you are the lead dog and that you are lying down, unable or unwilling to stand up and pull the sled.

How successful with the other five dogs on the team be in pulling the sled as long as you are lying down.

This is one of my favorite metaphors. It is just so simple and clear.

Each of us is our own lead sled dog. No matter how much potential exists in the friends and family who love and support us, their potential is useless until we stand up and start pulling. The moment we accept our responsibility as lead sled dog and “mush” forward, we harness our own strength and the strength of all the other dogs to help us plow ahead.

When I think of my life in these terms, I can really feel the power and support backing me up.

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## ABOUT THOM RUTLEDGE, LCSW

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THOM HAS BEEN FEATURED ON NBC'S TODAY SHOW, THE FOX NETWORK, AUSTRALIA'S CHANNEL 10, CNN'S ANDERSON COOPER 360 AND HAS CONSULTED WITH THE DR. PHIL SHOW. THOM DIVIDES HIS PROFESSIONAL TIME BETWEEN WRITING, SPEAKING/TRAINING AND MAINTAINING HIS PRIVATE THERAPY PRACTICE IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE.

VISIT THOM'S WEB SITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ALL OF HIS BOOKS, ABOUT HIS AVAILABILITY AS A SPEAKER AND WORKSHOP FACILITATOR & TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SCHEDULING A SESSION WITH THOM IN HIS OFFICE OR VIA SKYPE OR TELEPHONE.

### BOOKS BY THOM:

**SIMPLE TRUTH: IDEAS & EXPERIENCES FOR HUMANS FROM LESS-THAN-PERFECT FAMILIES (1990)**

**IF I WERE THEY: A HANDBOOK OF PRACTICAL RECOVERY WISDOM (1992) CURRENTLY OUT OF PRINT**

**THE SELF-FORGIVENESS HANDBOOK: TREATING YOURSELF WITH THE LOVE & RESPECT YOU MAY NOT KNOW YOU DESERVE (FIRST EDITION 1997, SECOND EDITION 2015)**

**NUTSHELL ESSAYS: 52 BRIEF LESSONS FOR BIG CHANGE (2006, IUNIVERSE PUBLISHING) SECOND EDITION, EXPANDED, CREATE SPACE PUBLISHING, TO BE RELEASED 2019**

**EARNING YOUR OWN RESPECT: A HANDBOOK OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (1998) CURRENTLY OUT OF PRINT, NEW EDITION SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE IN SUMMER 2018**

**EMBRACING FEAR: HOW TO TURN WHAT SCARES US INTO OUR GREATEST GIFT (2002)**

**LIFE WITHOUT ED: HOW ONE WOMAN DECLARED HER INDEPENDENCE FROM HER EATING DISORDER & HOW YOU CAN TOO (WITH JENNI SCHAEFFER) (2003)**

**THE GREATER POSSIBILITIES: 125 REFLECTIONS ON THE METHOD & MEANING OF GENUINE SUCCESS (CREATE SPACE PUBLISHING, 2016)**

**WHAT LOVE IS: REFLECTIONS ON THE TRUE MEANING & AUTHENTIC PRACTICE OF LOVE (CREATE SPACE PUBLISHING, 2017)**

**SIT DOWN & SHUT UP: A GUIDE TO SIMPLE MEDITATION & PRACTICAL WISDOM (AMAZON KINDLE E-BOOK, 2018)**

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