

**PRAISE FOR *HOW TO STOP  
THINKING* and not get eaten by a  
bear**

*“Aisle 2, on the left next to the bear spray.”*

**DAVE (APPALACHIAN MINI MART)**

*“I wish I had read this before I pulled the trigger on the lobotomy.”*

**UNCLE HENNY**

*“He won’t get away with this.”*

**SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF HUNGER TO BEARS**

*“The most dangerous man in America.”*

**NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

*“Dogu Who?”*

**APA (AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION)**

*“He’s clearly undermedicated.”*

**APA (AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION)**

*“News of our extinction has been greatly exaggerated.”*

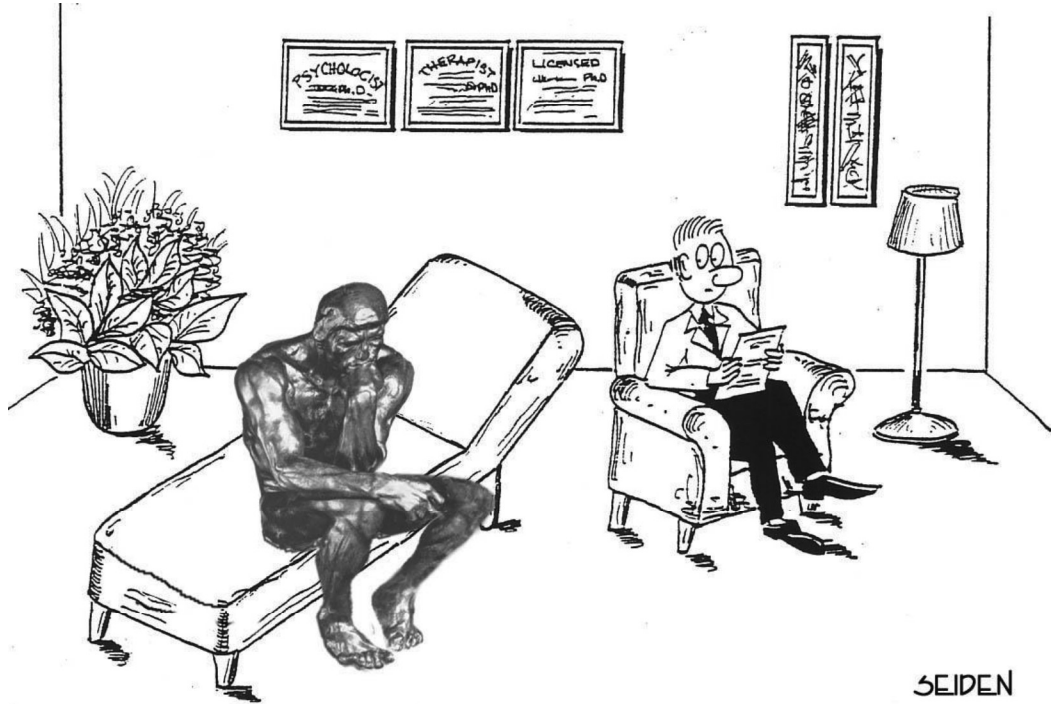
**APA (AMERICAN PENCIL ASSOCIATION)**

*“Dig it!”*

**APA (AMERICAN PALEONTOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION)**

*To*

*K*



SEIDEN

“Question: ‘How to stop thinking?’”

Papaji: ‘By *Being!*’”

# ALSO BY DOGU DENSEI

*How to Stop Thinking and Not Get Eaten by a Triffid*

*How to Stop Thinking and Not Get Squashed by a Heffalump*

*How to Stop Thinking and Not Get Abducted by a  
Tralfamadorian*

*How to Stop Thinking and Not Get Your Raisins Stolen by a  
Squeazle Weasel*

# How To Stop Thinking

*and not get eaten by a bear*

The New  
Cognitive Behavioral Mind Training

Dogu DENSEI, Ph.D.

CADUXEUS



PRESS

Westeros • Trantor • Arrakis • Tralfamadore

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## DISCLAIMER

The ideas and techniques in this book are not intended as a substitution for consultation with a qualified health professional, spirit guide, shaman, mystic, enlightened being or bear whisperer. No portion of this book should be eaten without Dijon mustard or fed to a bear without ketchup (bears like ketchup, unless they're French, in which case go with the Dijon).

This is a work of nonfiction. Except where it isn't. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's vast wisdom accumulated over countless lifetimes or of delusional fancy. Any resemblance to actual persons living, once having lived or never having lived is most likely not coincidental. No skeets were harmed in the making of this book.

## WARNING

This book contains quotations and may trigger elevated levels of inspiration and less frequently aspiration in quotaphobics. There is, however, anecdotal evidence that such effects are transitory:

*"Quotes are always inspiring to me for a day. Then I'm back to my regular self."*

**- Bill -**

# ABOUT CADUXEUS PRESS

CADUXEUS



PRESS

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In Greek mythology, the Caduceus was the Staff of Hermes, who conducted souls into the afterlife. For Carl Jung, Hermes was the god of the unconscious, and served as a guide for inner journeys. The Caduceus represents consciousness as subtle energy (kundalini/prana in yoga; chi in Taoism) that travels among the body's subtle energy centers. In yoga, energy can be trained to move from the yogic ida and pingala (left and right energetic pathways) into the sushumna (the subtle energetic pathway equivalent of the spine), around which they wind. In Taoist microcosmic orbit meditation, energy is circulated in a Yang/fire cycle up the back meridian (or Governor/Control channel), and down the front meridian (or Conception/Function channel) - or in the reverse direction in a Yin/water cycle. In both traditions, the consciousness-imbued energy eventually rises from the base of the spine to the crown of the head and out of the body into the Cosmos.

The Caduceus is nearly identical to the Rod of Osiris, the Egyptian god of the afterlife, which also has two snakes intertwined and ascending a staff but culminates in a pine cone (symbolizing the pineal gland). The pineal gland was considered by Descartes to be the "seat of the soul," is associated by some mystical traditions with out-of-body experiences, and has been found to contain chemicals implicated in altered states of consciousness. As such both the Caduceus and the Rod of Osiris may be considered symbols of Psychology 4.0 (Transcendent Psychology, after Psychologies 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 corresponding with preventive, curative and positive

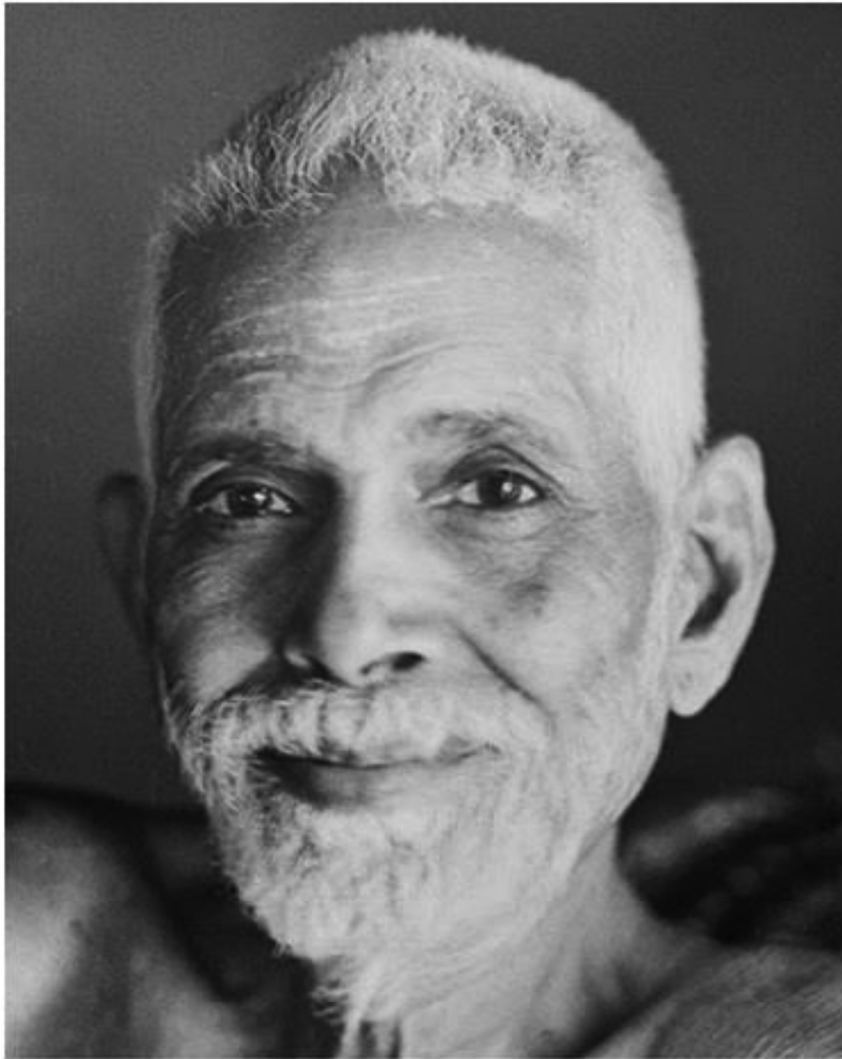


psychology, respectfully) in keeping with psychology's original mission to serve as a science of the psyche or soul.

The Caduceus is only mistakenly used as a symbol of medicine in the West. The true symbol of medicine is the Rod of Asclepius, the Greek god of healing. The Rod of Asclepius has a single serpent entwined around a rod, with no wings. The wingless Rod of Asclepius may be used to symbolize Psychology 2.0, traditionally limited in its theory, research and practice to healing pathological mind-body states.



The Melong is the Tibetan Dzogchen Buddhist symbol for the unity of the primordial state. Whirling in its center is the Gankyil, or Wheel of Joy.



**Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi**

*“Concentration is not thinking of one thing.  
On the contrary, it is excluding all thoughts,  
since all thoughts obstruct the sense  
of one’s true being.”*

(In Osborne, 1962/2010, p. 127; Talk 398)

“Tired of the old descriptions of the world,  
The latest freed man rose at six and sat  
On the edge of his bed. He said,  
‘I suppose there is  
A doctrine to this landscape. Yet, having just  
Escaped from the truth, the morning is color and mist,  
Which is enough: the moment’s rain and sea,  
The moment’s sun (the strong man vaguely seen),  
Overtaking the doctrine of this landscape.’”

**Wallace Stevens**

**Excerpt from *The Latest Freed Man* (1954/2015, p. 217)**

# Acknowledgements

“Journeys, like artists, are born and not made.

A thousand differing circumstances contribute to them,  
few of them willed or determined by the will - whatever we may  
think.

They flower spontaneously out of the demands of our natures -  
and the best of them lead us not only outwards in space, but  
inwards as well . . .”

**Lawrence Durrell**

**(Bitter Lemons, 1957)**

I'd like to thank many people, living in the physical and  
otherwise,

for the journey within which this current journey takes place:

**K**

my grandparents, parents, sister, niece, nephew & friends

My many teachers, and especially my psychology mentors

for their friendship and guidance along the way

Those who taught me how to think

Those who taught me how to stop

And my clients, who have invited me into their lives  
to share in their trials, tribulations, joys and celebrations.

And finally, I thank YOU  
Across, forward or backward in Time  
as the case may be, for

*"A good book needs time . . .*

Many hours must pass,  
many a spider must have woven its web about the book.

A book is made better by good readers  
and clearer by good opponents."

**(Nietzsche, 1879/1913, pp. 79-80)**

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## Prologue - *Who This Book Is For*



“I propose to point out here how this book must be read in order to be thoroughly understood. By means of it I only intend to impart a single thought. Yet, notwithstanding all of my endeavors, I could find no shorter way of imparting it than this whole book. I hold this thought to be that which has very long been sought for under the name of philosophy, and the discovery of which is therefore regarded by those who are familiar with history as quite as impossible as the discovery of the philosopher’s stone, although already said by Pliny: *Quam multa fieri non posse, priusquam sint facta, judicantur?* (Hist. nat. 7, I.)”

**Arthur Schopenhauer (1891)**

“Those,’ in the words of Lao Tze,

‘who *know* do not *say*.

Those who *say* do not *know*.’

And yet he *said* that!

He wrote a book of several *80 chapters* or so

to explain the Tao.”

**Alan Watts (2018)**

“The secret to Bliss is to stop the search,  
stop thinking,  
stop not-thinking,  
and keep Quiet.

The best practice is to Know ‘Who am I.’”

**H.W.L. Poonja “Papaji”**  
(2000, p. 20)

**D**oukipudonktan! Though I imagine this requires some explanation. I lost a bet one score and eighteen years ago (36 B.P.)(Before Pandemic)(OK, don’t wear your brain out this early in the book -- 1984) to a lovely German couple in a trailer on a farm in Mykonos, their having found me sleeping on the beach and eager to split the cost of the trailer -- about \$10/night -- three ways rather than two. As it turned out, the farmer who owned the land was merely passed out in the same position in the same chair on his porch overnight and well into the next day on his monthly one-week Ouzo binge and not in the more permanent state that my trailermates bet against, having unbeknownst to me resided there for some time and seen this before. The loser had to solemnly vow to begin every book s/he might write – though none of us were authors – *en perpétuité* with “Doukipudonktan!,” with an exclamation mark *even though Queneau inserted no such punctuation*. Worse, they would not be at liberty to explain what it means, being, however, permitted to slip in one hint, that hint being very specifically: “Ask someone who speaks German, who will immediately realize it isn’t German but will hopefully be bilingual and have majored in foreign literature.” They were otherwise good people and, more importantly, didn’t snore (except when they were sober).

Phew. That was awkward. Now that *that’s* out of the way, let us begin.

There are three breeds of overthinkers.

First, there are those who *don’t realize* they are overthinking, also known as *almost everyone*.

Second are those who *pride* themselves in overthinking. These are the intellectuals, pseudo-intellectuals and ego-syntonic worriers (worriers who think worrying is good, confusing it with problem-solving).

Third are people whose overthinking has a content that is so scary, depressing or irritating that it causes anxiety, sadness or anger, sometimes to levels defined as clinical pathologies.

This book is for all three. But there is a catch. Each of these groups has a seemingly good reason *not* to read it.

Group 1 (*almost everyone*) is unlikely to buy a book on how to stop thinking because they don't realize thinking is a problem. It's just something they do, mostly unawares. As one of my clients put it when I told her that in addition to cognitive therapy (learning to change the *content* of her thinking) I would also teach her how to just *stop it*:

“I've never heard of this before. I always assumed you were supposed to be thinking all the time. I think it sounds great. I think what I need to do is stop thinking.”

Group 2 is about as tempted to buy a book on how to stop thinking as they would be to buy a book on how to stop breathing -- *unless* it was on the New York Times Bestseller List, in the humor section, or *maybe* if they were trapped at home for two years during a pandemic (don't be silly)(uh wait) and ran out of Netflix shows. Unless they had Amazon Prime. Unless they ran out of Amazon Prime shows. Unless they had HBO. Unless they ran out of HBO shows. Unless they are of the “watching the same show again” type, which may require a referral.

Group 3, though suffering greatly from annoying to pathological levels of overthinking, is unlikely to buy this book due to the same incredulity expressed by a cognitive behavioral psychologist to whom I mentioned my new approach (i.e., “Good luck with that”).

In sum, the three potential barriers that must be dealt with in trying to help people learn to stop overthinking are:

1. They don't realize they are overthinking, and many are not even aware that they are *thinking*;
2. They overvalue thinking and value overthinking; and

3. They don't believe it is possible.

Now, you may have noticed with some degree of alarm that the promise of the title (*How to Stop Thinking*) is beginning to sound like a watered-down promise of *How to Stop Overthinking*. But I assure you that if you practice the techniques herein enumerated, you *may* achieve moments in which you have not a single thought in your head (thus stopping *thinking* – for which you hereby agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless your Dear Author if you achieve this and happen to simultaneously or in short order encounter a heavy, sharp or fast moving object – or in the case in which *you* are the fast moving object, encounter a stationary or slower moving object). And as a *bonus*, you will *also* learn how to have thoughts in your head that are actually useful.

To these ends, fortuitously, the above obstacles are usually easily overcome, because therapy clients (at least those who go willingly) and people who gravitate toward books such as this (versus those given them as *hints* masquerading as gifts) are almost always people with insight, who realize the havoc that overthinking is creating in their lives, and are amenable to learning how even thinking *itself* is not always desirable.

I can imagine, however, that many will still ask, as they always do:

“But we *have to* think, don't we?”

To which I respond

“Yes, and we *have to* eat. But not all the time.”

Or they might wonder

How can someone (do x, y, or z) without thinking?

(In case you're *wondering* about the apparently inconsistent punctuation above, as was I, it turns out that *wondering* doesn't qualify for quotation marks unless it's really loud).

I might then ask them to tell me how to tie my shoes, and then ask that they tie their own shoes. The latter, in the absence of thinking, proves much easier, especially when I'm wearing unlaced duck boots.

Many people's most interesting rationale for overthinking, especially in the form of "worry" (overthinking about a bad thing possibly happening in the future) is the following:

If I don't worry about (x, y, or z bad thing happening),  
aren't I just letting it happen?

(Rationales don't qualify for quotation marks either, except when being whispered to plants in need of dioxidation, carbonic or otherwise).

I call this the "*What if I go hiking and get eaten by a bear*" question. Because, of course, all hiking trails are full of bears, and *Bears Want to Kill You* (Nicolle, 2019), but if you worry about it enough it won't happen. And then when it doesn't happen, you think it's because you worried, thereby reinforcing the worry habit. Kind of like a rain dance. Or snapping your fingers in a restaurant to keep away the elephants.

So if you are one of the many people who spend a lot of time worrying about getting eaten by a bear, this book is for you. That is, if the bear you encounter doesn't *actually* want to eat you (technically meaning that it doesn't want to eat you *right now*). If they do, then you might do better to read Ethan Nicolle's book *Dickinson Killdeer's Guide to Bears of the Apocalypse: Ursine Abominations of the End Times and How to Defeat Them* (his prequel to *Bears Want to Kill You: The Authoritative Guide to Survival in the War Between Man and Bear*). For example, in the event that you are hiking in a swamp (first mistake), drop your glasses, and while fishing them out of the mud come face to face with a Bearigator (*Ursus Alligator Horribilis*) with its unmistakable 52-tooth, 8-canine veterinary dentist's paradise and sharp-scaled tail, Ethan offers the following advice: "Chain their tail and snout, then bash repeatedly with large rocks. Electrify the water they are in. Feed them bombs" (Nicolle, 2016, p. 6).

Likewise, if you are driving your kids to school one day and happen upon a hair-challenged prophet alternatively smoting and healing things with a gown, it might be a good time (if they've been behaving) to remind them of their Sunday School manners, for

"So the waters were healed vnto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake. And he went vp from thence vnto Bethel: and as hee was going vp by the way, there came foorth little children out

of the citie, and mocked him, and said vnto him, Goe vp, thou bald head, Goe vp, thou bald head. And hee turned backe, and looked on them, and cursed them in the Name of the LORD. And there came foorth two shee Beares out of the wood, and tare fortie and two children of them. And hee went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria." (2 Kings, 2:21-24; KJV 1611, 2022).

My first promise to you is that by the end of this book, *stopping thinking* will not cause you to get eaten by a bear. Making fun of prophets while they are smoting things or hanging raw meat on a clothesline next to your tent might (real story), but not stopping thinking. My second promise to you is that by the end of this book, stopping *overthinking* will help you to stop having sensations and emotions *appropriate* to imminent ingestion by a bear, but inappropriate when there are no bears in the immediate neighborhood. Unless they are flying above the immediate neighborhood, such as the Abearican Eagle (*Ursus Haliaeetus Leucocephalus*), like the one George Washington bred from birth, tamed and rode into combat in the Revolutionary War, in which case your only hope is, again according to my friend Ethan, to "Spear through head, throat or heart. Feed them bombs" (Nicolle, 2019, p. 21).

Lastly, even if you are *not* one of the many people who spend a lot of time worrying about getting eaten by a bear, this book is for you too. Because if it weren't, I would be committing some type of discrimination on the basis of cognitive functioning, and that would be *bad*. So my promise to *you too* is that, even though you're not trying to prevent it by worrying about it, by the end of this book, stopping thinking will not cause *you* to get eaten by a bear either *and* you might just learn some interesting and useful things along the way (with the exception of what those Latin words at the end of the Schopenhauer quotation mean. Your guess is as good as mine).





## Disclaimer - *About That Bear Thing*



“Brown, lie down, Black, fight back, White, say goodnight.

And if a big shadow falls on the wall of your tent

And you didn’t order pizza,

Now might be a good time to rethink that whole atheism thing.”

### **Trafamadorian Prayer**

**Y**ou might think that this is where I tell you that *this book does not constitute medical or psychological treatment* and that if you have or suspect that you have a medical or psychiatric condition you should speak to your shaman, healer, medicine man, witchdoctor or psychiatrist (Kalweit, 1987; Torrey, 1986), as they could suggest treatments based on a full understanding of your personal physiology, karma, psychology or footprints.



In fact, due to the title of this book, I not only need to state the above, but also, the (hopefully) obvious, that *stopping thinking will not keep you from being eaten by a bear*. That is, unless you were thinking about running away or climbing a tree, in which case STOP IT! as Bob Newhart (2019/2001) would say, and clank metal cookware, lie down, fight back, say good night, or pray, as indicated in the Tralfamadorian Prayer that I just made up. Yes, as in this book as everywhere else, Beware of Fake News. If it seems too fake to be true, it probably is (fake). Unless it isn't. An alternative version of the prayer practiced by the inhabitants of Westeros is

“Black, yell back  
Brown, lie down  
White, goodnight.”

It should be noted, however, that the Acting Wise King of Westeros recently issued an edict banning teaching of this prayer in the public schools after the prior three Acting Wise Kings of Westeros were eaten by bears or giant deers [sic] disguised as bears (regarding *sic* 4 words back: *deers*: Westeros spelling for pl. *deer*, the “s” is silent, though sometimes pronounced as a “sth” in the highlands depending on what the speaker is high on, not to be pronounced in the same sentence as the lowland drinking game *deersth*, to avoid confusion, which is prevalent in the Highlands for obvious reasons). The jury is still out, as they too were eaten by the bears or deersth (I have Highlands ancestors) but, according to the edict,

“The prayer is no more nor no less than, though more or less and, if you ask me, nevertheless a tad more than, a fistful of blatherskitish tommyrot, though less likely to give one a tummy ache, I'll give it that. The truth, according to Chris (2019), is that 'Black bears can be black, brown, dark brown, blue-black, cinnamon or even white. Grizzlies also come in a range of colours ... The best way to not get eaten by a bear is to avoid bears.'" (Acting Wise King of Westeros, 2022).

Seriously, if you are planning on encountering a bear, you *could* speak to a shaman, healer, medicine man, witchdoctor or psychiatrist who would probably listen, but your best and more reasonable bet would be the corner grocer, who also cannot keep you from being eaten by a bear, but may be

## How To Stop Thinking and Not Get Eaten By A Bear

able to provide good luck charms, incantations, first aid supplies (for you) or ketchup (for the bear).

If you do indeed come face to face with a bear, in addition to or rather than praying, you could try singing to it (there are no reports of bears attacking people who sing to them. I just googled it). One piece that might be helpful is “*Our-se J’Suis Pas*” (transl. “Bear I’m Not A”), attributed to Saint Dominique De Saint-Véran (Patron Saint of Protection from Hangry Bears, named after a 6<sup>th</sup> century Bishop of Cavaillon who drove away a dragon; Saint-Véran, 2022), inspiration for the French children’s bedtime standard *Frère Jacques* and sung to the same tune:

**“Our-se j’suis pas, Our-se j’suis pas  
Gourmet bouffe, Gourmet bouffe.  
Fous le camp m’manges pas,  
Fous le camp m’manges pas.  
Ding Dang Dong. Ding Dang Dong.”**

Roughly translated as:

**“Bear I’m not a, Bear I’m not a  
Gourmet food, Gourmet food.  
Go away don’t eat me, Go away don’t eat me.  
Bing Bang Bong. Bing Bang Bong.”**



Incidentally, regarding the above reference to atheism, I was at the North Bergen Park & Ride the other day, and standing at the machine was a lovely senior couple, leaving aside for the moment that I may soon be approaching an age at which I can't get away with patronizing seniors by calling them "lovely" (OK, I'll be 60 in 2 days and am staring it in the face, but cut me some slack, I'm still processing. And 2 days is 2 days – don't kill time unless it's trying to kill you, as Grandma Densei used to say). Anyway, they were having difficulty getting the machine to take their money (so much for artificial intelligence). I suggested they try a different machine, which they did, but that one refused as well. Each time they put in the voucher they had gotten at the entry gate followed by their credit card, the machine would wait a few moments, and then spit it back out, sans bus tickets. Finally, I had an epiphany (I get those at Park & Rides). There were a bunch of buttons that would flash whenever the credit card was put in, and they were flashing now, as the old geezer (I STILL HAVE 2 DAYS!) had just put the voucher and card back in to try his luck with the third and last remaining machine. Sometimes it behooves one to read flashing red messages, and this seemed like one of those times. So I switched my thinking back on, supplementing the sensation and quasi-perceptual experience of the flashing information that I had up until that point provided with limited access to my consciousness, and made the extra effort to read the sequence of letters and words. One button said "Child," another said "Adult," and another said "Senior." Without wanting to be presumptuous, I told him that maybe he needed to press one of the buttons. What he said next was truly golden in a way that I'm sure I had never encountered, nor am likely to encounter again, at least in this life, or at least at a Park & Ride ticket machine. He said, and I quote:

"I shouldn't have to.

I put in the Senior voucher I got at the gate."

My brain stopped for a few seconds, and then, at risk of offending but ultimately wanting to help, I said, and I quote:

"You shouldn't *have* to, but if you *do*,  
maybe the machine will give you your tickets."

He continued glaring at the machine for a few seconds, apparently waiting for the North Bergen Park & Ride ticket machine to use its state-of-the-art

200 petaflop quantum learning algorithms to realize it was messing with the wrong guy, at which point his wife shoved him out of the way and pressed the flashing red Senior button. Et Voila, two bus tickets. I trust that you see the relevance of this story to atheism (hint: “I shouldn’t *have* to pray.” Give that bear some ketchup).

Despite the title of this book, I will assume that you, like most, are here more to learn *how to stop thinking* than how to survive bear attacks. And with good reason: You have been tormented by your mind for somewhere between one and twelve decades, whereas my guess is you’ve never gone hand to hand with a bear, have no plans to in the near future, and realize that bear attacks probably having nothing to do with their telepathic ability to read your mind.

Therefore, with your permission, most of this book will be devoted to *how to stop thinking* and related topics that fall within the purview of my particular areas of expertise, bear telepathy will be completely ignored, and the above chapter quote is really all I’ve got for you in case some judgmentally challenged youngster on your camping trip hangs raw meat on a clothesline next to your tent overnight (true story).

Finally, regarding accuracy, unlike many “self-help” books, I am writing the same way I would talk to you if we were strangers sitting at the diner counter and I had accidentally mentioned I’m a psychologist, rather than telling you that I’m an ottoman re-upholsterer in order to continue eating in relative peace. So, while the content of this book is grossly accurate, it is based on a combination of personal experience, clinical encounters, memory of articles and books read over the years, Twitter verification of personal beliefs and opinions, non-sequiturs, outright nonsense and stuff I just made up. In other words, quote me at your own risk.

