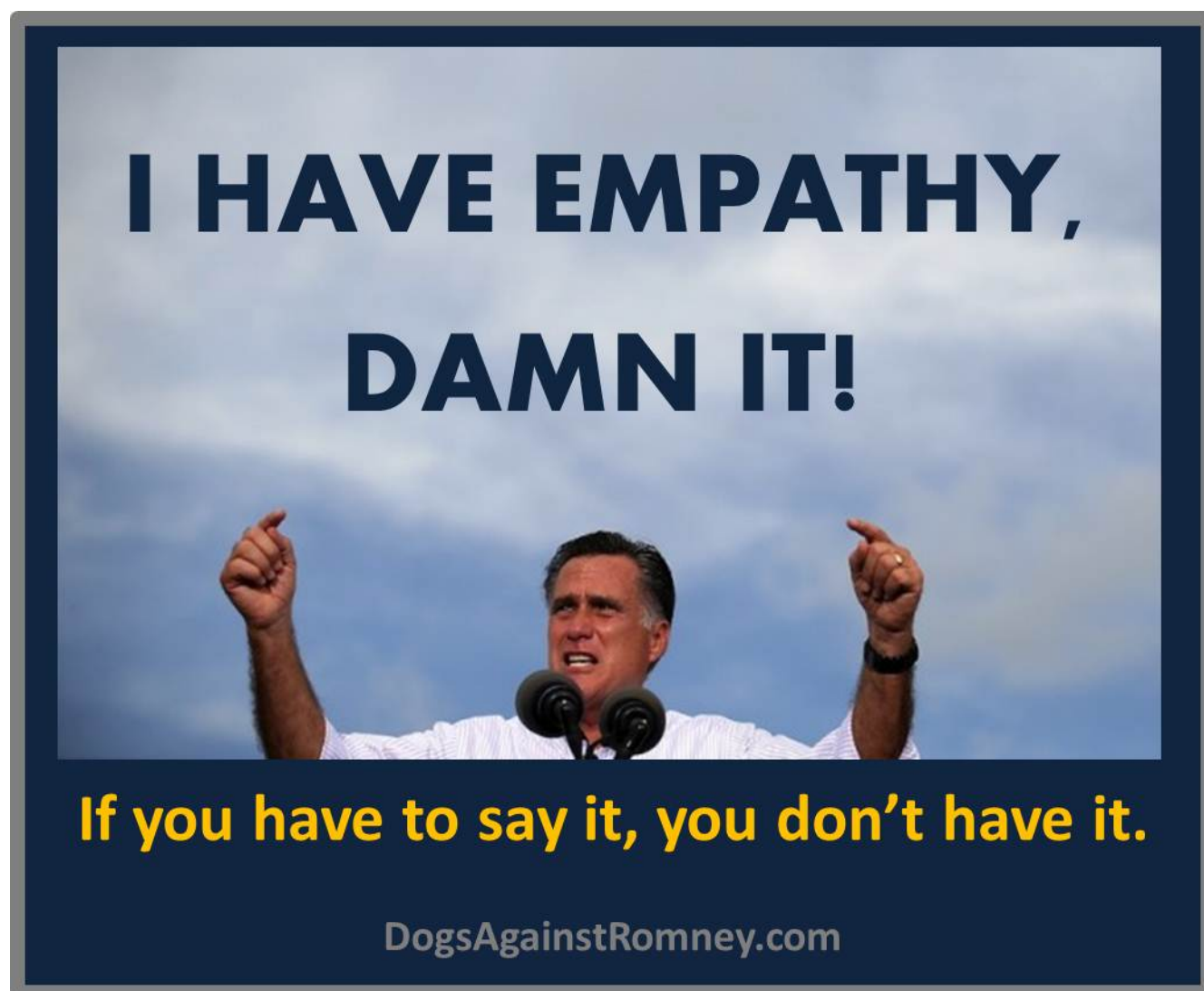# Do we need to teach children empathy?

No.

Anybody who talks about "teaching empathy" clearly has no empathy - at least for those who they want to teach such a thing. You do not teach empathy.

Empathy is defined as the ability to understand and *share* the thoughts and feelings of another person. How do you know a small child way more of that than the average adult? Leaving alone the question of how children imitate their caregivers' body language - which is even more striking - you know that, for example, by comparing how you speak your mother tongue to how you speak a second language.

As you struggle through the process of formally learning a new language you tend to not understand, and nor do you share the feelings involved. You experience some resistance to these arbitrary ways of expression that seem alien to you. You might end up achieving this, especially by becoming involved in the everyday life of natives, getting a native partner, etc. - which are all again ways of becoming a bit of a child again - but you have a significantly reduced ability to achieve the same emotional state that enables the coordination necessary to assimilate the new language at the deepest level and with the greatest ease.

No. We do not need to teach children empathy; *we need to let children teach us empathy* (the real meaning of empathy, that is).

Because what happens is that when people talk about "empathy" they usually mean *obedience* and prioritizing the thoughts and feelings of the narcissist who dominates: the parent or parental figure - as in politics and religion.

If you take the time to understand and share the feelings of *yourself* you will confirm this - that what is behind the word "empathy" is often something you do not feel good about, because there was not real understanding (which is impossible when the principles involved do not make logical sense, as in "thou shalt put others first") but a sheer command for you to do something that benefits a powerful person in your life.