

# THE CRUCIBLE OF AWAKENING

**Issue 33 January 2008**

## SECOND INNOCENCE

Innocence is commonly associated with a childlike lack of knowledge and experience, an infectious guilelessness, an almost deified blamelessness and purity. Behind such formidable cover, the apparently innocent seem to be but powerless pawns, perfect victims, fetchingly haloed photogenic magnets for cultural sentimentality.

As much as innocence is equated with weakness (however endearing) and helplessness (however cute), it is also equated with exploitability. That is, to be innocent is to be very easily manipulated, like infants or young children or “primitive” indigenous cultures. For many, innocence is appealingly naive, adorably or refreshingly unsophisticated. It is abundantly endowed with both prerational openness and ignorance in the Forrest Gumpian mode. And it is unconscious.

But there is a second innocence, a conscious innocence. It is not naive, nor gullible, nor helpless before parental or social tyrannies. It is childlike but not childish. It is open but not defenseless. Its vulnerability is not a liability, but a source of strength. It is not a victim. Its scars both ennoble and deepen it, without reducing its capacity for Wonder. Its sacrifices both root and wing it.

The lack of such innocence militates against real maturity, leaving little more than adult-rated stances, make-believe grown-ups, ruined children, aberrated adolescents. When Jesus talked about becoming as little children in order to enter Heaven, he was encouraging neither regression nor naiveté, but rather a conscious innocence. Beginner’s mind, lover’s heart.

## The Crucible of Awakening

Second innocence spontaneously combines the incorruptible openness, the liberating exuberance, the natural playfulness, the sobering joy, and the knowledge-transcending wisdom of unsullied Being. Even the blackest of circumstances cannot obscure its shine. Second innocence shines perhaps most brightly and purely in the faces of great spiritual realizers like Ramana Maharshi, perhaps the most remarkable Indian sage of the last century. In his unfathomably tender gaze, there is no lack of knowledge or experience, and nor is there any sign of weakness or helplessness. His is boundlessly illuminated innocence, compassionate without trying to be compassionate, overflowing with the innate radiance of Being.

Second innocence is wakeful, everfresh openness, as pure in its silence as in its spontaneity. It is the playground of Being.

We tend to associate innocence with childhood, as if it's something we must outgrow, leave behind, or control (or slip back into caricatures of, as in senility or the excesses of romanticism and sentimentality). So we generally confine innocence to the prepubescent young, tolerating it most of all in babies, even as we, more often than not, proceed to colonize their wilderness of Being with our unresolved wounds. Very young children are also innocent, though usually less so than infants, especially as their seedling egocentricity asserts itself (both as a natural development, and also as a defense mechanism).

Children frequently lose much of their innocence quite early, especially as self-consciousness (which is not actually consciousness, but rather only a painfully critical, shame-rooted viewing of one's apparent self as through the eyes of others) takes root. Those children who become beggars for applause often adopt an adult-pleasing "innocence," exploiting their cuteness and talents, while drifting away from their depths and true innocence. In many of those children who don't lose or don't have to abort their innocence, there often is an exaggerated resistance to letting go of childhood when it's time to do so — and who can blame them, given how much of what awaits them is the soul-barren consumerist frenzy and corresponding depression of ruined childhood and its obsessively adolescent progeny?

An “innocent” adult is generally viewed as a sucker, a fool, a mark, a pushover, an easy target, an incompleteness sorely in need of some worldly “education” and some “straightening out” (the extreme of such “awakenings” being that of Euro-American aboriginal genocide).

The innocent gaze of an infant is loudly approved of, but such a look from an adult easily creates discomfort in the very same infant-admirers, simply because it invites back a reciprocal openness, an openness that may have been long-denied, fled, or suppressed. Then innocence, especially in its purity, becomes a threat, a too-open stare, an unwanted reminder of what has been lost, crushed, or disowned in one.

With an ease rooted in numbness and emotional illiteracy, we again and again crush, ignore, patronize, tame, mow down, school, or merely romanticize innocence, confusing suppression with care and the loss of wonder with being grown-up. Nevertheless, the cries of abandoned or aborted innocence haunt even the most hardened of us, as when we nurse a drink in some dark corner, secretly holding our tears at bay. Though the voice of our own innocence may encounter deafness on our part, it is still heard somewhere beneath our skin, if only as the tiniest of fists beating against the inside of our chest.

On some familiar street a heartbroken child suffocating behind an adult mask catches our suddenly sensitized eye — we are busy multi-tasking, caught up in a traffic jam of important elsewheres, but we have to stop. We forget to glance at our watch. Our eyes truly open. The mask quickly becomes transparent, eloquently unraveling and thinning, hauling in our attention like a prodigal kite. Everything is very still, dynamically still. No thought can intrude. No should can trespass here. We cannot look away. Seeing occurs. It is our face, our primal need, our naked innocence. The street disappears. So do we. Breathing continues. And innocence reappears, now become second innocence, weaving through all that we are, like the string of a necklace through its beads.

And through, through the gates we go, without fanfare and fuss, entering Awakening’s heartland. Second innocence.

## TURNING MY NIGHT INSIDE OUT

*Draw forth that thunder, my drummer  
Stick stroke and blur those drums  
Until the skin moans throbs and hums  
Flail coax and free those passionbeats  
Strip spur and raise the speeding pulse  
Beating it into incandescent ice  
As wild as it is precise  
Releasing it all in a blossomed storm  
Rocketing through the ceiling of what's unborn  
Riding past the frontier of what's unknown  
Blasting through every tindrum sideshow  
Until the room loses its floor ceiling and walls  
Leaving nothing, nothing but this*

*This music flames through what's hidden  
Luring forgotten songs from every corner  
Pulling me past its edges, past its design  
Freeing me from what I took to be mine*

*This music turns my night inside out  
Skinning my confusion and disarming my doubt  
Mind and matter but a poorly shared dream  
Its music just a shadow of this music  
Its melodies just variations of a broken note  
But this music obeys a deeper beat  
It is not stuck on endless repeat  
It is the sonic feel of the always already true  
Heard without ears, sound within sound  
Tributaried everfresh and all around  
Its heartbeat our deepest ground*

## COLLECTIVE OVERWHELM

Contemporary culture is deeply entrenched in chronic overwhelm, unattended overwhelm, overwhelm without any significant relief in sight, overwhelm that continues to pick up steam, overwhelm that is so hugely and deeply pervasive that its signature pressurizing and distress-making mostly only get token challenges.

Collective overwhelm has become the norm to such a degree that adaptation to it remains only superficially questioned in most places. The plague is here, insidiously ubiquitous and voraciously viral, occupying — *colonizing* — so many faces and places that it usually is only partially recognized for what it is. Collective overwhelm is more common than the common cold and more infectious than any previous plague.

If future shock (the result of too much change in too short a time, as described by Alvin Toffler in 1970) was collective overwhelm's past, upper-obsessed depression is its present, flattening and pressing us down (hence de-pression), driving us into compensatory flight (and other distractions from our suffering) until we crash. The future generated by this is not necessarily something to look forward to — one possibility is a technologically hyperadvanced yet densely regressive singularity (a superficially diverse but nonetheless homogenized and largely dehumanized humanity) for which amnesia's infectious anesthesia is the drug of choice. Prolonged depression can only be kept down for so long.

We can define collective overwhelm as a pandemic depressive state which combines excessive stimulation (both positive and negative), unrelenting pressure, massive information overload, and neither enough time nor sufficient suitable means for proper psychological digestion and integration. Such a state keeps us in energetic debt, borrowing from our reserve tanks until we're basically running on empty; we're behind in the payments, and we're paying far too high a price to keep up the pace to which we've committed ourselves.

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Fear (anxiety, angst, dread) and anger (irritation, frustration, rage) are collective overwhelm's predominant emotional correlates, operating on so much adrenaline that the only respite from them for far too many of us is eventual exhaustion and, more often than not, a tagalong apathy that features us being numb to our numbness.

Is collective overwhelm the darkly budding supernova of humankind's final gargantuan fossil fuels bash and feeding frenzy, a madly avalanching force peaking and choking on its own exhaust? Or is collective overwhelm a preparatory shake-up, a prelude to an unprecedented psychospiritual awakening? But whatever it is, it's here in the full-fledged metastasizing raw, running more and more of the show, generating more and more momentum, feeding itself on itself. Collective cancer. And its tipping point? Already passed.

It's extremely overwhelming. No wonder the reported incidence of depression has shot up 1000% in the last five or so decades; no wonder there's such widespread anxiety; no wonder there's such a massive intake of pharmaceutical medication; no wonder there's so much hell on earth, regardless of our advances. The time for denial is over. And so is the time for complaining.

What we have as a species feared is already here, looming ever larger, and it isn't just slouching toward Bethlehem; it's eating its way into and through just about all of us, its appetite is as endless as it's blind, and it apparently has no more interest in its own survival than does cancer. Its peaking, which may have already happened, promises one hell of a party, with not enough of a tomorrow for much more than a planetary hangover.

Yet all is not lost. In fact, there is much to be gained here, but only if we get off the overwhelm express, ceasing to let ourselves be fed or seduced or engulfed by it. Yes, it will continue to affect us, sometimes intensely so, but we do not have to let it occupy us. This begins with seeing it for what it is.

If we don't pay close attention to collective overwhelm, we become a host for it, a mere means through which it can seed and expand itself, in a kind of cellular and organismic imperialism. The good news is that if we pay close attention to collective overwhelm and name it for what it is, we can cease being a host for it. We may not have stopped the vehicle, but we are no longer riding in it. Its noise and smell and presence still impact us, but not to the same extent as before. We then cease to serve it, even if it is but a breath or two away.

Thus do we recognize it not only all around us, but also within us, at least as a potential, and do not let it get behind the wheel, while not demonizing or otherwise dehumanizing those who are still under its spell. We're then akin to a physician who doesn't waste away trying to change the minds of physicians who are rigidly loyal to the model of conventional medicine, but who instead creates an alternative model of physician-ship that presents a more integral way of practicing medicine, in a manner that skillfully invites other physicians to broaden their horizons, helping them to recognize the ways in which their current way of practicing medicine is overwhelming them.

To effectively deal with collective overwhelm, we need to make sure that we are not under its spell before we can deal with it on a larger scale. So how can we do this? First of all, as described above, we need to be sufficiently familiar with it so as to recognize and name it; this means not just having a conceptual grasp of it, but also having the capacity to sense its signs moment to moment. The cultivation of such a capacity requires an integral approach, through which our physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social dimensions are all engaged, worked with, and allowed to function as a whole.

Second, we need to do whatever helps to cut through depression, and do it full-out. No more pressing down of our pain, no more shoving our vitality down dead-end drains, no more energetic flattening. What's called for here is a fitting mix of the following: aerobic, heavy-sweat workouts; efficiently grounding, self-transcending meditative practices;

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emotional literacy and unblocking, and life-serving expression; intimacy training and deepening; self-exploration that does not waste any time connecting the dots — and not just intellectually — between our past and present; and an in-depth sharing of this with others, until such work is not just personal, but interpersonal, liberatingly relational.

And third, develop the endurance and patience to stay the course. What's required is not just a weekend of good work, nor a month of it, nor even a year of it. It's a life's work, and needs to be treated as such. Yes, there will be plateaus, but these should not be occasions for going no further, but rather for rest and rejuvenation, so that we might keep extending our edge, continuing to make haste slowly, letting all the damage awaken rather than merely embitter or fragment us.

Spiritual stamina is essential; don't postpone developing it. Go to the heart of collective overwhelm, beyond the fear and anger and numbness and shock, and there you'll find an enormous grief; take it in, expanding your heart as much as you have to, cutting channels for the grief to flow, to cut loose, to tear open your sky, until its cry is your cry, and what's below and beyond all the pain starts to shine forth, inviting us into what we never left but only dreamt we did.

This is the healing through which we die into a deeper life; this is the healing that calls to us through all that we are and all that we do. Yes, it may overwhelm us at times, but it's the kind of overwhelm that cleanses, purifies, heals, awakens. We might as well move toward it. At this point, what else is there to do?

# UPCOMING GROUPS

## *AN OVERVIEW*

### **The Situation:**

You've done some work on yourself and have opened and benefited (and want to maintain that openness), but find certain issues surfacing again and again — relationship difficulties, insecurities, emotional inhibitions, and so on. Now, more than ever, these are in your face — perhaps because you're now ready to fully face them — asking for your undivided attention. And, quite possibly, also for a suitable setting, featuring both highly skilled, cutting-edge guidance and the company of others who are as committed as you to healing and awakening.

### **The Context:**

You might think that these issues are blocking your path, but in reality they are *part* of your path, and need to be treated as such. All you have to do is stop turning away from them, stop trying to rise above them, and make the journey into them, with awareness, compassion, and curiosity. This is not necessarily easy — for if it was, you probably would have already done it — but it can be done, leaving you more whole, more alive and present, more functional in every aspect of your life, allowing you to live a life that is as practical as it is liberating.

### **Who It's For:**

My groups are for those who want to make wise use of their difficulties and who are ready to work through whatever is obstructing their well-being. Such work is especially suited for those whose longing to be truly free is stronger — or allowed to be more central — than their longing to continue distracting themselves from their suffering.

### **About the Work:**

My groups are small and intimate, being limited from 8 to 14 participants only (depending on the length of the group), so that there is enough

time for everyone to receive in-depth high quality attention.

The groups involve psychotherapy (in their focus on personal history), and also involve much more than psychotherapy, given their integral nature. Deep catharsis, psychodrama, and spiritual breakthroughs flow in and out of each other during the groups, in spontaneously apt ways.

All kinds of issues and concerns — from the deepest trauma to the seemingly trivial — are dealt with, through a dynamic, creative mix of psychotherapy, bodywork, spiritual disciplines, dreamwork, and group practices (improvised and otherwise).

The atmosphere is one of deep trust. The groups are safe places to let go of playing it safe, providing a crucible not only for personal healing, but also for awakening from all of our entrapping dreams. Participants learn, at the optimal pace, to become more intimate with *all* that they are — dark and light, high and low, shallow and deep, neurotic and transcendent, dying and undying.

The structuring of the groups is not preset, but instead arises in fitting accord with both group and individual needs. Each participant has an opportunity to work, in relevant detail and in sufficient depth, with his or her particular concerns, and not necessarily just once in the group.

In every group (except for the Men's groups), I am assisted by my wife and spiritual partner, Diane, whose presence, insight, and deep heart add immeasurably to each group.

“Robert is hands-down the best therapist I've ever worked with — in fact, I had given up on the “therapy game” until I read his fascinating book *Darkness Shining Wild* and was inspired to go to him for a session. Since then I've done much work with him, as have an increasing number of my friends — all of whom also give him rave reviews. In a few sessions I'd already done more substantial work on myself than in all my previous therapy combined (this is a comment I've often heard from others as well).

“Robert meets people where they are, and with a compassionate and insightful gaze finds what they need to take the next step in their

development. His work is deeply embodied and highly integral, working with all aspects of a client's being. While extremely practical and grounded in his approach, he is deeply aware of (and embodies) deeper spiritual aspects of life, and can guide people to those places in their own being if and when they are ready to do so.

“As effective and inspiring as he is in individual sessions, Robert truly shines in groupwork settings — reaching such deeply universal issues that the work of anyone in the group feels personally relevant to everyone present. The openness and love of a group of people who have just done a workshop with Robert is a joy to behold.”

— Arthur Gillard

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# A Deeper Life

## A FIVE DAY RESIDENTIAL RETREAT

### IN HAWAII

**January 25th-29th, 2008**

#### **Location:**

Yoga Oasis, a beautiful, secluded retreat center on the eastern tip of the Big Island of Hawaii, 5 miles from the village of Pahoia and 2 miles from the ocean. Located on 26 acres in lush rainforest, Yoga Oasis is a short drive to surfing, geo-thermal warm springs, tide pools, snorkeling, kayaking, natural underground saunas, and a black sand beach. For more information, visit **[www.YogaOasis.org](http://www.YogaOasis.org)** (check out the video showing the retreat). The Big Island itself, which you'll likely want to spend some time on after the group, is a marvelous place to explore and relax, with its otherworldly volcanic park and astonishingly varied terrain.

**Tuition, Lodging, & Meals:** US\$1895, or CAD\$2195 (includes GST).

Rooms will be assigned according to the date of registration; the earlier you register, the more room choices you'll have. We are only taking **14** participants. There are 2 spaces left.

# ATTRACTING YOUR BELOVED

## *A Group For Singles*

with Robert & Diane

**January 19th-20th, 2008, in White Rock, BC**

So many are yearning to be in a truly intimate relationship — a relationship that consistently enlivens, deepens, and awakens us — and wonder why they continue to find themselves either without a relationship or in relationships that don't really work for them (but that they keep *hoping* will work for them).

Many are having a relationship not with the other, but with the other's *potential*.

Some think that all that they have to do to attract their beloved is to wish and intend for that one to somehow show up, but wishing and intending is not enough, no matter how ardently we may believe in our power to manifest what we want.

Something more is needed, namely to face, really face, and work through whatever it is in us that's in the way of attracting our beloved. This means not only facing our doubts and self-defeating beliefs, but also facing and working through the *originating* forces that underlie such doubts and beliefs. We'll only have our heart's deepest desire when we cease fighting the preparatory fire.

That is, to attract our beloved, we cannot just sit back and think positively or do some affirmations — rather, we have to do some real work on ourselves, deep work, in order to be sufficiently *ready* for our beloved. Full alignment with what we long for — a relationship that actually works on every level — is necessary, and this requires that we not only clearly see our conditioning, but that we also cease letting it run us. And we don't do this by somehow getting rid of our conditioning (such eradication being but a New Age fantasy), but by relating *to* it instead of *from* it.

In this group, we'll look at what is in the way of us truly attracting our beloved, and then we'll work with it, directly and deeply, through an intuitive mix of

psychotherapy, bodywork, emotional release, Gestalt, and spiritual deepening practices.

All you need do is bring your longing for deep relational intimacy to the group. That longing, that primal need, is your truest guide to attracting your beloved. This group will teach you how to make wise use of such longing, so that you can get on track for meeting the one with whom you can be truly intimate.

**LOGISTICS:**

The group will be held at 16133 9th Avenue, Surrey, BC V4A 1A5, from 10:00 am to approximately 6:00 pm both days.

Tuition is \$595 CAD plus GST.

We are only taking **10** participants, so early registration is recommended.

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# Transformation Through Intimacy

## A GROUP IN BOSTON March 1st & 2nd

A group for anyone wanting to be in a truly fulfilling relationship, whether you are longing to find a partner who meets you on every level, or longing to have your current relationship be more deeply intimate, so that it serves as both a crucible and a sanctuary for healing, awakening, and well-being.

In this group, we'll explore and work, directly and deeply, with what's in the way of us attracting our beloved or taking our current relationship to a deeper level, realizing that in order to have a great relationship with another, we need to, among other things, develop intimacy with *all* that we are.

**LOGISTICS:**

The group will be held in Newton, MA (close to Boston).

Tuition is \$475 US.

We are only taking **14** participants, so early registration is recommended.

**For more information, contact Linda Marks  
at 617-965-7846 or at LSMHEART@aol.com**

# Breakthrough

**A WEEKEND GROUP in SEATTLE**

**Feb. 23rd-24th**

**Tuition:** CAD\$625. A nonrefundable deposit of \$300 is required. Full tuition due one month before group begins.

**Location:** Seattle TBA.

Maximum number of participants: **12.**

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# Breakthrough

**A THREE-DAY GROUP**

**in SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA**

**March 14th-16th**

**Tuition:** CAD\$795. A nonrefundable deposit of \$400 is required. Full tuition due one month before group begins.

**Location:** Franciscan Renewal Center, located on 25 acres of secluded desert grounds in the heart of the Scottsdale/Paradise Valley resort district of Arizona. For more details, visit [www.thecasa.org](http://www.thecasa.org).

Maximum number of participants: **14.**

# Breakthrough

## A THREE DAY RESIDENTIAL GROUP

in ENGLAND, April 4-6

**Tuition:** CAD\$775, which is approximately £395. A nonrefundable deposit of \$400 CAD is required.

**Food & Lodging:** \$295 CAD (or approx. £150).

**Location:** Bawdsey Manor, approximately an hour and a half from London. Built in the late 1890s, Bawdsey Manor is a large and beautiful house, set in 150 acres of historic parkland overlooking the Deben Estuary in Suffolk. The location is outstanding, close to the river and the sea, surrounded by classic Suffolk scenery — boats, birdlife, reedy marshes and tranquil pebble beaches. See [www.bawdseymanor.co.uk](http://www.bawdseymanor.co.uk).

Maximum number of participants: **14**.

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# Breakthrough

## A WEEKEND GROUP in BOULDER

April 26th-27th

**Tuition:** CAD\$675. A nonrefundable deposit of \$350 is required. Full tuition due one month before group begins.

**Location:** The Solstice Center, 302 Pearl Street, Boulder, Colorado.

Maximum number of participants: **13**.

# Man Unbound

## A WEEKEND GROUP FOR MEN

**JANUARY 12th-14th, in WHITE ROCK, BC**

**Man Unbound** is about doing what's necessary to reclaim our balls without armoring or numbing ourselves, becoming warriors who, finding a source of strength in their vulnerability, can take needed stands with both heart and full-blooded power.

To enter our true manhood, we need to stop turning away from the wounded boy in us, both protecting him and giving him what he needs to heal. We also need to become more emotionally literate, not turning our anger into aggression, nor our shame into guilt, nor our hurt into an excuse to shut down or get heady.

As we assume our real power, we must at the same time step more fully into our heart; otherwise, we won't be capable of real intimacy. No more hiding out in cognitive strongholds, no more avoidance of our raw strength, no more bypassing of our wounds, no more avoidance of our depths.

**Tuition:** \$595 CAD plus GST.

Maximum number of participants: **10**

“I have facilitated hundreds of groups for men, for professionals, for youth, for parents, and for couples over the last dozen years. I have attended dozens of workshops, learning about working with anger and many other aspects of counselling/therapy. I have practiced yoga and many types of meditation over the years, but have never attended anything that moved me in the manner that Robert's groups have. Each and every man in the three groups that I attended gained profound insights into their lives. Men from all over the U.S. and B.C. and Alberta attended. We all deeply gained from each other and Robert's skillful facilitation. For those who want to face their fear and gain from their experience, this is the way to go.”

— Alistair Moes

# UPCOMING TRAININGS

## Integral Psychotherapy Practicum 2008/2009 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM in the USA (TBA)

**An opportunity to learn (1) unique and exceptionally effective psychotherapeutic, spiritual, and bodywork skills; and (2) how to combine these in counselling work.**

The purpose of this training is to deepen the capacity of participants to effectively counsel others through a dynamic, intuitively structured approach that integrates body, mind, emotion, and spirit.

To this end, the training will blend deep work on oneself and equally deep work with others, in personal, social, and spiritual contexts. Healing will be the primary intention and activity. Approaches that are taught and practised will be held, as much as possible, in a perspective that transcends them.

You'll learn to not rely upon nor necessarily impose structure, but rather to let it naturally arise from your relationship and interaction with those you're counselling. Working this way weans us from the security — the eventually deadening security — of operating from behind a preset structure or methodology, leaving us in a position that requires an appropriately creative response from us. Such creativity keeps us fresh, open, and alert.

Throughout the training we will be working with body, mind, emotion, and spirit. Love, integrity, and presence will be the cornerstones of our practice. The training will take place over 6 three-day weekends, beginning May 2, 2008. Tuition is CAD\$5900 plus GST. A deposit of \$1000 is required. The training is limited to **10** participants. Previous work with Robert required.

**Note:** The Practicum is not just for therapists who want to learn a more intuitive, integral, and bodywork-including approach to their practice, nor just for those who are wanting to work in the counselling/psychotherapy

field, but also for those who want to participate with kindred spirits in a year of exceptionally deep personal work, during which they will learn skills that will serve them in every area of their life.

Graduates of previous practicums have not only found themselves at home with new skills (sufficient enough to begin working as an integral counsellor), but have also done work of such depth — and not just a few times, but many times — during the practicum that they invariably emerge more grounded, open, intuitive, and confident about both themselves and their ability to effectively guide others.

Much of the depth and quality of the work done has to do with being with a group of individuals who are all deeply committed to their own healing and awakening. In such an environment, there is not only more than enough safety and trust, but also a rare intimacy, generated by sharing such deep work both as a participant and as a counsellor-to-be.

### **Practicum Schedule**

May 2-4, July 25-27, September 5-7, October 17-19, December 5-7, 2008, and February 13-15, 2009.

“Over my 10 years as a counselor, I have consistently sought out additional training. Many times, I have felt information overload (the skills felt mechanical). My experience in Robert’s Practicum was different than that. The practicum was profoundly experiential and there was support to integrate the skills. I feel much more confident as a therapist, and overall in my ability to be in contact with others. It’s not just what Robert is teaching, but his strong presence that provides the opportunity for deep personal healing. Diane’s presence adds a sense of being sweetly held, and at the same time, she persistently nudges for more authenticity. It is through this experience that I have expanded my ability to provide a healing presence for others.”

— Deanne Cousins

## **O BREATHE US DEEP**

Composer and recording artist Diane Bardwell, along with Robert (her husband), has created O BREATHE US DEEP, featuring genre-transcending music that reveals, explores, and celebrates our deepest dimensions with passion and grace. Diane brings her remarkably rich voice to each song, singing with a full-blooded, heartfelt fluidity unburdened by sentimentality. Complementing her voice are the eloquent lyrics, based on poetry written by Robert. Some songs are devotional, some are raw; some soar, some sing and bleed; but all are presented in the spirit of awakening to who and what we truly are.

O BREATHE US DEEP is an eclectic mix of deeply spiritual (but not New Age nor conventionally religious) music that is as evocative as it is original. What connects its eight songs is not a particular style (a wide range of styles is used — from ballads to Celtic to Native American to hard-driving), but rather the poetically-articulated embracing and living of a deeper life, a life in which body, mind, emotions, and spirituality function as a natural integrated whole.

*“The music in each of these beautiful songs takes my breath away. The soul and emotional depth expressed through both the lyrics and Diane’s magical voice moves me to tears. I relate to every feeling in every song. Thank you for this amazing and heartfelt gift.”*

— Pamala Oslie, author of LOVE COLORS

(To hear sound clips, go to MUSIC at [www.RobertMasters.com](http://www.RobertMasters.com))

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***For more information regarding groups and trainings, or to register for them, contact [info@RobertMasters.com](mailto:info@RobertMasters.com).***

***All cheques, deposit and otherwise, should be mailed to Robert Masters, 16133 9th Avenue, Surrey, BC V4A 1A5.***

***Payments for groups (and my books and Diane’s new CD) can also be made by credit card online at our new Store; simply go to [www.RobertMasters.com](http://www.RobertMasters.com) and click on STORE.***

**To view previous newsletters, click on the *NEWSLETTER* button at [www.RobertMasters.com](http://www.RobertMasters.com).**

**To view Robert's blog, go to [www.RobertMasters.com](http://www.RobertMasters.com) and click on the *BLOG* button.**

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## **ROBERT'S 2008 WORK SCHEDULE**

January 12-13	Man Unbound: White Rock, BC
January 19-20	Attracting Your Beloved: White Rock, BC
January 25-29	A Deeper Life: Hawaii
February 16-17	TBA
February 23-24	Breakthrough: Seattle
March 1-2	Transformation Through Intimacy: Boston
March 7-9	TBA
March 14-16	Breakthrough: Phoenix
March 29-30	Breakthrough: Ojai/Santa Barbara
April 4-6	Breakthrough: England
April 26-27	Breakthrough: Boulder, Colorado
May 2-4	2008/2009 Integral Psych. Practicum: USA TBA

**For additional information,  
visit [www.RobertMasters.com](http://www.RobertMasters.com)**