

THE CRUCIBLE OF AWAKENING

Issue 57 January 2010

The New Year has begun! We have scheduled groups for Santa Barbara (January), Mexico City (February), Boulder (April), and Europe (May). Plus we will be offering far more individual and couple sessions, including in one or two day intensive formats.

Our online work (www.masterscenterfortransformation.com) is underway, with glitch-removal and tweaking going well. Once the site has been sufficiently reworked, we'll relaunch it, hopefully in a month or two.

THAW UNTIL RAW

(WHAT TO DO NOW THAT IT'S CRUNCH TIME)

The future is far from what it once was. Its once rosy, reassuringly distant horizons have become something far less pleasant, something too close for comfort, something right in our collective face. Tomorrow is closing in on us with accelerating intensity; and time itself seems more and more compressed, leaving us in one hell of a squeezeplay.

It is literally crunch time.

Having the precipice within sight takes the fun out of looking ahead; and having the mess we've made looming up right behind us takes the fun out of looking back. So as we back away from both the future and the past, we find ourselves squeezed into a very shaky present, shrinkwrapped and disoriented, with very little solid ground and an abundance of psychic distortion from all the freaking pressure.

No wonder so many are enamored of teachings that extol and promise ascension, upliftingness, consoling spiritual popups. No wonder so many

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are eager to find immunity from such dark uncertainty, such instability and relentless compression. It doesn't matter if the lemmings are thinking positive thoughts or asserting that they are all one as they go over the cliff. The future doesn't appear to have much of a future.

We've arrived at the edge and most of us know it, but all too many of us continue numbing ourselves to that knowing, reducing it to just more information, more cognitive cud, more data to scan and file and gather electronic dust in the unlit outbacks of our mind, even as we engage (however passively) in various potentially stimulating activities that numb us to our numbness, dumbing us down on our way up.

Like those who build their village on the slopes of a recently active volcano and get used to (or comfortably numb with) the fact that a massive eruption is never really that far away, we have gotten used to being at the edge (at least conceptually), making our stay there as comfortable as possible, with plenty of perks for the tiny minority who have the majority of the money.

But we can't buy our way out of this one, though we can deny it, lie about it, minimize and marginalize it, reframe and intellectualize it, projecting it way into the future, outfitting ourselves with the latest accessories, surgically reconstructing not just our dying flesh but also our horizons, dewrinkling and recoloring them, pushing them away from us, thereby creating the illusion that we are not really in danger, not really in crisis, since the edge appears to be so far away, somewhere past that oh so distant and dreamy horizon.

So what to do?

Denumb.

Cease distracting yourself from your pain. If doing so breaks your heart, you are on the right path, even if you are on your hands and knees. Let your heart break open enough to become whole, expanding to include

more and more, with no dilution of its depth and bare care. Befriend your grief, giving it full-blooded expression, letting it carry you into and through your deepest woundedness, not so as to get stuck there, but to allow a healing that brings you into the present with enough power and presence to shake up what needs shaking not only in your world, but the world at large.

Denumb. Thaw until you are raw. Cease numbing yourself to your numbness. Journey into and through that frozenness, that wasteland, that aching loneliness, recovering your capacity for transparency and integrity and deep feeling. You may feel as though you have awakened from a semi-narcotic dream populated by dysfunctional aspects of you.

Denumb. Feel the suddenly crisp, invigorating air swiftly and dynamically circulating through your whole body as you inhale as deeply as possible. Feel your belly loosening, widening, softening, energetically connecting your torso with your pelvis and legs. Feel your heart cracking and stretching open, radiating out more and more. Feel your entire body taking a stand, stepping forward with such electric presence that you can feel the micromovements generated by each step.

Tomorrow's jaws may be snapping at us, and yesterday's fears may be hounding us, but we've got a deeper today to give ourselves to, a today seeded with evolutionary imperatives that resonate with who and what we truly are.

Denumb. Thaw all the way. Let your heart remain raw. Stop expecting sex to make you feel better. Stop expecting anything to make you feel better. Such expectancy keeps us neurotically dependent, marooned from the kind of autonomy that plugs us into our true authority. Get in touch with your out-of-touchness. Get comfortable with your discomfort. Denumb, thaw, unravel the knots, don't just settle for positive thoughts. The stakes are very high, perhaps the highest they have ever been for us. So let us do what it takes, both together and alone. We are worth it.

EVERYTHING MATTERS

*Everything matters
Including dreams that say otherwise
Everything is closer than close
To being already shattered
Gone to infinite pieces
Yet still mattering*

*Let the words sink from sight
Until what they describe
Rises bright and bare
Parting the fastmixing ripples
The smallest of the small
Packed with the eternal vast
Each moment too real to last
But still mattering
Requiring for its birthing
All that ever was
Beyond every because*

*Everything matters. Nothing matters.
Since both are true
What will you do?
It depends where you stand
Now and Zen
Wordplay evaporating
Just like us
Seafoam swallowed
By an undying sun
Singing its lacy traces of song
Leaving nothing
But what's been here all along
Even as we put our shoulder to the wheel
Righting our vehicle as best we can*

EMBRACING THE DRAGON

An Online Experiential Course on Working With Personal & Collective Fear

INTRODUCTION

It would be an understatement to say that fear is probably one of our least favorite guests.

When it shows up — and it shows up for all of us — we usually are not in a position to greet it, let alone treat it like a guest. In fact, we are likely already trying to get away from it, even if we have to vacate our body.

But the more we try to escape or evict our fear, the stronger it gets, occupying more and more of us (especially as we occupy less and less of ourselves). Eventually, it may seem that it is not in us, but that we are in it. And leaving the premises doesn't work, either; our unwelcome guest goes where we go, regardless of how much we medicate, mute, or deny it.

This sounds like bad news, having the feeling of an unpleasant dream in which we are entrapped — but it is actually good news, if we will learn to work with fear rather than flee it. And this begins with turning toward it, and not just intellectually! The dragon is there for a very good reason, which we'll discover firsthand as we get acquainted with it.

This course is about facing, encountering, and, eventually, embracing the dragon. If we don't do so, the treasure it is guarding will remain out of our reach.

The dragon is not blocking our path; it is part of our path, an essential part. In this course, you will not only learn why this is so, but also how to embody and live from this perspective.

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You won't necessarily get rid of your fear, but you will shed your fear of it, so that it becomes a life-giving force in your life, literally fueling your entry into a deeper life.

We are, quite understandably, usually not inclined to turn toward our fear. And so this course may not initially appeal very much to us, at least if we are identified with the part of us that does not want to go near fear. But that part, that aspect of us, is something that we need to turn toward and get to know very well — as we'll do in this course — so that it does not get to run the show.

If you are truly looking for genuine transformation, you need look no further than your fear. In it there exists not only an abundance of trapped energy, but also the very testing and challenge that we need in order to live a deeper, more authentic life, as will be clarified in this course.

Fear — be it in the form of worry, anxiety, dread, or terror — pervades our culture, along with our “solutions” for it, which mostly only numb us to it. These are tough times for many of us, times in which it is easy to slip into fear, both personally and collectively.

So what are we to do with our fear? Giving in to it only further entraps us in it, and avoiding it simply keeps us in the shallows, overly absorbed in distraction. But fear itself is not the problem! What really matters is what we DO with our fear, be it personal or collective.

The key to working with fear is to get inside it, getting past its defining thoughts and our problematic orientation to it, knowing that if we really want the treasure, we are going to have to face the dragon. And how to get inside our fear? You'll find out how to do so in this course.

We'll begin with personal fear, and then bring in collective fear. Both have to be worked with if we are to enter a deeper life.

In Part I, we'll introduce the topic and start developing some intimacy with our fear, both on personal and collective levels.

In Part II, we'll take this further, learning how to navigate and work with our fear (again, on both personal and collective levels), and mine its riches.

And in Part III, we'll learn how to emerge from and transmute fear (be it personal or collective), and how to continue relating TO it instead of FROM it.

This will all be done through teaching material, experiential exercises (each guided session is an audio exercise), and fitting homework. And to reinforce and deepen this, there will be three teleconferences (including Q & A) with us, at the end of each module (check with us for dates).

Course Structure

INTRODUCTION

PART I: MEETING THE DRAGON

Excitement in Endarkened Drag: An Introduction to Fear

Guided Session #1: Facing Personal Fear

Collective Fear

Guided Session #2: Facing Collective Fear

Teleseminar 1

PART II: GETTING UNDER THE DRAGON'S SKIN

Getting Inside Personal fear

Guided Session #3: Working with Personal Fear

Getting Inside Collective Fear

Guided Session #4: Working with Collective Fear

Teleseminar 2

PART III: INTIMACY WITH THE DRAGON

Guided Session #5: Dealing with Our Resistance to Working with Fear

Guided Session #6: Fear & Excitement

Guided Session #7: Fear & Anger

Guided Session #8: Fear & Grief

Guided Session #9: Love Doesn't Mind Fear

Teleseminar 3

This course is only available to Premium Subscribers to the Masters Center for Transformation. To subscribe, go to:

<http://www.masterscenterfortransformation.com>

BREAKTHROUGH

January 23rd-24th in SANTA BARBARA, CA

A weekend of deep healing and awakening.

Cutting-edge psychotherapy, bodywork, and spiritual deepening all brought together to generate exceptionally effective work.

THIS GROUP IS LIMITED TO 12 PARTICIPANTS ONLY, so that everyone will have time to do in-depth work.

LOCATION & TIME: Psychesoma Center, Santa Barbara. 10 to 6 both days.

TUITION: US\$550. Nonrefundable deposit of US\$200 is required. Full tuition due by January 11, 2010.

BREAKTHROUGH

February 20th-21st in MEXICO CITY

A weekend of deep healing and awakening.

Cutting-edge psychotherapy, bodywork, and spiritual deepening all brought together to generate exceptionally effective work.

THIS GROUP IS LIMITED TO 12 PARTICIPANTS ONLY, so that everyone will have time to do in-depth work.

LOCATION & TIME: Mexico City TBA. 10 to 6 both days.

TUITION: US\$550. Nonrefundable deposit of US\$200 is required. Full tuition due by February 1, 2010.

BREAKTHROUGH

April 17th-18th in BOULDER

A weekend of deep healing and awakening.

Cutting-edge psychotherapy, bodywork, and spiritual deepening all brought together to generate exceptionally effective work.

THIS GROUP IS LIMITED TO 12 PARTICIPANTS ONLY, so that everyone will have time to do in-depth work.

LOCATION & TIME: Boulder TBA. 10 to 6 both days.

TUITION: US\$550. Nonrefundable deposit of US\$200 is required. Full tuition due by March 11, 2010.

BREAKTHROUGH

May 7th-9th in THE NETHERLANDS

Three full days of deep, integrally-informed healing and awakening.

Cutting-edge psychotherapy, bodywork, and spiritual deepening all brought together to generate exceptionally effective work.

THIS GROUP IS LIMITED TO 14 PARTICIPANTS ONLY, so that everyone will have time to do in-depth work.

LOCATION & TIME: Venwoude, a beautiful retreat center less than an hour from Amsterdam. See www.venwoude.org.

10am to 6pm all three days.

TUITION: US\$750 (approx. € 520). Nonrefundable deposit of US\$375 is required. Full tuition due by March 1, 2010.

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS: US\$265 (approx. €183 for shared dormitory), US\$325 (approx. € 228 for double room), US\$350 (approx. € 243 for single room). If you wish a single or double room, register as soon as possible. Pay online through the STORE page at <http://www.robertmasters.com>. Payment due by March 1, 2009.

NOTE:

Public talks/events are being planned for Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Stockholm. Some private sessions may also be available.

A group might also be held in Ireland later in May.

For more information, contact info@robertmasters.com.

MASTERS INTEGRATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTICUM

An opportunity to directly learn from a master psychotherapist and spiritual teacher (1) unique, exceptionally effective psychotherapeutic, spiritual, and bodywork/energywork skills; and (2) how to creatively and effectively integrate these in counseling and coaching work.

2010 Apprenticeship/Training Program

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, energetics, and spirit.

To this end, the training will blend exceptionally 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.

WE WILL ONLY BE TAKING TWELVE PARTICIPANTS.

NOTE: The Practicum is intended for those who want to learn and practice a deeply intuitive, integral, and bodywork-including approach to psychotherapy, and who at the same time also want to participate with kindred spirits in a year of exceptionally deep personal (and interpersonal and transpersonal) 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

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with new skills (sufficient enough to begin working as an integral counselor), 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 a setting, there's 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 counselor-to-be.

LOCATION & STRUCTURE:

The Practicum will take place over 5 four-day modules in White Rock, British Columbia (45 minutes south of Vancouver). One or two of the modules may be held in Boulder.

Each module will include individual and group work, plus facilitation by participants of each other's work (with fitting feedback and guidance from Robert and Diane).

After the training concludes, participants who have attended it in its entirety will receive a diploma indicating that they have completed a one-year training in Masters Integral Psychotherapy.

PREREQUISITE: Previous work with Robert and Diane.

TUITION: US\$7000. Nonrefundable deposit of \$1000 required. Lodging and meals will be extra. Contact info@robertmasters.com to arrange payment.

SCHEDULE:

2010: March 4-7, May TBA, July TBA, September 9-12, November 11-14

For more information regarding groups and trainings with Robert and Diane, contact info@RobertMasters.com.

To become a member of the Masters Center for Transformation, go to: <http://www.masterscenterfortransformation.com>

All checks (deposit & otherwise) should be mailed to Robert Masters, 16133 9th Avenue, Surrey, BC V4A 1A5.

Payments for groups and trainings (plus Robert's books and Diane's CD) can also be made online at our Store page; simply go to www.RobertMasters.com and click on STORE.

To view previous newsletters, click on the NEWSLETTER button at www.RobertMasters.com.

To view Robert's blog, go to www.RobertMasters.com and click on the BLOG button.

To get Robert's daily posts on Twitter, go to www.twitter.com and join, and then go to twitter.com/RobertMasters to "follow" Robert.

2010 Schedule

January 23-24: Breakthrough, Santa Barbara, CA

February 4-7: Practicum, Ashland, OR

April 8-11: Practicum, Boulder, CO

April 17-18: Breakthrough, Boulder, CO

May 7-9: Breakthrough, Amsterdam