

THE CRUCIBLE OF AWAKENING

Issue 37 May 2008

THE FUTURE IS NOT WHAT IT ONCE WAS

Tomorrow is closing in on us.

We're having one hell of a time finding the time to save time, doing our time under ever-increasing pressure, as tomorrow gnaws more and more deeply into our now.

We helped make tomorrow what it is, and tomorrow is making us, with unprecedented, accelerating intensity, generating collective overwhelm.

Yogi Berra reportedly once said, "The future ain't what it used to be." We may laugh at this (while maybe recalling another alleged Yogi-ism: "This is like déjà vu all over again"), perhaps appreciating the insight folded at oddly illuminating angles inside the loopy curve of Yogi's folk savvy, but perhaps not recognizing that his statement actually points to something that is going on both personally and culturally, and going on with avalanching intensity.

It's hard to get nostalgic for the future as it becomes increasingly less predictable. Novelty is great, innovation is wonderful, but not when they become overwhelming.

The growth of growth is not necessarily growthful.

As things continue to speed up, we get run down. And the more run down we get, the more dependent we become on whatever seems to

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elevate, lighten, or brighten us, so long as it's relatively easy to access; we just don't have enough juice for anything more demanding — that's how run down we've generally become, regardless of our hypomanic (or "up"-oriented) behavior. Over and over again we exhaust ourselves trying to get away from our exhaustion, choking on the fumes.

Our past is filling out and overoccupying our present (unless we have faced, illuminated, and *integrated* it), and our future is sucking us into itself so powerfully that much of the time we might as well be bugs a split second away from making contact with a 100 mph windshield, sudden technicolor Rorschach splats framed before a freeway that's mostly just one big exit ramp to a tomorrow that's arriving far too fast.

Such a crushing nightmare this is, surreal garbage its broken landscape and fear-saturated fogginess its horizon and accelerating madness its designated driver, but there's nothing like a monstrous nightmare to wake us up (or *shock* us awake) — plenty of dream lucidity (sleep-dreaming in which we recognize that we are dreaming) arises near the hellishly peaking intensity of the final stages of nightmares.

Unfortunately we usually employ such awakening to do no more than flee our nightmare and reenter the "waking" state, so that we might become as removed or disconnected as possible from the surfacing fear/horror that animated our nightmare — that is, we wake up in order to fall back asleep.

Thus do we, however unwittingly, invite in bigger or more intense awakening shocks — whatever jolts us out of our trances, cultural and otherwise. Next time you become aware that you're dreaming while in the midst of a nightmare or unpleasant dream, stay put, take fitting action (like turning around and facing whatever is pursuing you), and watch the dreamscape mutate and pulse with your every thought and intention. Ordinary fear tends to contract or dull us; but extraordinary fear can, if permitted, really awaken us, if we will but separate the stories it is telling us from the raw, adrenaline-infused reality of it.

We're in a planetary squeezeplay; we can't go back to first, and we cannot yet reach second. But we don't have to stay on the basepath; yes, we'll be called out, and we'll probably get castigated for breaking the rules, but we'll have enough distance from what is happening so as to be able to view it more clearly. And if we look more closely (without losing focus), we may start to see that we are in fact playing *every* position. We're on first and second, and we're also in between, and we're also pitching, hitting, and umpiring. It's crucial that we see this and see it more than just intellectually, and also that we don't stop here, merely taking refuge in our witnessing capacity.

We need to directly feel each position from the inside, each embodiment, each energetic configuring, each personalizing of all this, and we need to feel it right to our marrow. No dissociation. No intellectual removal. We need to recognize ourselves, among other things, as multidimensional sentient intersections of past, present, and future. Anything less will not permit us sufficient realization to do what must be done. We'd love to be told what must be done and then jump ahead to do it, but this cannot be accomplished if we are not sufficiently prepared for it. Such preparation — bringing into optimally functioning integration our physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions — is our core task, a labor of love that has to ask everything of us.

Without such work, we are headed for a future that has no future. And this, regardless of its appearance, is the good news.

We are not just being called to do the requisite inner, relational, and cultural work, but are being forced into it by our circumstances. Our back is up against the proverbial wall, and yes, it's far from an easy or comfortable position, but does it not have a remarkable capacity to awaken our spine and sharpen our focus and call forth the very best from us? Does it not force us to dig deep, to bring to the surface resources that we may have previously thought we didn't have? Not to justify or legitimize what's going on — but when there's this much shit, and we can sense the compost that it could be, what else is there to do other

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than pick up a shovel and use it? Blood, sweat, and tears, yes, and also the sobering joy of getting more aligned with what-really-matters.

More good news: We may not be able to stop or significantly alter certain things (like political stupidity or the public school system), but we can pump energy and attention and will into other things that are more life-giving (like alternative education or integral medicine or retreat facilities for deep healing). Trying to fix what's already mostly past any truly significant fixing uses up the very energy that is needed for saner approaches and practices. Instead of trying to convert a Tyrannosaurus to a vegetarian diet, put your attention and juice into what *is* doable, while taking care not to become a dinosaur's meal. Some policing may be necessary, but we don't have to overbudget for defence.

There's a radically different wheel to put our shoulder to, and its time has come.

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. So put your shoulder to the wheel, and get totally involved, regardless of your distractions; dig your feet in, pushing up through your ankles and knees and hips and belly, and breathe, breathe, breathe as fiercely and fully as you need to, freeing your voice and vision and love, committing all of your attention and energy to the task at hand, however small it might seem to be, realizing that there is no such thing as an insignificant act.

The wheel is just starting to turn; let us allow the raw energy of our fear and anger to fuel, rather than obstruct, that turning. The times demand it. Let us without delay attune ourselves as fully as possible to that demand, taking it as an invitation which we cannot refuse.

A DEEPER LIFE

A ONE-WEEK GROUP IN THAILAND

January 16th to 23rd, 2009

Deep, efficient, highly effective breakthrough work for those who want to make wise use of their difficulties, and who are ready to work through whatever is obstructing their liberation, in a setting of exceptional beauty.

Everything can serve our healing and awakening. Especially the difficult stuff. Going toward, into, and through whatever is troubling us, rather than just rising above or otherwise avoiding it, is a profoundly liberating journey. Along the way we learn, firsthand, to be intimate with all that we are: high and low, dark and light, dying and undying.

This group will be both a catalyst and sanctuary for such deeply transformative work, providing a safe place to let go of playing it safe. The work will be not be prestructured, but rather structured in fitting accord with group and individual needs and energies.

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

We will have plenty of time — seven days! — for very deep work, plus time for spiritual deepening, and activities like staying in a treehouse one evening or night, while below us wild elephants roam.

And the group will be small, being limited to **18** participants only, so that there will be enough time for everyone to receive in-depth attention.

LOCATION: Phuiyara Resort in Western Thailand. For pictures and more information, see **www.phuiyararesort.com**. An exceptionally beautiful wilderness setting, adjacent to a national reserve forest. Nearby are hot springs, bat caves, wild elephants, waterfalls, and much more.

TUITION, ACCOMMODATION, AND MEALS: CAD\$2600. A deposit of CAD\$500 is required, nonrefundable after September 1, 2008. The fee of \$2600 also includes transportation from Bangkok to Phuiyara Resort, plus an evening in a wild elephant elevated watching house.

We will be eating very well.

PAYMENT: In Canadian funds either by bank draft (payable to Robert Masters at 16133 9th Avenue, Surrey, BC V4A 1A5) or by credit card online through the STORE page at www.robertmasters.com. Full payment is due by November 1, 2008.

RECOMMENDED READING: Robert's latest books, DIVINE DYNAMITE (revised edition) and TRANSFORMATION THROUGH INTIMACY.

We're only taking 18 participants, so early registration is recommended.

Woman Unbound

A WEEKEND GROUP FOR WOMEN

MAY 17th-18th in WHITE ROCK, BC

with Diane & Robert

An increase in power does *not* have to mean a decrease in femininity.

Being fully alive — passionately and deeply embodied — is every woman's birthright. Such aliveness requires embodying real power, so that what needs to be done and said gets done with maximum effectiveness.

But many women, however loving they may be, don't have full access to their true power and voice, and as a result have not sufficiently represented themselves, attracting situations and relationships that have only reinforced their inability to truly speak up and stand up for themselves.

This group is about taking back the power that originally was given away in order to survive difficult conditions, and taking it back not just mentally, but also physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Doing so involves expressing, fully expressing, what's been held back because of fear, insecurity, and social pressures. Sometimes this is gentle and flowing, and other times it is necessarily fierce – whatever helps the passion flow.

Part of what is needed is a reclaiming of anger (plus a clear differentiation between anger and aggression), so that it becomes a resource, a guardian of boundaries, a potent catalyst for needed change.

This group will involve deep letting go and opening, through a creative mix of psychotherapy, bodywork, sound-healing, group exercises, and spiritual deepening practices. The maximum number of participants will be 10.

Tuition: CDN\$595 plus GST. Nonrefundable deposit of \$200 required.

Man Unbound

A WEEKEND GROUP FOR MEN

MAY 24th-25th, 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. Nonrefundable deposit of \$200 required.

Maximum number of participants: **10**

FREEDOM THROUGH INTIMACY

A Transformational Intensive For Couples

JUNE 7th-8th, in ASHLAND, OREGON

Intimate relationship has immense transformational possibility, especially when we approach its difficulties as opportunities instead of as problems. Opportunities for what? To know ourselves more deeply, to love and live more fully, to become intimate with *all* that we are — in short, to be freed from our suffering.

This group is for couples who want a more conscious, loving, and liberating relationship with each other, and are ready to cut through whatever's in the way.

Even if you already have a good relationship, consider coming, and taking your relationship from good to great to what it *really* can be.

Individual work will be given as much emphasis as couples work, using a spontaneously structured approach that creatively mixes psychotherapy, bodywork, dream exploration, spiritual practices, and dyadic deepenings.

LOCATION: Dolphin House, 9820 Wagner Creek Road, Ashland.

TUITION & LOGISTICS: 10am to 6pm both days. Limited to **6** couples only. A special reduced rate of \$475 per person (or \$950 per couple). A nonrefundable deposit of \$300 is required from each couple.

For more info, contact Eric Grace at 541-292-3895.

BREAKTHROUGH

DEEP HEALING & AWAKENING

JUNE 13th-15th, in ASHLAND, OREGON

Deep, efficient, highly effective breakthrough work for those who want to make wise use of their difficulties, and who are ready to work through whatever is obstructing their liberation.

LOCATION: Dolphin House, 9820 Wagner Creek Road, Ashland.

TUITION & LOGISTICS: A special reduced rate of \$475. A nonrefundable deposit of \$200 is required. The group goes from 4pm to 7:30pm Friday, 10am to 6pm Saturday & Sunday. Limited to **14 participants only**.

For more info, contact Eric Grace at 541-292-3895.

NOTE: We will be doing a Friday June 6th evening event (including a talk, some Q & A, maybe some work, plus music by Diane and a booksigning by me), and also a women's evening group and a men's evening group while we are in Ashland. Private sessions may also be available. For more information, contact Eric at 541-292-3895.

BREAKTHROUGH

DEEP HEALING & AWAKENING

JUNE 21st-22nd, in BOSTON

Deep, efficient, highly effective breakthrough work for those who want to make wise use of their difficulties, and who are ready to work through whatever is obstructing their liberation.

LOCATION: Lighten-Up Wellness, 129 North Main Street, Mansfield, MA (30 minutes south of Boston). The group will begin Saturday, June 21st at 10am and end Sunday, June 22nd at approximately 5:30pm.

TUITION & LOGISTICS: A special reduced rate of \$495 CAD. A nonrefundable deposit of \$250 CAD is required. Limited to **12 participants only**.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

As a result of the response to our work over the past month in England and Boulder, Colorado, we are planning not only a practicum in England, but also one in the USA.

Intuitive Integral Psychotherapy Practicum

2008/2009 UNITED STATES APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

**5 Four-Day Modules, 3 or 4 to be held in
Boulder, Colorado, and the other(s) in
Santa Barbara or Maui**

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 5 four-day weekends. Tuition CAD\$6800. A nonrefundable deposit of \$1000 is required. The training is limited to **12** 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 (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 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 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 counsellor-to-be.

Practicum Schedule

To be determined once 12 participants have registered. Mid-September is looking like a possible starting point.

Intuitive Integral Psychotherapy Practicum 2008/2009 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM in England

The training will take place over 4 five-day modules. Tuition £4000. A nonrefundable deposit of £500 is required. The training is limited to **12** participants. Previous work with Robert required.

The training will begin as soon as there are 12 registered participants. It seems likely that we will begin October 9th-13th.

For more information regarding groups and trainings, or to register for them, contact 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 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.

2008 WORK SCHEDULE

April 4-6	Breakthrough: England (near London)
April 8, 9, 10	Evening events in Brighton and London
April 12-13	Individual sessions in London
April 24	Men's Evening event in Boulder, Colorado
April 25	Evening event in Boulder, Colorado
April 26-27	Breakthrough: Boulder, Colorado
April 28	Women's Evening event in Boulder, Colorado
May 17-18	Woman Unbound: White Rock, BC
May 24-25	Man Unbound: White Rock, BC
June 6	Evening event in Ashland, Oregon
June 7-8	Freedom Through Intimacy: Ashland, Oregon
June TBA	Men's Evening Event, Ashland, Oregon
June TBA	Women's Evening Event, Ashland, Oregon
June 13-15	Breakthrough: Ashland, Oregon
June 20	Evening Event in Boston
June 21-22	Breakthrough: Boston
July 11	Evening event in Sacramento
July 12-13	Breakthrough: Sacramento