

# THE CRUCIBLE OF AWAKENING

**Issue 41 September 2008**

## ***ONLINE COMMUNITY NEWS***

There are now two online communities centered around my work and writings. I encourage you to join both, whether your inclination is simply to drop in and check out the discussions or to add your voice to what's going on. In either case, you are welcome to join!

**FACEBOOK** has a month-old group for people who have worked with me and/or who are interested in my work/writings to connect and discuss my work/writing or anything related to it. Once a week (usually Monday or Tuesday) I answer questions from group members, which are sent to me from the group administrator, Arthur Gillard.

If you're not already a member of Facebook, it is easy to join at:

**<http://www.facebook.com>**.

Once you have joined, simply type "Robert Augustus Masters" in the Search box and then click to join the group. Please feel free to invite anyone you know who might be interested in my work and/or writing.

**GAIA**, a social networking site (which is free to join), now has a newly formed Robert Augustus Masters discussion group (just two-days old!), featuring the same intention and invitation (and weekly Q&A) as my Facebook group. The online culture of Gaia is very warm and inviting, and its powerful forum software is perfectly suited for meeting, discussing, and sharing with others who are interested in authenticity, healing, transformation, and Awakening.

Here's a description of Gaia from their Mission statement:

"Our vision is of a world where each of us is supported in realizing our highest selves, discovering our own individual gifts and strengths, and

each contributing, in our own way, to a harmonious, diverse, creative, and collaborative future.

“And so, we started this community with the intent of creating a space where people could come not just to remind each other to continue to follow our hearts, but to practice it. Our dream is for Gaia Community to be a sanctuary for individuals around the world who’ve committed to follow their deepest calling, and who will support each other in that commitment — offering encouragement and enthusiasm for each unique path.”

You don’t need to be a member of Gaia to see the posts there — just go to **[http://pods.gaia.com/robert\\_augustus\\_masters](http://pods.gaia.com/robert_augustus_masters)**.

But if you would like to participate in the discussions, you can join Gaia by going to: **<http://www.gaia.com/apply>**, or email Arthur Gillard ([aqalicious@yahoo.com](mailto:aqalicious@yahoo.com)), the cultivator of the site, who will send you an invitation.

The format of my Gaia group makes it very easy to navigate through, with everything organized into 7 main categories: *Introduce Yourself; Ask Robert; Announcements & Feedback; Doing the Work; Robert’s Writings; Other Influences, Teachings, Lessons, & Exemplars; and Potpourri for the Soul.*

Hope to hear from you, whether via Facebook or Gaia (or otherwise); feel free to jump in at any point. Don’t underestimate the importance and relevance of your voice! There are already 37 discussion topics posted on my Facebook group, among which you very likely will find some things that stir your interest and possibly catalyze some kind of shared response from you.

Thanks for your consideration.

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**T**his month’s essay is on women’s anger; let me know how you like it. There’s much more to say on the topic, but this hopefully will serve as a starting point for further discussion and elaboration. (Note: The initial poem isn’t an exact fit with the rest of the essay, but it felt better to me to include rather to exclude it.)

## ON WOMEN'S ANGER

*Plantation whips slicing open the cottonpicking day  
Laying crimson hieroglyphics across dark skin  
She bends, taking to heart every cry heard or not  
She bends, her deeper tears seen by none  
She bends, knowing her labor has just begun*

*Plantation whips hissing through the sweating air  
Trying to lash the life out of an unseen shadow  
She weeps, seeing her children crushed low  
She weeps, seeing her man gelded every day  
She weeps, feeling hate eating her heart away*

*Plantation whips laying down some stars and stripes  
On those who just don't know their place  
And also on those that do, just in case  
She watches, drowning her rage in silent grief  
She watches, seeing her man cut low and swinging high  
She watches, doing her time beneath a burning sky*

*Africa rises in her dreams, wild and green  
Bleeding and breaking under a smoky sun  
Jammed into slaveships headed for the land of the free  
A pain beyond pain dulled by nightmare chains  
Plantation whips falling in a long hard dark rain  
She waits, seeing her unborn grandchildren  
Playing on some far distant day  
She waits, knowing she can be but soil for their breakaway  
She waits, getting wiser with her dying  
She waits, singing O my children, rise up from me  
Rise, rise up from me, remember me  
I hold your history, I hear your song  
I rise with you, my anger fire and light, flaming strong*

The disempowerment of women has, among other things, meant the suppression and devaluation of their anger. Where male anger, despite anger's supposedly "lower" origins, has in many circumstances — war,

contact sports, vigilante heroics — often been viewed as healthy, morally justified, righteously ass-kicking, or even ennobling, female anger has generally been viewed much less favorably, as illustrated by our having less flattering labels for angry women than angry men. He's hotheaded, pissed off, assertive, letting off some steam, taking care of business, etcetera; she's a bitch.

Thus have anger-in or anger-suppressing practices tended to be more expected of women than of men. Anger is culturally held as far less legitimate an expression for women than for men. The result is that for many women anger is unavailable as a *resource*. And a woman marooned from her own anger is very likely going to have a much harder time maintaining healthy boundaries; she will tend to feel more helpless, more fearful, more prone to despair and depression.

When her anger cannot be depressed — kept or *pressed* down — its energies may be routed into resentment or bitterness. And what a pity this is, given that anger can be, whatever its degree of fieriness, a form of caring. In my work I have often seen a woman's anger — full-out clean rage, free of sarcasm, blaming, and shaming — cut through the cognitive muddling and emotional dissociation of her partner or others, waking them up to what they're actually doing.

For anger actually to be a resource in relationship requires not only that it be permitted its *innate vulnerability*, but that it also be valued, and valued equally, in both women and men. So long as female anger is treated as something less worthy of respect than male anger, relational approaches to anger will remain superficial or unproductive. The creation of empowering relational contexts for anger presupposes both familiarity with cultural attitudes toward female anger, plus a deep recognition of anger — including openly expressed anger — as legitimate, useful, and necessary in building and maintaining better connection in relationships.

As female anger emerges culturally — and it has been a relatively recent emergence — it is crucial that it not be trivialized, negated, geisha'ed away, or misrepresented. Films like *Misery* and *Fatal Attraction*, by

dramatizing the pathological extremes of female anger, may — however inadvertently — work against a more positive reception of female anger (which of course doesn't mean that films should only show “clean” female anger!). For example, women watching *Fatal Attraction* might well disown their own anger through siding with the “good” (read: non-raging) woman in the film.

Yet a woman expressing non-abusive rage is no murderess, psycho, or Medusa gone into isolation, but rather a potent awakener, the power of which is present to varying degrees in “everyday” women whose anger is significantly infused with caring. *Wrathful compassion*. Anger and love are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Anger can be full-blooded, fierce, and fiery, and still be rooted in compassion. *Heart-anger*.

Just because many men fear openly expressed female anger — retreating like frantic sperm from the suddenly engulfing power of the ovum— is not reason enough to slander or suppress it. A woman who is out of touch with her anger is a woman who cannot stand her ground or give full voice to her needs, a woman who cannot sufficiently protect the little girl in her, a woman whose love lacks the guts needed to manifest real integrity.

*Your rage storms the breath  
empties the stands  
awakens the room  
blasts through the walls  
A full-bellied heartfist  
petals exploding all around  
your sobbing breast  
drawing from this suddenly breathing room  
tears and deeper tears  
greening overgrazed eyes  
and rejected hollows  
Your eyes no longer just yours but also ours  
weeping pools of maternal fury  
Your voice a summons to wake up  
Now!*

## The Crucible of Awakening

*Not just release this rage  
but sacred fire and baptism  
cutting through  
the paradox-stained debris of exploded rationality  
Your voice burning bright  
burning through all the catharsis  
to the us beyond us  
Silence moves in non, takes over  
Your whole body smiling so sweet and so deep  
your tender immensity cradling all  
inviting us into truer lands  
where anger and love go hand in hand*

Many women, however loving they may be, do not have full access to their true voice and power, 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.

Taking back the power that originally was given away in order to survive difficult conditions involves expressing, fully expressing, what has 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.

An increase in anger does not necessarily mean a decrease in femininity! And it also does not necessarily mean a decrease in love and intimacy.

The fiery intensity at the heart of women's (and men's!) anger asks not for smothering, spiritual rehabilitation, psychological marginalization, nor mere discharge, but rather for a mindful embrace that does not necessarily require any dilution of passion, any lowering of the heat, nor any muting of the essential voice in the flames.

# FREEDOM THROUGH INTIMACY

## A Transformational Intensive For Couples

**SEPTEMBER 13th-14th in BOULDER**

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:** Boulder Center for Integral Living, 2819 Broadway Street.

**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. **One space left.**

**NOTE: EVENING TALK/EVENT: Friday Sept. 12th at 7:30pm at the Boulder Center for Integral Living, 2819 Broadway.**

**NOTE: Private sessions will be available in Boulder September 16th-18th. Both Robert and Diane will be present at each session. To schedule sessions, contact [info@robertmasters.com](mailto:info@robertmasters.com).**

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# ***BREAKTHROUGH***

## **DEEP HEALING & AWAKENING**

**SEPTEMBER 20th-21st in BOULDER**

## The Crucible of Awakening

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:** Solstice Center, 302 Pearl Street. The group will begin Saturday, Sept. 20th at 10am and end Sunday, Sept. 21st at approximately 5:30pm.

**TUITION & LOGISTICS:** CAD\$550. A nonrefundable deposit of \$250 CAD is required. Limited to **12 participants only**.

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# HEALING & INTEGRATION

## A THREE-DAY GROUP IN ENGLAND

**October 3rd-5th, 2008**

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.

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 deeply 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.

And the group will be small, being limited to **14** participants only, so that there

will be enough time for everyone to receive in-depth attention.

**LOCATION:** Integral College, 2 Wilbury Crescent, Brighton, UK BN3 6FL

**TUITION:** CAD \$750 (or approx. £380). A deposit of CAD \$375 is required, nonrefundable after August 1, 2008. Accommodation and meals are not included. **There is one space left.**

**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 <http://www.robertmasters.com>.

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# Man Unbound

## A GROUP FOR MEN IN ENGLAND

**OCTOBER 11th-12th, 2008**

**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:** CAD \$595 (or approx. £300). A deposit of CAD \$250 (or approx. £125) is required, nonrefundable after August 8, 2008. Accommodation and meals are not included.

**PAYMENT:** In Canadian funds either by bank draft (payable to Robert Masters

## The Crucible of Awakening

at 16133 9th Avenue, Surrey, BC V4A 1A5) or by credit card online through the STORE page at <http://www.robertmasters.com>. Full payment is due by September 1, 2008.

**LOCATION:** Brighton, TBA

Maximum number of participants: **12**

“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 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

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# ***BREAKTHROUGH***

## **DEEP HEALING & AWAKENING**

### **NOVEMBER 7th-8th in LOS ANGELES**

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:** Santa Monica Center for Integral Living, 1001A Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90401. The group will begin Friday November 7th at 10am and end Saturday November 8th at approximately 5:30pm.

**TUITION & LOGISTICS:** CAD\$650. A nonrefundable deposit of \$250 CAD is required. Limited to **12 participants only**.

For more information, contact Kees at [kees@smintegral.org](mailto:kees@smintegral.org).

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

# Masters Integral Psychotherapy Practicum

## 2008/2009 USA

### APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

#### 5 Four-Day Modules in Ashland/Boulder

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 in great depth with body, mind, emotion, and spirit. Love, integrity, and presence will be the cornerstones of our practice. **We will only be taking 12 participants. There are 4 spaces left.**

**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.

### **LOCATION & STRUCTURE:**

The Practicum will take place over 5 four-day modules. Some of the modules will be held in Ashland, Oregon, and some in Boulder, Colorado.

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

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 with Robert Augustus Masters.

**PREREQUISITE:** Previous work with Robert.

**TUITION:** CAD\$6800. A nonrefundable deposit of CAD\$1000 is required. Half of the tuition is due at the start of the first module; the rest is due by

the start of the third module (unless other arrangements have been made with us). Lodging and meals will be extra. Contact [info@robertmasters.com](mailto:info@robertmasters.com) to arrange payment.

**SCHEDULE:**

November 13-16, January 8-11, March 12-15, May 28-31, July 23-26. If we begin in January (which will happen if we don't have 12 fully committed participants by November), our final module will be September 10-13.

**There is considerable interest in the Practicum (only 4 spaces left). If you are interested, please contact Robert.**

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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.***

## **2008 Remaining Work Schedule**

- September 12 Evening Event in Boulder, CO  
September 13-14 Freedom Through Intimacy: Boulder, CO  
September 16-18 Private sessions in Boulder, CO  
September 18 Man Unbound Evening Group: Boulder, CO  
September 20-21 Breakthrough: Boulder, CO  
October 3-5 Healing & Integration: Brighton, UK  
October 7-9 Private sessions in Brighton or London, UK  
October 11-12 Man Unbound: Brighton or London, UK  
October 25-26 Women's Intensive: White Rock, BC  
November 7-8 Breakthrough: Los Angeles  
November 13-16 Integral Psychotherapy Practicum: TBA  
November 26-30 Bodywork/Energywork Practicum: White Rock