



## OPEN THE DOORS WORKSHOP

### Overview

Through this workshop we intend to open doors for each participant that have not been opened before. We invite each participant to start afresh with each piece of writing, to find new ways through the thicket of the self and welter of the world.

Over the course of decades we have taught many dozens of workshops and have developed a sense, both practical and intuitive, about the value of using prompts as a springboard into writing. The notion is Buddhist and reminiscent of koans: be in the moment and respond to what occurs in the moment. There is nothing to plan ahead about and very definitely nothing to worry about.

Each day of workshop, we present at least two prompts. After a discussion that speaks to what is occurring in the piece, participants use that prompt as a jumping-off point. Then, after a timed writing period, the group reconvenes to read aloud what they've written and discuss how their piece relates to the prompt.

The workshop revolves around trust: trusting us as teachers and trusting yourself to respond. We think responsiveness is a great gift. It is a hallmark of our being alive. For my part, I started teaching at the Frost Place in 1992 and before that was teaching undergrads and high school students. I came to realize that prompts offer a chance to appreciate and engage with some nugget of art along with a chance to make something more of it, something personal. The prompts are a spur to writing but also a chance to further the conversation every writer needs to have *about* other writers and *with* other writers.

There will be, over the course of the workshop, plenty of time to revise pieces. If a participant gets caught up with a piece of his or her writing and wants to stay with it, that's fine. The intention is to respect the opening of those inner doors. Although what comes up may be intense, there is no emotional agenda. The path each person takes in each piece is utterly up to the person.

Again, for my part, I have offered similar generative workshops over the years at various locales but can now do it in my own home, where my own library is present. My wife and I live in a cozy cottage of a house, and the group will meet, as weather and inclination dictate, in our living room, dining room, patio, and front porch. Our house is near downtown Montpelier so it's a very short walk from places to stay, such as the Montpelier Inn, Betsy's B & B, and the Capitol Plaza Hotel. Montpelier has many restaurants, an art cinema, a bar with over twenty craft beers on tap, independent bookstores, and a number of bakeries and cafes. There is plenty of hiking, kayaking, and swimming nearby. It's a lovely place to spend a week or a weekend.

—Baron Wormser

## What participants have said about the *Open the Doors* workshops

“Thank you for teaching me to marry content with style and sing my song on the page. You and Kim have changed my life!”

“It was unlike any workshop I’ve been in. It was relaxed and convivial, and you both were so welcoming to us and to our work and at the same time attentive in any way in which we might make the pieces we wrote better and stronger. It seemed almost uncanny, how you understood what we were doing, sometimes better than we understood it ourselves.”

“I left the front porch of Baron’s lovely and historic home with a full notebook and dozens of ways to go with new pieces. This is a fertile and exciting week for a poet in any stage of the creative life.”

“A meta-awareness of stylistic and formal possibility effervesces from your method, clearly challenging us to reach and feel and write beyond our habitual reading for content and voice. BRAVO! You have revolutionized the workshop model.”

## Logistics

The cost for a three-day fiction or nonfiction workshop is \$600. The cost for a five-day poetry workshop is \$1,000. Doors open at 9:00 for breakfast; workshop begins at 9:30; and the day runs to 3:30. Participants can sit and write in our house and on the grounds or porch or sit in a nearby café and write there. We’ll be around all day to talk individually with each participant. Participation is limited to six people. These workshops are geared for writers at any level. The goal is to offer participants opportunities to grow as writers and bear witness to others’ growth. Each day will unfold in a slightly different way because the prompts and the writing that the prompts generate inevitably take us down intriguing paths.

## Dates / Instructors

**Fiction workshop** with Baron Wormser & Rachel Basch, June 11 through June 13, 2016. Rachel Basch, a novelist, has been teaching fiction and nonfiction on the graduate and undergraduate level for twenty-eight years. In addition to her university teaching, she’s been leading writing workshops out of her home since 2004.

**Poetry workshops** with Baron Wormser, June 26-30, 2016 and August 15-19, 2016. Baron Wormser is the co-author of two books about teaching poetry, along with nine books of poetry, a memoir, a novel, and a book of short stories. He has led generative workshops for decades.

**Nonfiction workshop** with Baron Wormser & Kim Dana Kupperman, July 29 through July 31, 2016. Kim Dana Kupperman is an award-winning essayist who has worked as an editor, writer, and teacher for over thirty years. Open the Doors is one of the most exciting and provocative creative-writing teaching experiences she has ever had.

## For more information

- ⇒ **For information**, or to register, please call Baron Wormser at 802.223.2622 or email him at [baronwormser@gmail.com](mailto:baronwormser@gmail.com)
- ⇒ **For more information about instructors:**
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