



Success Coaching For New Brothers



Grand Lodge State of New York

The Mission of the NorthStar Project

*We, the Freemasons of New York: In our quest to better ourselves in virtue, intellect, wisdom and historical understanding. To explore a curiosity for mystery that all men hold, to promote the cause of liberty for all mankind, to guide other men into manhood through an initiatic ritual and tradition, to strengthen our fraternal bonds and our compassion for the world...Has established **The NorthStar Project** as a “light added to light” thereby striving to leave the world enriched by living a Masonic life dedicated to Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.*

Why Success Coaching?

Success Coaching has but one objective-to teach the **fundamentals** of Freemasonry to every Candidate so he may become a Master Mason in fact as well as in name. Please note particularly the word “*fundamentals*”. This alludes to the elements that are basic to our Craft, i.e., the principles and practices which every Craftsman should be familiar if he is to bear with honor the proud title of Master Mason. It seeks to have him understand the Masonic way of life, that he may properly conduct himself as a Mason before his Brethren and before the world at large.

This Program supports the traditional maxim that the Fraternity has the inherent right to insist that each of its votaries shall be well grounded in his Masonic duties and responsibilities. It embraces the equally important idea that he should understand clearly the Fraternity’s obligation to him.

The **NorthStar** Project is a working tool with the goal of making every new Brother a lifetime active worker in the quarries of Freemasonry. It could also be viewed as an overall Masonic Education program for each Lodge. While it is specifically for the use of the Success Coaches who will be working with the Candidates, every Freemason could profit from reading this guide.

Having passed through the **Candidate Selection Process** prior to the submission, acceptance and favorable balloting upon his petition, the new Brother will by definition have attained a basic understanding of the principles of the Craft as well as its purpose. It was based on this knowledge that he gained permission to petition the Lodge.

Masonic Education is critical for the advancement of every Mason and is a lifelong journey. It goes to the very heart of the answer to a critical question posed to all of us. “*Where were you first prepared to be made a Mason?*” Masonic knowledge beyond that primary point is crucial. No program can provide everything there is to know concerning the Craft.

It is important for the Success Coach to instill within each new Brother a burning passion to learn, leading to More Light in Masonry. The Candidate who petitions our Fraternity is entitled to know his heritage. This includes learning the Craft’s history, purpose, operation, symbolism, law, philosophy, obligations and ideals.

Think of each new Brother as an immigrant to a new country. He wants to learn the language, customs, and nuances of the land he has entered in order to fit in with the people who are already there. He wants to be a part of things. He wants to be accepted and contribute to his new land. The Success Coach contributes his knowledge and inspiration to the new Brother and helps him acclimate to his new environment. The Success Coach becomes the “faithful friend” to the new Mason. He will stand by the Brother throughout his degrees and well beyond them. Success Coaching kicks into **high gear** when the

degree work is *done*. That is when the cement is still wet and much can be done to bring the Brother to whatever destination his journey in Masonry will take him.

The **NorthStar Project** outlines a method by which this knowledge will be communicated. It is hoped that the proper use of Success Coaching will cause the new Brother to have a greater appreciation of Freemasonry, the beauty of the ritual delivered and the meaning behind its soaring words. The goal for the Brother is to see those words and meanings acted out in real life, thus becoming an informed Mason and as such, a better Mason and a devoted active member. The Success Coach becomes an important factor in developing a competent member and a potential leader to sustain Freemasonry throughout the coming ages.

How Success Coaching Works

Success Coaching begins with the **Candidate Selection Process** which has been described in great detail in the preceding sections of this document. Success Coaching is based upon the simple truism that an average man will learn more quickly and more effectively when he receives individual and personal attention from an instructor. It also assumes that the person being instructed will be influenced by the enthusiasm, passion and knowledge of the Success Coach. One need not go beyond the words of the Middle Chamber Lecture to prove the point. The Success Coach revitalizes the type of learning that occurs when *“the attentive ear receives the sound from the instructive tongue.”* We are reminded that when Success Coaching occurs in this manner, we ensure that *“through a succession of ages are transmitted unimpaired the Tenets of our Institution.”*

Who would make an effective Success Coach?

Success Coaches share these common attributes:

- Has the time and commitment to truly help, aid and assist the Candidate assigned to them.
- Provides guidance and support aimed in a positive direction.
- Has a positive attitude- The kind of Mason who asks the question, *“What’s good about this?”*
- Believe that enthusiasm is a force multiplier.
- Has a track record of being a good team player in the Lodge.
- Is an active listener who tailors his approach to the Candidate’s needs.
- Is well informed about the Craft and the workings of the Lodge.
- Has a true desire to help another man grow in Freemasonry.
- Allows open and honest discussion and does not cut off the conversation if a topic makes him feel uncomfortable.
- Success Coaches use their experiences as a beacon of wisdom, but always make past references fit the current situations.
- The best coaches are the best listeners. Those coaches learn who their players are and what motivates them to do their best.
- These are the Brothers who can find the “good news” in any situation.
- They do not use Success Coaching as a pulpit to tell war stories.

The NorthStar Project places the responsibility for adequate Candidate instruction squarely upon the Lodge, where it rightfully belongs. **This is your Success Coaching program and it is your Lodge’s responsibility to build it into a valuable tool.**

The Lodge System of Masonic Education (LSOME)

It cannot be emphasized enough that the Success Coaching program uses as its basic framework the four LSOME videos and booklet together with the course materials contained in this program for the three Degrees. Lodges may use any other programs or materials as needed. Therefore, the Candidate must have an opportunity to study each booklet before its contents are discussed with his Success Coach. For greater effectiveness, the Candidate should study each section without delay. The Success Coach and the Candidate will further discuss these topics in greater detail at the next meeting. It therefore follows that the Success Coach should be very knowledgeable about all materials that are part of this program. You cannot teach what you do not know and understand.

The NorthStar Project in conjunction with the LSOME contains answers to the questions that are most likely to be asked by a Candidate. There will be some questions that the authors of this program have not identified. When such a question arises, the Success Coach will answer it if he can. If not, he should make every effort to obtain the correct answer and to inform the Candidate at the earliest opportunity. The Grand Lodge stands ready to assist in providing answers as well.

- *Note: The full text of the LSOME is attached in a separate file.*
- *Note: The Master Meanings Document from the Ritual Renaissance Program is also attached as a separate file.*

The Success Coaching Process

The process of Success Coaching begins from the acceptance of a petition through the first year of membership. The Candidate's source of instruction will be the four LSOME videos and booklets together with the course materials contained in this program. The course materials include information on the meaning of the three Degree which are presented to him as he progresses and additional materials may be supplied to him from time to time from the Lodge or the Grand Lodge of the State of New York. Success Coaching is an ongoing lifetime process. Depending on the Candidates' interest he can have many Coaches involved in his Masonic life.

Note: The individual Lodge is encouraged to furnish additional educational materials specific to their Lodge and Masonic community in conjunction with this program.

As part of the Success Coaching process there are seven meetings scheduled as follows:

1. Prior to the First Degree.
2. Prior to the Second Degree.
3. Prior to the Third Degree.
4. Following the Third Degree.
5. Two months after the Brother's Master Mason Degree.
6. Six months following the Brother's Master Mason Degree.
7. First Anniversary of his Membership as a Master Mason.

Meeting Number One

When the Lodge has declared a petitioner elected to receive the degrees, the Worshipful Master assigns a Success Coach for the Candidate. His duties include contacting the signers of the petition and the members of the Candidate Selection Process. These names should be written down for the benefit of the Success Coach. The Secretary can send these in a letter to the Success Coach informing him of his assignment.

The Success Coach will contact his Candidate, explain that he is the Success Coach and make the necessary arrangements to meet with him. The Success Coach will meet with his Candidate at any convenient place, where comfort and privacy is assured, although the most common location will be at the Candidate's home. The Coach must be satisfied that the Candidate understands the subjects listed below. When interfacing with the Candidate, the Success Coach should nurture an atmosphere of informality and make the Candidate feel that he has a faithful friend, adviser, and teacher.

The Success Coach highlights the following:

- Congratulate the Candidate for having made it through the Candidate Selection Process; many are called, few are chosen.
- Inform him that a personal congratulatory letter will be coming from the Master or Secretary with more details about the initiation process.
- Provide him with a brief history of Masonry.
- Provide him with a brief history of your Lodge.
- It would be good etiquette to provide transportation arrangements for the Candidate and bring him to the degree ceremony.
- Make sure the Candidate has all of your contact information and knows that he can call at any time with questions. **Give him and his family every opportunity to ask whatever questions they may have.**

“What is a degree?”

A degree is a three part ceremony in which the new candidate will participate. Each degree contains its own “life lessons”. Assure him that he will not be hazed at any time and the Lodge has worked very hard to confer the degree.

“What can I expect at my degree?”

A candidate is expected to kneel, walk and be conducted around the lodge room. The Candidate will be clothed in traditional garments for his Initiation that symbolizes the clothing worn by the workers at King Solomon's Temple.

“What is the timeline of degrees?”

Each Lodge has its own schedule for conferring degrees. As the candidate becomes proficient in his lessons, additional degrees will be scheduled as needed for his advancement.

“What is the proper attitude the Candidate should have before receiving his Entered Apprentice Degree?”

The Candidate is passing through ceremonies that link every Mason in the world by a common bond of understanding. Therefore the Candidate should attempt to come in with an open mind ready to learn.

“What should I bring to the degree?”

You will instruct the Candidate what your initiation fee is and how the check should be made out. You should advise him to wear undergarments and be alert to the fact that all piercings will have to be removed or covered before entering the Lodge room. If there is a fellowship dinner preceding he will be invited. Inquire if he has any special needs or considerations that must be addressed such as heart, knee, back or other conditions. Determine if he has any special requirements concerning the Volume of Sacred Law.

“How may I receive the most benefit from the Entered Apprentice Degree?”

The Candidate should approach the Entered Apprentice Degree with a humble and serene attitude. The mind and heart attuned to those things that elevate man to the position of dignity and responsibility that his Creator intended him to occupy.

Advise him to dismiss from his mind all worldly matters that might detract from the seriousness and solemnity of the ceremonies that he will soon hear and see. Be keenly alert to all that is said and done, for in this manner will he receive and assimilate the time-honored teachings of Freemasonry.

The methods used for his instruction may be new to him, for the great lessons of our Fraternity are taught by allegory and by symbolism. These methods are both effective and ancient and the Candidate’s mind and heart should be receptive as the degree progresses. Remember too, that every Mason in the Lodge room is your friend and is prepared to teach if you are ready to learn.

“Is there any horse-play in any of the Symbolic Degrees?”

Freemasonry does not have a place for juvenile games in our ceremonies. The Ritual of Freemasonry is serious in all its aspects, from first to last. There is no place for foolishness or “horse-play” of any kind. Anything contrary to the above that is told to a Candidate, jokingly or otherwise, is false and desecrates the honorable purposes of our ancient Craft. The Candidate need have no apprehension whatever as to the manner of his reception or his treatment in each of the degrees. From the very first, he is among friends who will soon become his Brothers.

“What is the definition of Freemasonry?”

Freemasonry is defined as a course of moral instruction, illustrated by symbols, emblems and allegorical figures. The classical definition is: “A beautiful system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.” Webster’s Dictionary says an allegory “represents by suggestive resemblance,” and a symbol is

“a visible sign or representation of an idea.” After an extensive analysis of the opinions of other eminent Masonic scholars, the late Brother Charles C. Hunt, Grand Secretary of Iowa, proposed the following definition:

- *“Freemasonry is an organized society of men symbolically applying the principles of operative masonry and architecture to the science and art of character building.”* This especially distinguishes our Fraternity from all other organizations that teach a system of morality.

“What is the purpose of Freemasonry?”

Through the improvement and strengthening of the character of the individual man, Freemasonry seeks to improve the community. Thus it impresses upon its members the principles of personal righteousness and personal responsibility. It enlightens them as to those things which make for human welfare and inspires them with a feeling of charity or good will toward all mankind. This will move them to translate principle and conviction into action.

Freemasonry also seeks to enlighten the mind, promote peace and understanding and whatever may enhance and adorn man’s contacts with man and to stimulate the noble and generous impulses of the human heart. It puts into practice its basic Tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. The Fraternity stands firmly on the bedrock foundation of Universal Brotherhood and all that is implied by that noble ideal.

“What is our Origin?”

How old is Freemasonry? No one knows. Freemasonry was not created at a given moment or in a single day, month, or year. It is a growth whose roots extend in many directions often beyond historical record. An unknown scribe wrote the first recorded document mentioning Freemasonry. Known as the Halliwell Manuscript or Regius Poem it was written around 1390 AD. It is written in verse, on vellum, 4 by 5 inches in size and bound in Russian leather. The manuscript is housed in the British Museum. In this document, points of proper conduct are found for the Master and for the craftsmen of both a moral and an operative nature. The Regius Poem together with more than one hundred other ancient documents are commonly known as the “Gothic Constitutions”.

The story of King Athelstan of England (925-940) recounts that in 926 A.D., he invited the Masonic Guilds to commence the construction of abbeys and towers. Thus Operative Masonry in England can be traced to this date. We are unable to document any earlier date, thus Masonic history prior to 926 A.D. rests entirely upon legend.

Modern or Speculative Freemasonry, as we know it today, evolved from the first Grand Lodge of England which was organized in London in 1717. Untold volumes have been written concerning this question of Masonic origin and much has found its way into print that is pure fantasy with no basis in fact. The earnest Masonic student is cautioned against placing credence in anything that purports to establish a definite place, date, or even a specific era as the beginning of Freemasonry. The Fraternity as an Operative Craft is very old. Beyond that we cannot go with assurance.

“What is symbolism and why is it so important to Freemasonry?”

Symbolism is the use and interpretation of symbols and emblems. Literally a symbol is a comparison. The word “*symbol*” is derived from two Greek words meaning to throw together and to place side by side. Thus a symbol is a visible representation of some object or thing, real or imagined, employed to convey a certain idea.

We have no other way to express ideas than by the use of symbols. Words themselves are only symbols. When we say a man is “lion-hearted” we use symbolism. In ordinary usage, however, we mean an object that stands for an idea. The Flag is a symbol of our Country, the Cross is a symbol of Christianity, and the Builder’s Square is a Masonic symbol of Virtue, Morality and Honesty.

Extending this concept further, ceremonies and actions may also be symbolic. The military salute is a symbol of obedience and discipline. A hearty handshake may symbolize several ideas including friendship, faith or sympathy. Kneeling for prayer is a symbol of humility, submission, obedience or reverence.

A great Masonic scholar once said, “*The symbolism of Masonry is the soul of Masonry.*” This becomes apparent when we realize that it is not enough merely to state ideas, they must be driven home with emphasis that not only will impress, but also will be retained by the Candidate’s mind. These ideas, garnered from the wisdom of ages, are represented by symbols.

Concluding Notes:

- *During the times when the Candidate (and later “Brother”) is present at the Masonic Hall, the Success Coach should conduct himself as a perfect host, introducing him to the Brothers present and seeing to it that he is comfortable and at ease. Under no circumstances should the Candidate be left alone except for period of preparation.*
- *The Success Coach should see that no Brothers jest about the Degree. No mention of a goat, giving him pennies or vulgarity concerning the Degree should be tolerated. This is a serious moment for our newest Candidate and respect should be shown to him at all levels.*

Meeting Number Two

The Candidate should be contacted within **48 hours** after the conferral of the Entered Apprentice Degree to set the next meeting. The Success Coach should keep the Worshipful Master updated on all meetings and progress of the Candidate. This meeting should take place in addition to any other ritual proficiency program offered by the Lodge. Keep in mind that each Lodge has a unique way of dealing with proficiency.

The catechism is Ritual and ultimately the responsibility of the Worshipful Master. The proficiency of the Candidate is determined by his judgment. Although it is not his prime function, the Success Coach may work on the Ritual with the Candidate if he receives permission from the Worshipful Master.

The Success Coach highlights the following:

- Congratulate the Entered Apprentice on achieving the status of Entered Apprentice ready to embark on the next step of his journey.
- Determine if the Brother has any questions or concerns regarding anything that happened that night?
- Examine the Brother's feelings concerning the Entered Apprentice Degree.
- Show Part 2 of the LSOME Video and discuss it with him.
- Review Part 2 of the LSOME booklet and discuss its content.
- Review the step, due guard, sign, grip and word of the Degree.
- If there are any other First Degrees scheduled nearby, invite him to attend. This is a great way to cement what he went through and is very effective in highlighting the lessons of the Degree.
- Review the Ritual Renaissance Program portion for the Entered Apprentice Degree.
- If the Lodge has a social function upcoming make sure that he and his family are invited.
- Encourage the Worshipful Master to lower the Lodge to the 1st Degree and invite the Entered Apprentice to participate in the Lodge Communication.

“Free Will and Accord”

Why were you asked so many times during your First Degree “Is it an act of your own free will and accord?”

Every act a Mason performs as a Mason or in the name of Masonry throughout his entire Masonic life is the result of his own “free will and accord.” Never is he told that he shall not do anything, except as it may be implied in the Ritual or in the rules and regulations of the Fraternity, which apply to all for the common good. It follows, therefore, that even a man's first approach to our portals must be upon the same basis; a voluntary act, unbiased by solicitation from any member. Thus he is prompted in his desire to be a Mason only by a favorable opinion of the Institution, and is unbiased by friends and not influenced by mercenary or unworthy motives. He is a “free” man, performing a “free” act and when finally he becomes a Mason he will find that his freedom of thought and action is one of his most cherished privileges.

The Fraternity flourishes, prospers, and spreads its teachings through the mode of life exemplified by its members. Therefore every Mason by the example of his personal life and by acts performed of his own “free will and accord,” becomes a silent but active Masonic ambassador to the world at large. Thus we

attract desirable men for membership in our fraternity bearing “good fruit” as evidenced by the Fraternity’s continued existence throughout the ages.

“Why Must an Applicant for Masonry First Be Prepared in His Heart?”

The heart is the traditional seat of man’s affections, passions, and desires. As a man’s heart is, so will his life be. If his heart is clean and pure, his life cannot be wicked and vicious. Fundamentally, Masonry’s first concern is with the strengthening of character in the individual-the building of a Spiritual Temple. Unless a Man’s heart is receptive, the mind will not properly respond to this fundamental objective.

“Why is the Candidate Duly and Truly Prepared?”

The wearing of special garments furnished by the Lodge is symbolic. It emphasizes the concern of Freemasonry with a man’s internal worth, rather than with his external adornments of position, wealth, or environment. By wearing these garments, the Candidate also signifies the sincerity of his intentions.

The hoodwink demonstrates that the sightless need a guide because “we walk by faith and not by sight.” The hoodwink also lays aside the distractions of the outer world and prepares the candidate to concentrate upon the lessons he will receive in the Lodge room.

The cable-tow symbolizes the length or extent of the Candidate’s responsibility as measured by the “scope of his reasonable ability” to live up to his obligations.

“Why am I from a Lodge of the Holy Saint John of Jerusalem?”

According to a Masonic legend, the first or Mother Lodge of the Fraternity was located at Jerusalem and anciently was dedicated to King Solomon. Later, Lodges were dedicated to St. John the Baptist, then to St. John the Evangelist and finally to both. Some catechisms also refer to Saint John the Almoner. The legend further declares that all Lodges are descendants of the original Lodge at Jerusalem. In keeping with this tradition, we say that every Mason hails from such a Lodge, which is equivalent to saying that he is from “a just and duly constituted Lodge.”

“What is the Significance of the Candidate’s Journey around the Lodge Room?”

This journey enables all present to view the Candidate and ascertain that he is “duly and truly prepared” and it is patterned after one of the most ancient of all religious rites, an important part of which was the circumambulation around the altar, moving in the same direction as the sun. In his search for Light, the Candidate starts from darkness, the North, travels to the East (the source of Light) and then by way of the South to the West and back into darkness. He again comes out of the North and passes through the same course again and again in his journey around the Lodge Room, moving in the same direction as the sun.

“What is the Significance of the Volume of Sacred Law in Freemasonry?”

This question obviously is too comprehensive to permit complete treatment in this manual. The following, however, represent a few of the fundamental facts concerning the place of the Volume of Sacred Law in Freemasonry: The Volume of Sacred Law is one of the Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry and is an indispensable part of the furniture of a Lodge. In our Grand Jurisdiction, it usually is represented by the Holy Bible, but any Candidate not a Christian may, for the purpose of his obligation, have substituted for

it any other volume which he considers sacred: e.g., the Old Testament, the Koran, the Vedas, or the Laws of Confucius. In New York Lodges more than one Sacred Book may be on the altar at the same time, and the Candidate may elect the one on which he wishes to be obligated. The Holy Bible is always found on Altars in the Grand Jurisdiction of New York.

The Volume of Sacred Law, is open during all Lodge Communications because its teachings are “the rule and guide of our Faith and Practice,” A Mason should conduct himself by the Light he there shall find and as he there shall find it.”

“What is the Real Purpose of the Obligation?”

The obligation, and the manner in which it is taken, is visible and audible evidence of the Candidate’s sincerity of purpose. Without it nothing he might say or do could be considered binding. By taking it he gives irrevocable evidence of his sincere intentions.

Thus the Fraternity not only binds him to certain responsibilities, but also protects itself against an exposure of the secrets of Freemasonry, which have to do chiefly with its modes of recognition and of symbolic instruction. It should be here emphasized that the great truths taught by Freemasonry are not secret; only the manner of teaching them.

“What Penalties will I actually incur if I violate my Obligations?”

Violation of his obligation may subject a Mason to the scorn of his Brethren, or to the loss of his right of membership, but never to physical punishment of any kind. The penalties are symbolic and intended to emphasize the seriousness of the undertaking. The violation of a Masonic obligation is a serious offense, which may deserve reprimand, suspension, or expulsion from the Craft.

“What is the Purpose of the Due Guard?”

It is a reminder of your obligations and its use is a silent pledge to continue to perform them faithfully. The Due Guard is a sign of salutation, and is used upon entering or retiring from a Lodge in the Grand Jurisdiction of New York, together with the Sign. It is indicative of the degree in which a Lodge is working, and is, along with the Sign, your pledge to conform to the usages thereof.

- *Note to Success Coach: it would be helpful here to review the Due Guard and Sign with the Brother and impress upon him the importance of giving both with precision. Too often this part of our ceremonies is given in a careless manner.*

“What is the Significance of the Lambskin Apron?”

The apron was used as a symbol in many of the Ancient Mysteries. In Masonic ritual, it is compared with some of the most noted and honored decorations of ancient and modern Europe, with the assurance that it, too, is an ennobling decoration. To Freemasons, the apron is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason. It should remind all Freemasons of their commitment to purity of life and rectitude of conduct. The Apron presentation is one of the most beautiful and meaningful sections of the ritual. To the discerning student of the Craft this small section can be the subject of many hours of study.

“When do Masons wear the White Apron?”

A White Apron can be worn in Lodge Communications. White aprons may also be worn in public during certain other strictly Masonic ceremonies which are under the direct supervision of a Lodge or the Grand Lodge. Such ceremonies include public Installations of Officers, Masonic Hall Dedications, the laying of cornerstones, and Masonic Memorial Services.

“What Connection has “Some Metallic Substance” with Masonic Charity?”

This ceremony not only reminds us to give physical relief to those in distress, but also to give thought and time to the aid of others, such as visiting the sick, and sympathizing with others in their misfortunes.

“What Special Significance has the Northeast Corner of the Lodge?”

The first stone of a building is usually placed in the Northeast corner because that is the beginning, the line where darkness ends, and light begins. This custom is as old as mankind. The Entered Apprentice has but laid the foundation whereon to build his future moral edifice, that of life and character. His position in the Northeast corner of the Lodge thus aptly symbolizes the end of the preparatory period and the beginning of the constructive period of human life.

“What is the Proper Form and Situation of a Masonic Lodge Room?”

Lodges are usually laid out in the form of an oblong rectangle. If it is physically possible, and convenient, the East should be at the geographical east end of the room and the West at the geographical west end. However, this is not an official requirement of the Grand Lodge of New York and many Lodges are not so situated because structural conditions will not permit.

It must be emphasized that the Masonic “East” is purely symbolic, for it represents the source of Light; hence the Worshipful Master’s station is located there.

“Is Freemasonry a Secret Society?”

Freemasonry is not a secret society; rather it is a society with secrets. A secret society, among other things, meets in a secret place unknown to the general public; its membership is secret and nothing is publicly known concerning its aims, principles, and organization. Masonic Lodges usually occupy a prominent location in the community and Masonic Buildings customarily are identified by a display of one or more well-known Masonic emblems. Anyone may see who enters or leaves a Masonic Hall and most members of the Craft wear a Masonic insignia somewhere on their persons so all may see that they hold membership in the Fraternity.

Masonic principles, ideals, philosophy and purposes may be known to anyone who desires to make inquiry, or to read about them in the multitude of books available to any man, woman, or child and they are often discussed in public notices. The organization of the various Masonic bodies also is a matter of common knowledge. Its leaders and usually the great majority of its membership are known and respected by all who endorse men of high purpose.

The only secrets of Freemasonry are its modes of recognition and its system of symbolic instruction. However, this does not mean that its members when outside of the Lodge, particularly in the presence of

non-Masons, may discuss the internal affairs of a Lodge. The internal affairs of a Lodge are private and should be so treated by every member, just as he would treat the private affairs of his own family.

“What Subjects are barred from Discussion in a Masonic Communication?”

Masons, when meeting as such, are always on a common level. There is no distinction of worldly position, class, race, or creed. Every Mason is entitled to his own thoughts and beliefs, according to the dictates of his own conscience, as long as he believes in one Supreme Being and conforms to the laws and usages of the Fraternity. King, Prince, and Potentate, or a President in a Masonic Lodge, meets with other men on a common footing and without social distinction, for here each stands before his Creator as a man, nothing more and nothing less!

Freemasonry seeks to unite men, not separate them. Therefore any subject is barred from discussion in a Masonic Lodge that might create friction or contention between men who are otherwise favorably disposed toward each other. This applies with particular force to discussion concerning any specific religion, and also to partisan politics.

This does not mean that there can be no differences of opinion, or arguments or debate about legitimate Lodge business or other matters that affect the Lodge’s welfare. Such discussion is wholesome and progressive, as long as it is confined to good taste and a genuine tolerance for the opinion of others. In all legitimate debates, however, it is a maxim that peace and harmony must prevail. Therefore, when the Lodge has “spoken,” either by a secret ballot or a show of hands, from that instant the decision of the Lodge must be accepted by all, even those who may have voted “nay” except in cases where a legal appeal is permitted.

“Is Freemasonry a Religion?”

Freemasonry is not a religion, although it is deeply spiritual in many of its ways. Affiliation with a house of worship is not a prerequisite for membership.

“Why can’t an Atheist become a Freemason?”

No atheist can become a Mason because no obligation of an atheist can be considered binding. An atheist denies the existence of a Supreme Being. This is directly contrary to a fundamental Landmark of Freemasonry for admission to the Fraternity – a belief in one Supreme Being.

“What is the Significance of the Term “Blue Lodge”?”

Although the organization, which confers the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason commonly, is sometimes called the “Blue Lodge,” its correct name is “Symbolic Lodge” or “Craft Lodge.”

How, when or why the term “Blue Lodge” originated is not known, but there have been many attempted explanations for this description. A prominent author states the following:

“The three degrees of Symbolic Masonry are clothed in or ornamented with blue, whence they are commonly known as Blue Lodge Masonry. Blue is the color of truth or fidelity and it is a remarkable fact

that the Brethren have ever remained true to the blue degrees. Under the reign of William III of England, blue was adopted as the favorite color of the Craft.”

“This durable and beautiful color was adopted as the peculiar characteristic of an Institution which has stood the test of ages, and which is as much distinguished by the durability of its materials or principles, as by the beauty of its superstructure. It is an emblem of universal friendship and benevolence and instructs us that, in the mind of a Mason, those virtues should be as expansive as the blue arch of heaven itself.”

Meeting Number Three

This meeting should be arranged within **48** hours after the conferral of the Fellowcraft Degree. As previously noted, this meeting is in addition to any proficiency program the Lodge offers. The format of this meeting is very similar to Meeting Number Two.

The Success Coach highlights the following:

- Congratulate the Fellowcraft on achieving the status of Fellowcraft.
- Review the Fellowcraft Degree and make sure that the Fellowcraft has a firm grasp of the degree.
- Refer to the RRP Fellowcraft Meanings Document.
- Compare the lessons of the First and Second Degree.
- Review the step, signs, grips and words from the Degree.
- Discuss any questions the Fellowcraft may have.
- Show Part Three of the LSOME Video and discuss it with him. Review Part Three of the LSOME booklet.
- If there are any other Second Degrees scheduled nearby invite him to attend. This is a great way to cement what he went through and is very effective in highlighting the lessons of the Degree.
- If the Lodge has a social function upcoming make sure that he and his family are invited.
- Make him feel a part of the Lodge by inviting him to all subsequent Lodge meetings between degrees. Master's are encouraged to lower the Lodge to the 1st Degree so Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts may enter.

“Fellowcraft Degree”

In the Fellowcraft degree the emphasis is on the zest for learning and the search for Truth. The Degree symbolizes the value of knowledge and the cultivation of the mind. In this Degree, the Candidate takes a symbolic journey and receives instructions similar to those once given to operative workmen. The Degree is symbolic of one of the great goals which all men should seek - self development in the journey of life.

“Operative and Speculative Masonry”

Operative Masonry was the immediate predecessor of Speculative Masonry. It represents that period in Masonic history, prior to the 18th Century, when members of the Craft were operative stonemasons and architects, actually engaged in the construction of private and public buildings. They were the most skilled artisans of their day and much of their labor was devoted to the erection of the great cathedrals that now grace the landscapes of Europe.

Speculative Masonry refers to the character of our Craft as it evolved from the final years of the operative era to modern times. In speculative Masonry, the actual working tools of the operative Mason are not used by Freemasons to erect structures of stone, but as symbolic tools in the erection of their personal spiritual temples, houses not made with hands. They have become powerful symbols that carry moral and spiritual lessons to a speculative Craft. Thus, through these symbolic “working tools,” Freemasonry has become a system of ethics inculcating the principles and providing the means to live a righteous life – **For Masons it is “A WAY OF LIFE”**

“When and Why did Masonry Change from Operative to Speculative?”

The change occurred gradually over a period extending from the latter half of the 17th Century to the early part of the 18th Century. Gentlemen of that day, including rulers and high-ranking officials, who had no desire or intent to become stone masons or builders, sought membership in the Operative Lodges for the many spiritual, social, and cultural advantages they offered. By consent they were admitted and became “accepted” Masons, whose interest in the Lodge was purely “speculative.”

As the Gothic style of architecture began to decline, the demand for operative Masons, builders and architects, gradually diminished until, finally, the very existence of the operative Craft was seriously threatened.

Fortunately, at this time there was evidence of a growing interest in Speculative Masonry with a corresponding increase in the number of “accepted” members. If this interest had not prevailed, it is probable that the Craft would have passed into oblivion, and there would be no Freemasonry today. However, the Craft literally was “saved” by the “accepted” members, and in 1717, four old London Lodges held a joint meeting in the Goose and Gridiron Tavern and organized a Grand Lodge. Thus the operative Craft became purely speculative and with the organization of the Mother Grand Lodge, Speculative Masonry became dominant and has remained so ever since.

“What is the Length of my Cable Tow?”

The Baltimore Masonic Convention of 1843 declared that the symbolical length of a cable tow is “the scope of a Brother’s reasonable ability.” In other words, a Mason is bound to his Brethren by a tie that is as long and as strong as his conscience dictates, and he must determine himself what constitutes his reasonable ability.

“What are the Basic Teachings of the Second Degree?”

As the Entered Apprentice degree with its moral instruction is symbolic of life, the Fellowcraft degree is symbolic of manhood with its increased duties and obligations. Here the Candidate is urged, literally and symbolically, to advance his education, particularly in the fields of history, science, and the liberal arts, so that he may occupy with honor his allotted place in the great structure of human society.

William Preston (1742-1818), to whom we are indebted for a generous portion of our Masonic Ritual, intended the Fellowcraft degree to be the beginning of a liberal education, and indeed in his day it was. Today every school boy is familiar with most of the facts presented by this degree; but he knows nothing of its symbolic interpretation or that it is intended to be an open door to further study.

The Fellowcraft degree symbolizes that period of life when a man prepares for life’s work and strives to erect his spiritual Temple agreeably to the designs drawn on the Trestle Board. As a Fellowcraft you receive more light in Masonry, you are invested with the working tools so necessary for the tasks of manhood, you are encouraged to continue in the acquisition of useful knowledge, in the cultivation of the mind, and in the search for Truth.

“Why does the Middle Chamber Lecture of the Fellowcraft Degree Contain such Elementary Subjects?”

No matter how well grounded a Candidate may be in the subject covered by the Middle Chamber lecture, he is not-nor ever will be so “learned” that he may conscientiously cease his studies and “rest on his laurels.” Freemasonry expects its votaries to seek and learn and thus by precept and example to teach! Thus, can our Craft carry its beneficent influence into every avenue of human activity and accomplish its mission.

All useful knowledge rests upon elementary fundamentals to keep it in proper perspective, and to remind the Candidate emphatically that the process of education never ceases. The Fellowcraft degree accomplishes this in an admirable manner, for it not only reviews the basic elements of education but in so doing it automatically reminds the Candidate how far we have progressed in the acquisition of useful knowledge in our modern day. Thus by contrast, it sets before him a progressive pattern for the future.

Consider the elements that “disturb” our daily lives. Most of the burdens borne by mankind result from Mankind’s departure from the simple fundamentals that guide the human race. If we are able to find real happiness, it lies on the path to Truth.

Thus the Middle Chamber lecture, with its elementary fundamentals, presents a logical approach to Truth and permits the Candidate to view in true perspective, the Great Architect and His Works.

The detailed discussion on the Five Orders of Architecture, which is a prominent part of the Middle Chamber lecture, has several objectives. While it fixes the Candidate’s attention on the growth and the importance of architecture in general, and by inference displays the magnitude of its influence on the progress of man, it also emphasizes, that architecture is a symbol of the very foundation of Freemasonry, which is a speculative science derived from an operative art.

“What is the Symbolism of the Approach to the Middle Chamber?”

The road map towards the Middle Chamber of King Solomon’s Temple is established. The first encounter is with the Pillars of the Porch, symbols of strength and establishment – by implication, power and control, which must work together because one without the other is futility. They also correspond to two of the three Supports of a Lodge - Strength and Wisdom. As Fellowcrafts, we pass between the two Pillars to remind us that we must have a balance between strength and wisdom, power and control – and in so doing, we become the third of the three Supports of a Lodge: Beauty.

There is also some interesting information on the nature and purpose of those Pillars. One common source of controversy is that our Ritual describes the Pillars as being cast out of brass rather than bronze, which some people believe is incorrect. It is true that the Pillars of the Temple would have been cast out of a metal we would call “bronze” in contemporary English. But our Ritual follows the older language of the King James Version, and at that time “brass” was a generic term for any type of copper alloy. In fact, “bronze” wouldn’t even become part of the English language for another hundred years.

Metallurgy of the First Temple period used the sand casting process, which requires a good source of clay to bond the sand that forms the molds. The clay grounds on the bank of the river Jordan between Succoth and Zeredatha (pronounced soo-COAT and zeh-reh-DAH-tha) were known as a good and convenient source of clay, which is why the Pillars and other vessels of the Temple were cast in the foundries

established there. The Pillars are also curiously described as a special kind of safe, where the archives of our ancient Brethren would be protected from fire and flood. This is a deliberate allusion to one of the earliest legends in the Old Charges of Freemasonry in which the sons of Lamech preserved the knowledge of mankind from God's coming vengeance in two pillars: one that would not burn and one that would not sink.

“What are the Actual Wages of a Fellowcraft?”

The wages of a Fellowcraft are corn, wine, and oil, symbolizing the wealth of life in mental and spiritual but not financial realms. In the Old Testament these three were physical wealth; in Freemasonry, corn represents plenty, referring to opportunity, work and friends; oil represents joy, happiness, and gladness; wine represents health, spirituality, and peace. Together, corn, wine, and oil represent the rewards of a good life. They are also the elements of consecration used in Masonic cornerstone laying, and in the dedication and consecration of a new Lodge.

The meaning of the word corn, as it is used in the Fellowcraft degree, should be clarified. In the United States the word generally is used when referring to “Indian Maize,” the “corn” which grows so abundantly in our fields. Most Candidates therefore are confused when they hear reference to a “sheaf of corn” and then see it represented by a sheaf of wheat. In most parts of the world, the word “corn” is used in its collective sense and refers to all small grain. This is its meaning when used in any of our Masonic ceremonies, and grain collectively is usually represented by wheat although any small grain such as barley, oats, maize, etc., may properly be used.

“The Letter “G””

The letter “G” is the symbol for Geometry and in the American rituals the sacred name of Deity. The symbolism of this important Masonic Emblem has been the subject of innumerable papers, books, and articles, many of which have attempted to evolve esoteric meanings that are both complicated and fanciful.

In his introduction to Freemasonry, Brother Carl H. Claudy says, “Aye, God is always geometrizing. Geometry is particularly His science. Freemasonry makes it especially the science of the Fellowcraft Degree and couples it with the symbol of the Great Architect of the Universe. No teaching of Freemasonry is greater; none is simpler than this. The Fellowcraft, who sees it as the very crux and climax of the degree, the reality behind the form, has learned as no words may teach him why he climbed the Winding Stairs, for the true wages of a Fellowcraft, which he found within the Middle Chamber.”

In this country after 1750, the letter “G” was combined with the Square and Compasses in Masonic lapel emblems, rings, etc. This combination is a symbol of Symbolic Masonry that is unique to America.

“Where can I Learn More About Solomon's Temple?”

Refer to the Holy Bible and read “The First Book of the Kings” (I Kings), beginning with Chapter 5. Also read “The First Book of the Chronicles” (I Chronicles), beginning with Chapter 2.

Bear in mind, however, that the Masonic ritualistic references to the Temple are symbolic and sometimes legendary. Therefore, details of construction and development, as presented by Masonic Ritual, frequently differ from the Biblical account. This is a very large topic of investigation that has progressed over some

700 years of our recorded development as an organization. The Chancellor Robert R. Livingston Library of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York holds much in its collection regarding this topic. You will learn more about Masonry's legendary Temple of Solomon in the Master Mason Degree.

“With What Particular Emblems Should I be Familiar as a Fellowcraft?”

The Plumb, Square and Level; Corn, Wine and Oil; the Pillars of the Porch; the Globes; the Winding Stairs, the 3, 5, and 7 Steps; the Orders of Architecture; emblems representative of the Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the letter “G.”

“What should I expect from the Master Mason Degree?”

The Master Mason degree exemplifies, by the now familiar methods of allegory and symbolism, Freemasonry's answer to one of the most profound of all mortal queries - **IS THERE AN IMMORTAL SPIRIT IN EACH OF US?** In this degree, the recurrent theme of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, is also given further emphasis. As a Master Mason, you will also become a voting member of the Fraternity, with added privileges and responsibilities that will be explained to you at the proper time.

It would be impossible to overemphasize the importance, the dignity, and the sublime teaching of the Master Mason Degree. It is the magnificent climax of all that has preceded. The power of this Degree is such that Brother Edwin Booth, one of the greatest tragedian actors the world has ever produced, once said that he would rather play the leading role in this degree of Freemasonry than any other part that could be assigned to him in any of the great dramas of history.

Meeting Number Four

This meeting should be arranged within **48** hours after the conferral of the Master Mason Degree. As previously noted this meeting is in addition to any proficiency program the Lodge offers. The format of this meeting is very similar to Meeting Number Two.

The Success Coach highlights the following:

- Congratulate the Brother on achieving the status of Master Mason.
- Encourage the Brother to become proficient in the Master Mason Degree.
- Review the Master Mason Degree and make sure that the Brother has a firm grasp of the degree.
- Discuss the rights and responsibilities of a Master Mason.
- Review the step, signs, grips and words from the Degree as well as their significance.
- Discuss any questions the Brother may have.
- Show Part Four of the LSOME Video and discuss it with him.
- Review Part Four of the LSOME booklet and make time for questions and discuss its contents.
- If there are any other Master Mason Degrees scheduled nearby invite him to attend. This is a great way to cement what he went through and is very effective in highlighting the lessons of the Degree.
- Utilize the information contained in the “Walk About the Lodge” to review the information regarding how the Brother can understand navigating a typical Lodge Meeting.
- Offer to take the Brother to the next Stated Communication and sit next to the Brother to increase his comfort level at Lodge Communications.

Make sure that the Brother is given the following critical items:

1. The Lodge Trestleboard.
2. The Lodge’s membership roster.
3. The Lodge bylaws.
4. The Standard Work and Lectures
5. A contact list of the Lodge officers.

“What are the Essential Differences in the First Section of the Master Mason Degree and the Corresponding Sections of the two Preceding Degrees?”

Many of the differences are too obvious to require discussion. As a “progressive moral science” Masonry advances the Candidate according to a regular pattern that should become apparent to him as the degrees unfold.

The outstanding difference, of course, lies in the character of the numerous obligations that are assumed by the Master Mason. With emphasis it should be stressed here that each and every one of the points of the obligation is an important and complete entity – and each is to be rigidly observed and practiced. All are binding – forever!

If the new Master Mason will thoughtfully review his obligations from time to time, he will be constantly aware of his responsibilities and will realize that each point has a highly important purpose and fits

perfectly into an overall pattern which has been designed to establish his proper relationship to the Fraternity, to the Great Architect of the Universe and to all of his fellow human beings.

“Why is the Master Mason Degree called the Sublime Degree?”

In its Hiram Legend, “the Sublime Degree” departs significantly from the familiar pattern of the First and Second Degrees. Instead of being concerned with moral principles and exhortations, as in the First Degree, or with architecture and learning, as in the Second, it answers the cry of Job, “If a man die, shall he live again?”

“The legend of the Craft is at once the tragedy and the hope of man; it is virtue struck down by error, evil, and sin, and raised again by truth, goodness, and mercy. It is the story of the resurrection of that which bears the nearest affinity to that supreme intelligence which pervades all nature.” It is the answer to Job. It is at once the beginning of the even more sacred legend – of that which was lost – and the assurance that at long last he who seeks shall find... “The Hiram Legend is the glory of Freemasonry; the search for that which was lost is the glory of life.”

“Never may we find it here. You shall gaze through microscope and telescope and catch no sight of its shadow. You shall travel in many lands and far, and see it not. You shall listen to all the words of all tongues that all men have ever spoken and will speak – The Lost Word is not heard. Were it but a word, how easy it would be to invent another! But it is not a word, but The Word, the great secret, the unknowableness, the will o’ the wisp to follow, a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Never here is it to be found, but the search for it is the reason for life.”

“The Sublime Degree teaches that in another life it may be found.”

“That is why it is the Sublime Degree.”

--Quotations from “Introduction to Freemasonry” by Carl H. Claudy

“Who was Hiram Abif?”

Hiram Abif was a widow’s son of the tribe of Naphtali, a man of Tyre. There is no person in the annals of Freemasonry whose life looms larger in our tradition as this celebrated architect of King Solomon’s Temple.

Of this artist, whom Freemasons also sometimes recognize as Hiram the Builder and sometimes as the Widow’s Son, the earliest account is found in the First Book of Kings (Chapter 7:13, 14).

“And King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was a widow’s son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass, and he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to King Solomon and wrought all his work.”

He is next mentioned in the Second Book of Chronicles (Chapter 2:13, 14), in the following letter from Hiram of Tyre to King Solomon:

“And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding of Hiram my fathers. The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skillful to work in gold and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone and in timber, in purple, in blue and in fine linen and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David, thy Father.”

“Why was Hiram, our ancient Grand Master, called “Abif?””

The word Abif means “his father,” or “my father.” Hiram Abif is therefore correctly translated “Hiram, my father,” the “my father” being a term of great respect. Hiram, the Widow’s Son, was the father of all his workmen in the same sense that the patriarchs of old were “fathers” of their respective tribes.

“Is the drama of which Hiram Abif is the central figure truth or fiction?”

The drama of the Hiramic Legend as presented by Freemasonry is strictly legendary. In fact, it is usually referred to in Masonic literature as the “Legend of Hiram Abif,” or the “Hiramic Legend.” Hiram of Tyre, of course actually lived in Tyre. But the Masonic legend in which he plays the leading role is not historical. It was adopted by our early ritual writers to exemplify in highly dramatic form the sublime teachings of the Master Mason Degree.

“Who was Pythagoras and what did he do for Masonry?”

Pythagoras was one of the most remarkable and able Greek Philosophers. He established a system of schools of a secret order in Crotona. Some Masonic scholars believe that the esoteric (secret) Masonic doctrines are derived from his schools. Pythagoras was a profound student of the science of numbers. He is credited by Anderson in his Constitutions of 1738 with the discovery of the Forty-seventh Problem of Euclid, although it really was discovered by Archimedes.

“What are the Ancient Landmarks of Masonry?”

Masonic authorities are not in agreement on the number of Landmarks. The eminent Masonic student Albert G. Mackey lists 25 Landmarks. Some authorities have listed more, others less. All these lists, however, hold some such Ancient Landmarks in common, such as belief in a Supreme Being, Immortality of the Soul and the Hiramic Legend.

The Jurisdiction of New York has never adopted an official list of the Ancient Landmarks, opting for a more flexible code of “Masonic Belief” found in the Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York. Though lists have been proposed and published in our past from a variety of sources, none have ever been voted upon in favor of full adoption.

“The Legend of the Third Degree”

This is the most important and significant of the legendary symbols of Freemasonry. It has descended from age to age by oral tradition, and has been preserved in every regular Masonic rite, practiced in every country and language, with no essential alteration.

Masonic Secrecy includes only methods of recognition and of symbolic instruction. It does not extend to everything relating to the Institution. A secret society is one whose members are not publicly known, and whose existence is concealed from the world. Masonic bodies, however, meet openly; there is no secrecy concerning membership or officers and Masonic symbols and philosophy are discussed in thousands of books accessible to anyone. Masonry has no part in subversive activities, yet its secrets belong to the Fraternity just as the private affairs of a family are its own concern.

Symbolism of the Operative Art means that Masonic symbols are taken from architecture. Almost without exception, they relate to the building art such as the Square, Level, Plumb, Ashlars, Pillars, Trestle Board, etc. The grand idea of Masonry is that the development of character is like the Building of a Temple; the same rules apply to both. There must first be a plan, then a foundation and framework, and finally, proportion and harmony of line. There must be “wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.” This is a practical truth of universal application to all forms of achievement. The symbols of Freemasonry are drawn from the experience of the ages.

A Mason must be a freeborn male adult. In Operative Masonry, women and young men could not work at the mason’s trade so traditionally membership in the Craft has been confined to male adults, and from long usage this practice has become imbedded in the Fraternity as a Landmark.

“With what principal Emblems of the Master Mason Degree should I be familiar?”

The Square and Compasses, an emblem which appears in all three degrees; the Trowel, the Pot of Incense, the Bee Hive, the Book of Constitutions guarded by the Tyler’s sword, the Sword Pointing to a Naked Heart, the Anchor and Ark, the Forty-seventh Problem of Euclid, the Hour Glass, the Scythe, and the third class of Masonic emblems of the Master Mason Degree, which are explained only in a tiled Lodge.

“Who is eligible for a Masonic Memorial Service?”

To be eligible for Masonic Memorial Service, a deceased Brother must meet the following requirements: He must be a Mason (E.A. sufficient), he must be in good standing (not under sentence of suspension or expulsion), and he need not be affiliated with the Lodge within whose jurisdiction he dies. It also must be requested by the family of the departed upon his passing.

“Visitation – If I want to visit another Lodge, how do I proceed?”

To visit a Lodge, a Brother must be able to exhibit documentary evidence that he is a Master Mason in good standing, and if not vouched for by a Brother, he must pass a satisfactory examination before an examining committee. But no visitor can be received into a Lodge in New York if the Master feels this would cause disharmony or interruption. In most cases a Brother must also have a current dues card or a valid letter of regular dimit. It is also the right of a traveling Brother to demand to see the charter of a Lodge to check its regularity. The use of a “Tyler’s Oath” is common in the United States but is not practiced in New York and is not required as part of visitation.

“Special Favors” – What kind of special favors will I receive now that I am a Master Mason and how much additional influence will I have? Will I get a better job if my boss is a Mason or will the Chief of Police “fix” my ticket for a traffic violation if he is a Mason?

Freemasonry does not seek to contravene the laws of the land, and no Mason should ask or expect favors in the outside world to which others would not be entitled. Those who seek through Freemasonry to gain special favors to get a better job, or escape justice do not comprehend the meaning of Masonry, nor will they ever reap the real benefits it bestows, because such benefits will not be apparent to the selfish eye.

“Responsibilities of a Master Mason – Attendance”

The Ancient Charges provide that “in Ancient Times no Master or Fellow could be absent from it (his Lodge), especially when warned to appear at it, without incurring a Severe Censure, unless it appeared to the Master and Wardens that pure necessity hindered him.” Freemasonry today has no minimum attendance requirements, offers no attendance prizes, and prescribes no penalty for absence. But certainly a Master Mason is morally obligated to be loyal to the Lodge that permits him to enjoy the benefits of Freemasonry and this includes attendance as frequently as possible at the Communications of the Lodge. Men get out of Masonry in proportion to what they put into it – participation is critical to the benefit you will derive from the Craft.

“Balloting on petitions – under what circumstances should I use the black ball (cube) in balloting?”

If a Mason is convinced in his heart, after due inquiry into his motives, that a petitioner for membership is unworthy, he should not hesitate to use the black cube in balloting on the petitioner. Personal likes or dislikes, misunderstandings, or grudges should be put aside in that solemn moment. The only standard that should govern a Mason’s action in balloting should be the moral qualifications of the petitioner - will this petitioner uphold or injure the good name of Freemasonry if he should become a member?

“Secrecy of the Ballot – has a Mason the right to declare how he voted on a Ballot?”

In the State of New York it is a Masonic offense to disclose how one ballots. It is also a Masonic offense to ask another how he balloted or to discuss the ballot after it has been decided. A Mason who casts a black cube without just cause, or for other un-Masonic motives, or reveals the color of his ballot, violates Masonic Law and he may be tried therefore. If found guilty, he may be punished for such un-Masonic conduct.

“Examination of a visitor – if I am appointed to examine a visitor to my Lodge, what should I do?”

The visitor shall be required to furnish documentary evidence as to his name, the name and number of his Lodge, its location and his current membership in good standing. His Lodge should then be checked against the list of recognized Lodges contained in a book that the Tyler of the Lodge should have on hand called the List of Lodges. The visitor should then be examined in a reasonable, dignified manner as to his knowledge and proficiency of our work. Always remember the object is to assure you that he is a Mason not that he is a Master Ritualist.

“Solomon’s Temple - What is the symbolic meaning of King Solomon’s Temple?”

Symbolic interpretations concerning the Temple of Solomon, in all of its aspects, are practically inexhaustible. Many opinions seem to center on the symbolic representation of Man as a Temple of God. I Corinthians 3:16-17 says “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you. If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” Thus, when Freemasonry undertakes the idealistic task of elevating mankind through the strengthening of character in the individual it seeks to so improve each Mason that he will be better fitted as a spiritual temple. The chief purpose of Solomon’s Temple was to provide a suitable dwelling for the Arc of the Covenant – in the Sanctum Sanctorum or Holy of Holies. There are many who claim that it was the most perfect edifice ever erected.

“Where was Solomon’s Temple erected?”

The Temple was located on Mt. Moriah, near the place where Abraham was about to offer up his son Isaac, and where David met and appeased the Destroying Angel. David purchased the site from Ornan, the Jebusite, to whom he paid the sum of fifty shekels of silver according to II Samuel 24:18-25, although the sum is stated to be six hundred shekels in I Chronicles 21:18-27.

“How long did it take to build the Temple?”

Seven and one half years were spent in its erection. The Temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Chaldees.

“Solomon, King of Israel”

He was the son of David and Bathsheba, born about 997 B.C. He became King in 977 B.C. and died about 937. The name Solomon means “peaceful.”

“Hiram, King of Tyre”

Hiram, King of Tyre, was a staunch friend of King David. He also was a friend and ally of David’s son, Solomon, and actually assisted him by supplying certain materials for the construction of the Temple. The Masonic Ritual assigns some duties to Hiram of Tyre that are purely legendary, but which are essential to the drama of the Master Mason Degree.

“Who wrote the text of the Masonic Funeral Dirge?”

David Vinton, one of the early “traveling Masonic-lecturers,” was the author. He was born January 6, 1774 at Medford, Massachusetts and died at Shakertown, Kentucky in July 1833. The dirge, set to the music of Pleyel’s Hymn, was first published in the “Masonic Minstrel” at Dedham, Massachusetts in 1816.

“What Masonic meaning applies to the Sprig of Acacia?”

It symbolizes Freemasonry’s great doctrine, the immortality of the soul.

“What is the Meaning of the word “Dotage” as used in the Eligibility for Membership in Freemasonry?”

Dotage may be defined as deterioration of mind from old age. It is a condition marked by loss of judgment and memory. No precise age can be fixed at which these deficiencies occur. They appear earlier in some individuals than in others. The Lodge must determine for itself whether a specific petitioner falls in this category. But however old a petitioner may be, if he possesses healthy mental faculties, his age alone does not disqualify him. It is not the number of his years, but their effect on his mind that should be the basic test.

Meeting Number Five

This meeting should take place no later than two months following the Master Mason Degree.

All Lodges should have presented the Walk About Program or some form of Orientation program before this point. If some of the below is redundant, use the time to reinforce anything that will make the New Brother more and more comfortable in the Masonic Environment.

After the New Brother has been seated as a member of the Lodge, the Success Coach's duties *increase rather than diminish*. By this time, the Coach and the Brother should be close friends and companions.

From that time on the Success Coach should:

- See that the Brother attends Lodge Communications regularly.
- Explain to him the forms, customs, and procedures peculiar to our Masonic Communications.
- Explain the various jewels worn by our officers, and the emblematic meaning of the various jewels and stave ornaments.
- Select a variety of Masonic activities including fun family activities and arrange to take the new Brother to them.
- Take the Brother to different Lodges and show him the fun of visitation including how to do it.
- Take the Brother to District Activities.
- Encourage the Brother to take the Masonic Development Course.
- Make sure he is made aware of our Masonic Care Community and explain the other charitable programs of the Grand Lodge to him.
- The Coach should find out the interests of the new Brother and report these to the Worshipful Master, that his talents may be utilized in the best interest of the Lodge.
- Reinforce the lessons of the Five Points of Fellowship as proper Masonic conduct while abroad in the world.

Many more means of service to the new Brother, and to the Craft, will suggest themselves during the first year of membership in which the Success Coach will act as a "big brother" to the new member, appointed to guide and direct him in this new adventure as a member of our Fraternity.

Remember, Coaches, yours is the golden opportunity to mold a new Brother into a Mason who is well qualified to travel and work as such.

It is very important to expose the new Brother to sources of Masonic Light such as:

- *"24 - Inch Gauge"
- * The Standard Work and Lectures
- * Masonic Development Course (MDC)
- * Copy of Lodge By-Laws
- * Lodge System of Masonic Education (LSOME)
- * The most current disc related to the Ritual Renaissance Program (RRP)
- * Key to Freemasonry's Growth - Allen E. Roberts
- * Masonic Lifeline - Allen E. Roberts

- * The Handbook of Masonic Law
- * The Monitor (Booklet 6)
- * Masonic Etiquette Booklet
- * The Grand Lodge Reading Course
- * The Philalethes Society
- * District Newsletters and Publications
- * Masonic Service Association Short Talk Bulletins
- * The Craft and Its Symbols – Allen E. Roberts

“What rules govern a Brother while speaking in a Lodge?”

This is covered in far more detail in the ‘Walk About’ program found in the LSOME booklet and in the Masonic Etiquette Booklet. A Brother who desires to speak should rise, come on the sign of fidelity and await recognition by the Worshipful Master. He should observe due order and decorum and should not discuss subjects that might disturb the harmony of the Lodge, such as political or religious matters. After he is finished speaking he should be seated.

“Who was the First Mason in America?”

The first speculative Mason to come to America is reputed to be John Skene, a native of Aberdeen, Scotland. He arrived in the colonies in 1682. He was number 27 on the membership role of Aberdeen Lodge No. 1 territorial. This lodge has minutes going back to 1670, which show that each Mason registered was required to make his mark (a sign by which his work would be labeled). This lodge was the mother lodge of Dr. James Anderson, who later authored Anderson’s Constitutions of 1723 in England. Skene was Deputy Governor of West Jersey from 1685 to his death in 1690.

“What and where was the First Lodge in America Formed?”

The first Masonic Lodge to be chartered in America was St. John’s Lodge in Philadelphia, PA. The constitution and other documentation show that it came into existence in 1727. The Constitution of some 22 pages still exists. Brother Thomas Cormick penned the work, which is the oldest known Masonic document written in America.

“Do Freemasons engage in Politics?”

Not as Freemasons, for to do so in the name of the Fraternity, or as a member thereof, would be contrary to our rules and regulations. However, as a citizen of his country, state, and nation, every Mason is urged to perform his civic duties through all possible channels of expression. He is not barred from participation in politics as a citizen. Many prominent politicians and statesmen of the past and the present have been and are members and staunch supporters of our Ancient Craft.

“Why Have Freemasons Been Persecuted in Totalitarian Countries?”

Communism, Fascism, and other Totalitarian Ideologies breed and thrive on darkness and ignorance. These forms of government are based on hatred of all persons outside their group and practice intolerance by suppressing all types of freedom. Persuasion is by force, not by intellect. Freemasons say, above all else, “Let there be Light.” The dictator, as such, must have control of every phase of the lives of his people, else he cannot be a “dictator.” Freemasons believe inherently in freedom and democracy and inculcate understanding among all men. Therefore, they can do naught but oppose a dictatorship and dictators will tolerate no diversity of thought or opinion, as history has amply proved. Thus Dictators have always repressed and persecuted Freemasons.

“What Constitutes Masonic Charity?”

The very form of a Lodge, as you will learn, is limited only by the vastness of the universe. Masonic Charity should be equally extensive and this refers to Charity in its broadest sense. Therefore, one of the fundamental tenets of a Mason’s profession is Relief.

Within the terms of our obligations every Mason has solemnly promised to “aid and assist all poor and distressed Master Masons, their widows and orphans” when they apply to him within the broad meaning of the obligation he has taken. This applies equally to Lodges, of course. This responsibility never ceases, and it is not restricted within tangible boundaries. Thus, Masonic Charity actually is, or should be, as boundless as the universe. The Mason who understands this fully and practices Charity in his daily life soon discovers why Charity has been called “the greatest of these.” His reward is that inward peace which “surpasseth all understanding.”

“Does the Masonic Fraternity in the State of New York Discriminate Against Ethnic or Minority Groups?”

The answer is “No!” Membership in a constituent Lodge of the Grand Lodge F. & A.M. of the State of New York is not restricted on the basis of a Man’s race, creed, religion or national origin. We have in our own membership Brethren of every generally known race, national origin, and organized religion.

To determine whether a given Lodge is considered regular or clandestine, a Brother should refer to the book “List of Lodges, Masonic” kept by the Secretaries and Tylers. If the Lodge does not appear in that book, it must be considered clandestine.

Meeting Number Six

This meeting takes place no later than six months after the new Brother becomes a Master Mason.

After six months of membership the Brother has formed some early opinions of his Masonic experience. The six month meeting is a time to take stock with the Brother as well as continuing to offer interesting topics to increase his knowledge.

Taking Stock

It is important to hear everything the Brother has to say and to not act defensively if he points out negatives or concerns. It is only through feedback that we can grow. If the Brother has great ideas, pass them along to the Worshipful Master and other appropriate officers. If there is negative feedback, assist the Brother in working through the problem in a Brotherly way.

Recommended Questions and topics of discussion:

1. How has the Lodge met your expectations?
2. How has the Lodge not met your expectations?
3. Do you feel a part of the Lodge?
4. What has impressed you the most about Freemasonry?
5. What can the Lodge do to increase the value of your membership?
6. Is there something you feel you can do to help the Lodge?
7. What are your areas of interest in the Lodge and the Craft as a whole?
8. Are there any activities and programs you would like the Lodge to sponsor?

On a scale of 1-10 with ten being the highest, rate your experience in Freemasonry thus far in the following categories:

Friendship and fellowship_____

Leadership_____

Family involvement_____

Educational opportunities_____

Chances to contribute_____

Success Coaching_____

The Success Coach should highlight the following:

- Reinforce the lessons of the Five Points of Fellowship as proper Masonic conduct while abroad in the world.
- Continue to make the new Brother aware of the opportunities for growth and self improvement.
- Reiterate the available resources to facilitate his Masonic Education.
- Continue to make him aware of social and educational events in the area including the offer of visitation to other Lodges.
- Assure him that he can count on your support for any good idea he may want to implement.

“What is a Clandestine Lodge and a Clandestine Mason?”

A clandestine Lodge is a Lodge not subordinate to any Grand Lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of New York. A clandestine Mason is a member of a clandestine Lodge. Thus, neither a clandestine Lodge nor a member thereof is considered to be a Masonic Lodge or a Mason by Grand Lodges or constituent Lodges of legitimate origin, i.e., descended from the Grand Lodge of 1717.

“Does New York recognize Prince Hall Masonry?”

Prince Hall Lodges are recognized in New York State. Lodges are regular or clandestine by virtue of the manner in which they and their Grand Lodges were formed, whether they demand a belief in deity and whether their practices are in accord with our ancient customs and usages. Prince Hall Masonry has done all of this since its very beginning. **The list of all lodges, which are recognized by the Grand Lodge of New York, is contained in the book kept by the Secretaries and Tyler’s of all lodges entitled “List of Lodges, Masonic.”**

At the 220th Annual Communication held in 2001, the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of New York voted overwhelmingly to fully recognize the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the State of New York. One month later the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the State of New York held their vote on the same matter. Thus, both hold mutual recognition in peace, love and Brotherhood from Long Island to Western New York. This is a major advancement in Masonic relations and it should be said that sadly not all Grand Lodges in the United States have made such efforts.

“Masonic Law - What are the oldest statements of Masonic Law in Freemasonry?”

First, the Old Charges, in manuscript form; later, the famous Constitutions of Freemasonry, compiled by the Rev. James Anderson in 1722 and published in 1723, commonly known as Anderson’s Constitutions. These, with the Ancient Landmarks, constitute the historical background of authority for the Book of Constitutions and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge of New York, which is the present fundamental law of Ancient Craft Masonry in this State.

“Where may I obtain a detailed explanation of Masonic Law?”

For a general explanation, see Mackey’s “Jurisprudence of Freemasonry.” For more detailed and specific information refer to the Book of Constitutions and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge of New York. All Lodges are required to have a copy on hand during communications and they may be purchased for personal use from Grand Lodge Sales.

“The Atholl Charter”

On January 23, 1781, in New York City, a meeting of representatives of six Lodges (Numbers 169, 441, 133, 210, Solomon’s and Sions) convened to form the Provincial Grand Lodge. This was held at the invitation of Lodge 169, which had moved from Boston to New York in 1776, along with the British Forces.

On September 5, 1781, in London, the Duke of Atholl, Grand Master of the Ancient Grand Lodge of England, signed the Provincial Grand Lodge Warrant also known as the Atholl Charter. In December 1782, the Atholl Warrant arrived from London instituting the official formation of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York.

“What are the powers of a Grand Lodge and from whence are they derived?”

The Grand Lodge is the highest source of Masonic authority in Craft Masonry within its jurisdiction. Its powers include the following: to grant Dispensations and Charters to organize Lodges, to hold jurisdiction over all Masons within the State in which it operates, to pass judgment on appeals from the decision of any Lodge, to assign jurisdictional lines between Lodges, to render final decision on controversies or grievances brought by appeal or otherwise, to enact laws and regulations which are the supreme Masonic law of the State, to assess and collect dues for the support of its activities, to supervise the state and condition of its own finances, to reprimand, suspend or expel any member from its own body for cause, to review the reports of its Officers and Lodges at each Annual Communication, and to do whatever may contribute to the well-being of the Fraternity in the State. Many other functions also will be found in an organization of our scale and functions! The Masonic Book of Law for New York lists these powers.

Grand Lodge consists of: the Lodges within its jurisdiction, represented by the Worshipful Masters or their legal representatives, present elected and appointed Grand Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, Past Elected Grand Lodge Officers, and Standing Committee Members - all of whom may vote at our Annual Grand Lodge Communication.

“What are the powers and privileges of the Grand Master?”

The Grand Master has the power: to convene the Grand Lodge in special meeting in case of emergency, to preside at all special and stated meetings, to exercise the executive functions of the Grand Lodge when not in session, to decide all interim questions of usage, order and Masonic Law, to require the attendance of and information from any of the Grand Lodge Officers concerning their respective offices and duties, to convene any Lodge within the jurisdiction and in person or by deputy to preside therein, inspect their proceedings and require their conformity to Masonic laws and rules, to issue his dispensation to any Lodge or in person to make a Mason or confer any degree at will subject only to the restraints of the Ancient Charges and the Landmarks of Masonry, to suspend the functions of any Lodge for good reasons to command every Grand Officer and to call on any of them for advice and assistance on matters and things relative to the Craft, in person or by proxy appoint representatives by warrant in any other recognized Grand Lodge and receive and accredit such representatives from other Grand Lodges, to see that the Ancient Landmarks and Charges are observed. All acts and decisions of the Grand Master are subject to review of Grand Lodge at the following Grand Lodge Communication.

“What are Grand Honors? Why and how are they given and to whom are they due?”

Grand Honors are a special form of Masonic applause, given to distinguished Brethren in authority or to anyone the Master deems deserving. When given, the Brother being honored should be escorted to the East. Grand Honors is given to all active Grand Lodge Officers and Grand Masters. If you receive Grand Honors you should come to the sign of fidelity.

“What is the proper way to wear a Masonic ring?”

New York has no Masonic regulations governing the wearing of personal jewelry or emblems by Masons. Many Masons like to wear the ring with the points of the compass toward their hearts, so that the Square and Compasses will appear in the same position that they occupied when they first beheld them. Others prefer that the Square and Compasses will appear “right side up” to the observer in the same position that a lapel emblem should occupy. In this matter, a Mason may be governed by his preference and sense of good taste.

“What is the George Washington Masonic Memorial and where is it located?”

The George Washington National Masonic Memorial is situated on Shooter’s Hill, on the outskirts of Alexandria, Virginia, on the land once owned by Washington and on a site originally proposed for the location of the Capitol of the United States. The movement to erect this great Memorial originated in 1910. The cornerstone was laid in 1923 and the Memorial was dedicated in 1932 as a part of the ceremonies commemorating the bicentennial of Washington’s birth. The Masons of New York, through their Grand Lodge, have contributed liberally to the erection and maintenance of this Memorial. It should be noted that this is the only project that all active Grand Lodges in the United States took active part in at the same time.

“Why are Masonic Lodges in some jurisdictions designated as A.F. & A.M., while in others they are F. & A.M.?”

Before the United Grand Lodge of England was formed in 1813, there were two Grand Lodges working in England. One was known as the “Ancients” and the other as the “Moderns.” Both of these Grand Lodges issued Charters to Lodges in the United States. Those Chartered by the “Moderns” (which was the older Grand Lodge) used the title F. & A.M., while those chartered by the “Ancients” used the title A.F. & A.M., (Ancient Free & Accepted Masons). The Grand Lodges in the various states then chose the title, either F. & A.M. or A.F. & A.M., preferred by the Lodges participating in the formation of that Grand Lodge.

Meeting Number Seven

One year of Membership Ceremony

This event takes place in the Lodge Room during a Stated Communication as close to the date of the anniversary as possible.

Time of Ceremony: Five-Seven minutes

Purpose: To honor the Brothers' first year of membership in the Lodge.

If a Lodge has a Years of Service Ceremony as part of their Trestleboard please include the One Year Anniversary as part of the program as long as it is close the anniversary date. If the Lodge had multiple Candidates then the Ceremony is performed for all of them.

Suggested format

- WM: My Brothers it is now time to perform a very pleasant duty.
- WM: Brother Marshal please escort Brothers _____ to the East.
- WM: *** Brethren, these Brothers (Name them individually) have been the Success Coaches for our Lodge. They have labored hard and well to help our New Brothers become good and faithful Masons of the Lodge. (Add any other comments)
- WM: For the Success Coaches, Grand Honors (given)
- WM: *
- WM: Brother Marshal escort Brothers _____ who are celebrating their one year anniversary of membership in Anylodge No.343.
- WM: Either the Master or the Success Coaches should make personalized unscripted comments about the Brothers.
- WM: It is now my pleasure to give you this certificate to celebrate your one year of membership. (Will have to be produced- Master should read the contents of one)
- WM: ***
- WM: For our Brothers celebrating one year of membership, Grand Honors (given)
- WM: * (All return to their seats)

End of Ceremony