

Mentoring Handbook



ACACIA LODGE NO. 1
Ancient Free & Accepted Masons
123 Hiram Road, Masontown, TX 75067

The Grand Lodge of Washington, F. & A.M.

Note: The following Mentoring Handbook has been extracted and adapted from material prepared by the Grand Lodge of Washington, F. & A.M.

MENTORING HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a map to guide you on the road to successful mentoring--a road that is becoming far more traveled. Mentoring is not a new concept; in fact, mentoring existed in ancient Greece. It is only that the road has been repaved with new ideas and styles that require a directional tool (i.e., map) for a successful journey.

This handbook will guide you through the mentoring process--what it means to be a mentor, the roles and responsibilities during your tutelage, and the different styles that you can adopt to meet the unique demands of a mentoring relationship. The mentor-mentee relationship is charted from beginning to end by tips on how to identify a mentee, cultivate the relationship, and avoid obstacles that can detour a mentor-mentee relationship. Finally, this handbook outlines the positive effects of traveling this road, effects that are shared by the mentor, the mentee, and the fraternity.

Recommendations for Use

This handbook contains comprehensive information on mentoring, with tips, suggestions, and examples to supplement this information. It is recommended that you read all sections of the handbook at least once. Whether you are a mentor-to-be who stands at the crossroads of mentoring, or an experienced mentor who is miles down the road, there is information to be learned. Once you have read the material, refer to the handbook whenever necessary. You may find that you refer to some sections more than others. Remember, this handbook is the map that guides you on the road to successful mentoring. You need to decide how to best use this tool.

What Is Mentoring

Mentoring is an open vista of new experiences and possibilities. One usually charts unfamiliar territory when attempting to define mentoring. Mentoring is not a term that is easy to define because it is an ever-changing process. The mentoring process links an experienced Mason (mentor) with a less experienced Mason (mentee) to help foster Masonic development and growth. The mentoring process requires that the mentor and mentee work together to reach specific goals and to provide each other with sufficient feedback to ensure that the goals are reached. Many define a mentor as a teacher who assigns tasks and reviews performance, but a mentor is more than a teacher. A mentor facilitates personal and Masonic growth in an individual by sharing the knowledge and insights that have been learned through the years. The desire to want to share these life experiences is characteristic of a successful mentor.

A successful mentor is also characterized as:

Supportive

A mentor is one who supports the needs and aspirations of a mentee. This supportive attitude is critical to the successful development of the mentee. A mentor must encourage the mentee to accept challenges and overcome difficulties.

Patient

A mentor is patient and willing to spend time performing mentoring responsibilities. A

mentor provides adequate time to interact with the mentee. Time requirements are defined by both the mentor and the mentee.

Respected

A mentor is someone who has earned the respect of his peers and/or his Fraternity. It is important that this person be someone to whom others can look at as a positive role model.

Just as a mentor is more than a teacher, a mentee is more than a student. A mentee, as a bright and motivated individual, is the future of the fraternity; the insurance that a well trained, high quality Mason will exist to meet long-term goals. Mentees represent a wide range of individuals in terms of age and work experience. A mentee is an achiever groomed for advancement by being provided opportunities to excel beyond the limits of his current position.

A mentee is the man new to Masonry, the junior colleague who needs to be taught everything about our great fraternity in order to make this good man better. Together, the mentor and mentee share mentoring experiences that, over time, can build a successful and enriching relationship. Of course, the success of this relationship depends on both the mentor and the mentee. Both you and your mentee must want the relationship to work. You must cooperate with each other to make the most of the experience.

***TIP:** Watch for signs of “lopsided” mentoring. This occurs when one party is devoting more time and energy to the mentoring process than the other. In most cases, efforts should be equal. Make sure you both are committing time and energy to the process.*

The success of the mentoring relationship also depends on how well the mentoring relationship is defined. You need to know each other’s expectations. Once you have a clear understanding of these expectations you will be able to ensure that each other’s expectations are being met.

Finally, you must be concerned with the overall development of your mentee. You should be the influencing force behind your mentee's Masonic growth--providing guidance, promoting participation in Lodge training, and assisting in decisions--to cultivate overall development.

MENTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Like marks around a compass, the roles you assume as a mentor point you in many different directions. Which role you assume depends on the needs of your mentee and on the relationship you build with your mentee. Each of the roles is explained in the next section to help you prepare for the different directions you will take.

Teacher

As a teacher, you may need to teach the mentee the skills and knowledge required to be a successful Mason. This role requires you to outline the “nuts and bolts” of the Lodge and to share your experiences as a seasoned Mason. You have identified the knowledge and skills that make a seasoned Mason. You need to identify what knowledge and skills the mentee already has and what knowledge and skills require development. Then, concentrate your efforts on helping your mentee develop his or her knowledge and skills.

It is in your best interest to ensure that your mentee develops in Masonry. There are many

different ways you can help your mentee develop. You should make a point of explaining, in detail, what you expect from your mentee. If you are helping your mentee develop leadership skills, provide examples of good Masonic leaders, when possible, for the mentee to follow. The most important developmental method you can use is to answer the questions your mentee poses. Keep in mind that you are not required to be the “expert” on everything. A good mentor knows when to direct the mentee to a knowledgeable source. Knowledgeable sources can be people or materials (e.g., handbook, diagram, chart, the internet).

As a teacher, it is important that you share the wisdom of past mistakes. A mentee cannot only learn from your errors, but also can realize that no one is perfect. Make a point to relate these learning experiences, special anecdotes, and trials whenever appropriate. It is this sharing of information that strengthens the mentor-mentee relationship.

Guide

As a guide, you help navigate through the inner workings of Masonry and decipher the “unwritten rules” for your mentee. This information is usually the “kernels of knowledge” that one only acquires over a period of time. The inner workings of Masonry are simply the “behind the scenes” dynamics that are not always apparent, but are crucial to know. The “unwritten rules” can include the special procedures your Lodge follows, the guidelines that are not always documented, and policies under consideration. This is known as the Lodge culture.

As a mentor, it is important that you explain the inner workings and “unwritten rules” to your mentee. Brief your mentee on who does what and the critical responsibilities that each performs. The mentee may well ask why all of the rules are not written so that mistakes or misinterpretations are not made. Sadly the answer may be that you don't know. A good mentor will strive to correct this deficiency in his lodge.

Counselor

The role of counselor requires you to establish a trusting and open relationship. In order to create a trusting relationship, you need to stress confidentiality and show respect for the mentee. You can promote confidentiality by not disclosing personal information that the mentee shares with you. Show respect by listening carefully and attentively to the mentee and by not interrupting while your mentee is talking.

The counselor role also encourages a mentee to develop problem-solving skills. A mentee must be able to think through problems rather than always depending on you to provide a solution. You can develop the mentee's problem-solving skills by advising the mentee to attempt to solve the problem before seeking assistance.

Motivator

As a motivator, you may at times need to generate motivation in your mentee. Motivation is an inner drive that compels a person to succeed. It is not often you will find an unmotivated mentee. In general, most mentees are enthusiastic about their journey in Masonry. After all, mentees tend to be characterized as highly motivated individuals with a thirst for knowledge. You usually perform the role of motivator only when you need to motivate your mentee to complete a difficult assignment or to pursue an ambitious goal. Through encouragement, support, and incentives, you can motivate your mentee to succeed.

One of the most effective ways to encourage your mentee is to provide frequent positive feedback during an assigned task or while the mentee strives toward a goal. Positive feedback is

a great morale booster that removes doubt, builds self-esteem, and results in your mentee feeling a sense of accomplishment. Concentrate on what the mentee is doing well and tell your mentee about these successes.

Advisor

This role requires you to help the mentee develop interests and set realistic Masonic goals. As the old saying goes, “If you don't know where you are going, you won't know how to get there.” This saying holds true for a mentee’s Masonic development. In the role of advisor, you need to think about where the mentee wants to go in Masonry. That is, you need to help the mentee set Masonic goals.

There are several factors to consider when setting Masonic goals.

- Goals should be specific. Goals need to be clearly explained using details about what the mentee wants to achieve.
- Goals must be time-framed. You both need to plan an overall time frame for goals with interim deadlines to ensure that your mentee is moving toward these goals. It is important not to make goals too future oriented. Most mentors recommend that you keep goal time frames within a three to six month range.
- Goals must be results oriented. You need to concentrate on the results of their efforts, not so much on the activities that are required to accomplish them. An activity provides a way of reaching the goal, but the end result (the goal) should not be neglected.
- Goals must be relevant. The goals must be appropriate and in tune with Masonry, while moving the mentee closer to the knowledge and proficiency that he finds challenging and enjoyable.
- Goals must be reachable. The goals must be within the mentee's reach. The mentee needs to feel challenged, but not incapable of reaching the goals. You must consider the special talents of your mentee and weigh these talents with the requirements of the goal for which your mentee strives.

You may want to create several Masonic goals to eliminate the possibility of your mentee feeling “trapped.” However, goals should be limited in number. You need to avoid setting too many goals at once. Concentrate first on setting goals that will help your mentee accomplish what needs to be done (i.e. proficiency in his current degree). Keep in mind that goals must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in the mentee’s personal life. Goals shouldn’t be so rigid that adjustments can’t be made.

Referral Agent

Once Masonic goals are set, you are likely to assume the role of referral agent. As such, work with your mentee to develop an action plan that outlines what knowledge, skills, and abilities a mentee needs to meet his goals. There are several steps that you and your mentee should follow when developing an action plan.

Target the areas that require development. To do so, know the requirements of the next goal or position. Perhaps talk to people who have achieved the goal or hold the position, or visit with the Worshipful Master to obtain information. You should identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required for the goal and weigh these against the knowledge, skills, and abilities that your mentee already possesses. Are there any that require development? What knowledge needs to be acquired and skills honed to meet the demands of the goal?

MENTOR AND MENTEE CHARACTERISTICS

CHARACTERISTICS OF A MENTOR

To successfully assume the different roles of a mentor, you need to display certain characteristics. As previously mentioned, a successful mentor is characterized as supportive, patient, and respected. There are other characteristics a successful mentor should possess. Some of these are listed in the following paragraphs.

People Oriented

A mentor is one who is genuinely interested in people and has a desire to help others. A successful mentor is one who has good people skills, that is, a mentor knows how to effectively communicate and actively listen. A mentor must also be able to resolve conflicts and give appropriate feedback.

Good Motivator

A mentor is someone who inspires a mentee to do better. A mentor needs to be able to motivate a mentee through encouraging feedback and challenging assignments. A mentor once described this characteristic by saying, “a mentor needs to stretch the mentee’s potential, setting new limits for what the mentee can do.”

Effective Teacher

A mentor must thoroughly understand the mentee’s current knowledge and goals, and be able to effectively teach his mentee. A mentor must not only teach the “skills of the craft,” but also manage the learning of the mentee. This means that a mentor must actively try to recognize and use teaching opportunities.

Secure In Position

A mentor must be confident in his Masonic knowledge so that pride for the mentee’s accomplishments can be genuinely expressed. A mentor should appreciate a mentee’s developing strengths and abilities, without viewing these accomplishments as a threat. A secure mentor delights in a mentee’s discoveries and welcomes a mentee’s achievements. In truth, a mentor enjoys being a part of the mentee’s growth and development.

An Achiever

A mentor is usually an achiever himself, one who sets realistic goals, continually evaluates these goals, strives to reach them, and demonstrates a thirst for Masonic knowledge and improvement. A successful mentor is usually one who takes on more responsibility than is required, volunteers for more activities, and tends to climb the proverbial Masonic ladder at a quick pace.

A mentor attempts to inspire a mentee with the same drive for achievement. This “attempt at achievement,” or thirst for Masonic knowledge, is the flint that sparks a mentee’s desire for Masonic success. In this way, a mentor helps a mentee set, evaluate, and reach Masonic goals.

Values Masonry

A mentor takes pride in being a Mason and relishes the every day challenges that

typically arise. A mentor understands the vision and values of the fraternity and supports his lodge and Grand Lodge initiatives. A mentor should be well versed in lodge culture as well as its particular policies and procedures. Keep in mind that a mentee looks to his mentor for guidance on interpreting policies and procedures as well as understanding the lodge culture. In order to provide this guidance, you need to be well versed in all of these areas.

Respects Others

A mentor is one who shows regard for another's well-being. Every person, including the mentor, has certain vulnerabilities and imperfections that must be accepted. A mentor should learn to accept a mentee's weaknesses and minor flaws, just as the mentee must learn to accept the weaknesses and flaws of the mentor. Mentors can, in fact, help a mentee explore his vulnerabilities and imperfections. Without passing judgment, a mentor must also recognize the differences in opinions, values, and interests that will exist. By accepting such differences, a mentor projects openness to others.

Not all these characteristics are equally found in everyone. If you fall short in one or several of these characteristics, it doesn't mean that you can't be a successful mentor. It just means that you need to strengthen those characteristics that you think are a bit weak.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A MENTEE

A successful mentoring relationship not only depends on the characteristics of the mentor, but also on the characteristics of the mentee. The following list outlines the characteristics of the ideal mentee.

Eagerness To Learn

A mentee has a strong desire to learn. A mentee seeks educational and/or training opportunities whenever possible to broaden his knowledge. A mentee strives to elevate his level of Masonic knowledge to gain a greater mastery of the Craft. A mentee should also be permitted and encouraged to search out a Mason whom he believes that he will be compatible with and whom he believes will be of value in his own Masonic enlightenment.

Ability To Work As A Team Player

A mentee must interact with many others as a part of the fraternity. Therefore, it is important that the mentee cooperate and communicate with the brethren. A mentee must learn how to be a team player, to contribute as much as possible to the mentoring relationship. To do this, a mentee should:

- Initiate and participate in discussions
- Seek information and opinions
- Suggest a plan for reaching goals
- Clarify or elaborate on ideas
- Try to ease tension between parties
- Resolve differences
- Be fair with praise and criticism
- Accept praise and criticism.

Patient

A mentee must be willing to put time and effort into the mentoring relationship. A mentee must persevere through the difficulties that arise during the learning process. Many mentees, at one time or another, feel frustrated because they feel confined in their current position. A mentee should be realistic enough to know that Masonic knowledge doesn't happen overnight. In fact, it takes a lifetime, for mentoring should be a life long process, at all levels, throughout the entire Fraternity.

Risk Taker

As a risk taker, a mentee must be willing to travel from "safe harbor" into the seas of uncertainty. This means that a mentee must move beyond tasks that he has mastered and accept new and more challenging experiences. This can be difficult for a mentee because this means giving up the known for the unknown. With each new task, a mentee may ask, "Can I really do this?"

Task changes are never easy for a mentee. A mentee must realize that to grow in Masonry, it is necessary to assess oneself, to acquire needed knowledge and to make contact with other brothers. A mentee must be willing to take chances! In fact, a mentor should encourage risk taking.

Positive Attitude

This is the most important trait for a mentee to possess because it is a bright and hopeful attitude that can help a mentee succeed. A mentee with a poor or "defeatist" attitude will not move ahead as the first "bump in the road" will jar this person off course. An optimistic mentee is more likely to tackle difficulties and to stay on course. A mentee should not be afraid to fail.

Remember, these characteristics are desired characteristics of the "ideal" mentee. If your mentee has only two or three of these characteristics, this does not mean that the mentoring relationship will fail. It may, however, take extra effort to overcome possible obstacles that could arise from lacking one or several of these characteristics.

MENTEE'S ROLE

Mentoring creates a partnership between two individuals--the mentor and the mentee. In a previous section you learned the roles of the mentor, but a mentor is not the only one that must wear many hats. A mentee must also perform several roles.

A mentee is the gauge to measure how interactive a mentoring partnership will be. This means that a mentee determines the capacity of the mentoring relationship. Your mentee decides upon the amount of dependence and guidance he needs. A mentee should take the initiative to ask for help or advice and to tackle more challenging work.

A mentee is the student who needs to absorb the mentor's knowledge and have the ambition to know what to do with this knowledge. As a student, the mentee needs to practice and demonstrate what has been learned.

A mentee is a trainee who should blend mentoring with other training approaches. The mentee must participate in Masonic training programs, in addition to seeking your advice. By participating in other programs, the mentee becomes a better-rounded and versatile individual and Mason.

ESSENTIALS OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

When you are traveling to an unfamiliar destination, there are probably some essentials you should take to make your trip a success, a road map, directions, and perhaps a contact's telephone number in case you get lost. Well, as you begin your Masonic mentoring journey, there are several essentials that you should know to make your journey a success. These essential factors are:

- Respect
- Trust
- Partnership Building
- Self Esteem
- Time

Respect

The first essential of a successful mentoring relationship is respect. Respect is established when the mentee recognizes knowledge, skills, and abilities in the mentor that he would like to possess. The mentee then attempts to acquire these much-admired characteristics. Respect usually increases over time.

Trust

Trust is another essential of a successful mentoring relationship. Trust is a two-way street--both mentors and mentees need to work together to build trust. There are four factors to building trust:

*Communication + Availability + Predictability + Loyalty = **TRUST***

Communication: You need to talk and actively listen to your mentee. It is important to value your mentee's opinions and let your mentee know that he is being taken seriously. Your mentee can help to build trust in the relationship by honestly relaying his goals and concerns and by listening to your opinions.

Availability: You should be willing to meet with your mentee whenever he needs you. Remember the "open door" policy, that is, you should keep the door open as often as possible. Your mentee should also make time for this relationship.

Predictability: Your mentee needs you to be dependable and reliable. You should make a point to give consistent feedback, direction, and advice. You should also be able to predict the needs of your mentee. Conversely, your mentee needs to be consistent in his actions and behavior. Although your mentee will grow and change during the mentoring relationship, drastic changes in behavior or attitude could signal a problem. Look for these indicators of potential trouble in your mentoring relationship: frequent switches in direction, frequent arguments, frustration at lack of progress, excessive questioning of each decision or action taken, floundering.

Loyalty: Never compromise your relationship by discussing your mentee's problems or concerns with others. In addition, instruct your mentee not to discuss your relationship with others. Keep the information discussed between the two of you in strict confidence. Avoid criticizing or

complaining about other Masons. Disloyalty to the organization or a brother may cause confusion on the part of your mentee.

Partnership Building

The third essential is “partnership-building” activities. When you enter a mentoring relationship, you and your mentee become Masonic partners. There are natural barriers that all partnerships face. Natural barriers may include miscommunication or an uncertainty of each other’s expectations. Five improvement activities can help you overcome these barriers:

- Maintain communication
- Fix obvious problems
- Forecast how decisions could affect goals
- Discuss progress
- Monitor changes

You and your mentee can use the following activities to help build a successful partnership.

- Show enthusiasm. Create a positive atmosphere by showing enthusiasm and excitement for your mentee’s efforts.
- Create an atmosphere for emotional acceptance. Since a person can resist being changed, transformation is a campaign for the heart as well as the mind. Help your mentee feel accepted as he experiences Masonic growth.
- Approach change slowly. Listen to your mentee and be responsive to his concerns. When drastic changes occur, a person needs time to accept and experiment with these changes.

Partnership-building activities are not only useful when building a mentoring partnership, but also are helpful to your mentee when interacting with others.

Self Esteem

The fourth essential to a successful mentoring relationship is to build your mentee’s self-esteem. All people have the desire to believe they are worthwhile and valuable. To help build your mentee’s self-esteem, encourage him to have realistic expectations of himself and the mentoring relationship. Dissatisfaction can result if the mentee expects too much of himself, the mentoring relationship, or his progress. Discuss realistic expectations together. Encourage your mentee to have a realistic self-perception. You can help define your mentees self-perception by identifying your mentee's social traits, intellectual capacity, beliefs, talents, and roles.

***Tip:** Always provide honest feedback. Your mentee deserves the truth, and honest feedback helps your mentee keep a realistic self-perception.*

Encourage your mentee to change a poor self-perception. Changing a poor self-perception requires a good deal of commitment from your mentee. There are two reasons for a poor self-perception: the mentee “can’t” be the person he would like to be or the mentee “won’t” be the person he would like to be.

A mentee “can’t” change when he does not have the skills or abilities to change. You can help your mentee change this self-perception by helping him develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to become the person he wants to be. Often, a mentee with a poor self-perception claims

he “won’t” be the person he would like to be because he is not willing to do what is required. You need to instill in your mentee that a poor self-perception can be changed if he is willing to make the effort.

Time

The fifth essential is time. During the mentoring relationship, make time to interact with your mentee. Specifically set aside time for your mentee. Set meeting times with your mentee and don’t change these times unless absolutely necessary. Meet periodically, at mutually convenient times and at times when you know you won’t be interrupted. In addition to making time in your schedule, realize that you need to give your mentee adequate time to grow Masonically.

MENTORING SKILLS

Building skills such as listening, counseling, and advising are crucial skills for a mentor.

Listening Skills

There are two styles of listening, one-way listening, and two-way listening. One-way listening, also known as passive listening, occurs when a listener tries to understand the speaker’s remarks without actively trying to provide feedback. In this style of listening there is little or no feedback. The listener may deliberately, or unintentionally, send nonverbal messages such as eye contact, smiles, yawns, or nods. However, there is no verbal response to indicate how the message is being received. Sometimes one-way listening is an appropriate way to listen. If your mentee wants to air a gripe, vent frustration, or express an opinion, you may want to practice one-way listening. Your mentee may not want or need a verbal response, but only wants you to serve as a “sounding board.” One-way listening is also appropriate when you want to ease back mentally and be entertained. It would be a mistake to interrupt your mentee as he relates a good joke or story.

Two-way listening involves verbal feedback. There are two types of feedback that you can use as a listener. One type of verbal feedback involves a questioning response. You ask for additional information to clarify your idea of the mentee’s message. For instance, you may want to ask, “What do you mean?” By asking this type of question, you are asking your mentee to elaborate on information already given. The second type of verbal feedback is paraphrasing. In this type of feedback, you need to demonstrate that you have understood your mentee’s concerns. You need to rephrase your mentee’s ideas in your own words. If you concentrate on restating your mentee’s words, you can avoid selective listening, which is responding only to parts of the conversation that interest you.

TIP. *You can summarize your mentee’s points by saying, “Let me make sure I’m with you so far,” or “The way you see the problem is...”*

A key to strengthening your listening skills is to improve your concentration. You can improve concentration by using the following suggestions.

- **Holding your fire:** Learn not to get too excited or angry about the individual’s point until you are sure you understand it. Do not immediately draw conclusions whether the meaning is “good” or “bad.” Reduce your emotional reactions.

- Listening for the main points: When listening to your mentee, focus on the main ideas. Make a mental outline of his or her most important points. Look at your mentee to understand what is being communicated.
- Resisting distractions: While listening to your mentee, try to ignore your surroundings, outside noises, or other distractions. Try to concentrate on your mentee's facial expressions, or his emphasis on certain words.
- Capitalizing upon thought speed: On an average, you speak 125 words a minute. You think, and therefore listen, at almost four times that speed. You need to remember not to let your mind stray while you are waiting for the person's next thought. Instead, try to "listen between the lines." You can do this by interpreting your mentee's non-verbal messages.
- Listening for the whole meaning: Listen for feeling as well as fact. In other words, try to "get inside the other person's head."

Counseling

During the course of the mentoring relationship, you may be required to counsel your mentee on problems that can stem from conditions outside of the Lodge, or from conflicts in the Lodge. You may also counsel your mentee on how to make certain decisions. As a mentor, you should be familiar with the non-directive approach to counseling. The focus of this approach is to let your mentee discover problems and work out solutions that best fit his value system. This type of approach avoids the need for making a diagnosis.

***TIP:** One role you don't want to assume is that of psychoanalyst. Never try to diagnose a mentee's problem.*

A non-directive counseling approach requires you to use active listening skills. While listening to your mentee, refrain from passing judgment. You should accept the different values and opinions of your mentee without imposing your own values and opinions. Make your mentee feel comfortable and at ease and show a genuine interest in your mentee's welfare. Attempt to get your mentee to "open up" with phrases such as: "I see, would you like to tell me about it?" "Would you help me to better understand what you're feeling?" "Why do you feel that way?" "OK ... what happened?"

As part of the non-directive approach, you should learn how to reflect on what has been said by your mentee. A non-directive approach does NOT mean that you are passive throughout the discussion. Any discussion, if it is to be productive, requires give and take. You should reflect on your mentee's statement by restating the key point(s). Make sure you really know what your mentee is trying to tell you.

It is not unusual for a person to stop talking during a conversation to organize thoughts, focus opinions, interpret feelings, or simply catch his breath. You may feel great pressure to break the silence by saying something. However, it is better to let your mentee restart the conversation and continue the conversation at their own pace. This eliminates putting too much of your own feelings and biases into the conversation.

If your mentee becomes emotional during your discussion, let him work through the feelings. After an emotional release, it is not unusual for a person to feel shame and guilt. If your mentee wants to discuss this emotional release, you should allow him to talk freely about it.

With a non-directive approach, it is better to let your mentee arrive at their own solutions.

(This helps your mentee sharpen problem-solving abilities.) Of course you can give advice to your mentee, but you need to emphasize that this advice comes from your own perspective or experience. If you are asked for advice, preface your statements with “From my experience...” or “The way I view the situation...” or “If I were in your situation, I would consider...”. These statements help your mentee understand that this advice is from your perspective. It is the mentee’s choice and responsibility to decide whether or not to apply it. Remember the more serious and personal your mentee’s concern, the more cautious you should be about giving advice.

It goes without saying that confidences should be maintained. You should use considerable discretion in handling sensitive or confidential information. Realize that your mentee may be feeling anxiety, apprehension, or fear about disclosing this information to you. Your mentee may wonder how this information is going to be interpreted or acted upon. (This is where trust really is a factor.)

When you counsel your mentee, you can learn to better understand how your mentee thinks, feels, acts, or reacts. In fact, counseling can effectively stimulate your mentee’s problem-solving ability.

Advising

Mentoring requires you to help your mentee set goals and to meet these goals within a specified time frame. First, you need to determine your mentee’s interests. To help your mentee determine his interests begin by asking questions such as: What activities do you enjoy or find satisfying in Masonry? What outside activities or other organizations do you enjoy? In what other volunteer programs are you active?

Keep in mind that your mentee may have difficulty identifying his skills and abilities for three reasons. People tend to be modest and not want to toot their own horns. People tend to recall only those attributes necessary to address their current experiences. People tend to diminish their abilities by thinking the abilities are common to everyone.

Second, once your mentee shares some of his interests, begin to categorize these interests. By categorizing your mentee’s interests, you can help your mentee focus on the areas of knowledge that he enjoys. Once you have identified your mentee’s interests, you need to identify his skills and abilities within these interest areas. You need to gather this information to focus your mentee’s goals and his areas of interest.

Ask your mentee: What do you think are your responsibilities? What knowledge, skills, and abilities do you need to meet these responsibilities? What do you believe are your strengths? Often knowledge, skills, and abilities are shown in accomplishments. Accomplishments include the successful completion of any assignment or task that clearly demonstrates a particular skill or combination of skills. Have your mentee think about his professional, personal, or Masonic accomplishments by asking your mentee the following questions: What would you consider to be your three most significant accomplishments? Why do you consider these to be the most significant? You can help your mentee reveal knowledge, skills, and abilities by forcing him to closely examine professional, personal, or Masonic accomplishments.

Third, once you have determined your mentee’s interests, knowledge, skills, and abilities, help your mentee to formulate and develop or isolate his Masonic, as well as his personal goals. Masonic goals are desires to enhance one’s Masonic interaction and personal endeavors. Masonic development goals are sometimes hard to quantify so be patient and willing to accept small detours along the path that you are traveling. Ask your mentee: Where would you like to

be in three years (long-term goals)? What series of one-year goals (short-term goals) could lead you to these objectives?

You can set a formalized Masonic education structure for your mentee by writing the long-term and short-term goals on a planning worksheet. Keep in mind that your mentee's goals must be realistic and flexible. You also should ensure that the mentee's goals coincide with Masonry's philosophy and culture. Once you have identified the Masonic development goals, organize these goals in one of the following categories.

- Knowledge goals: These goals are desires to advance one's Masonic knowledge and proficiency. To attain Masonic knowledge goals, one must use his previous knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Target areas: Target areas are subtasks that a mentee needs to do to reach his Masonic goals.
- Social goals: Social goals are aspirations to meet other brothers to build a network of contacts.
- Personal goals: Personal goals are strong desires to improve oneself.

Fourth, once your mentee's goals are established, you need to meet at least every six weeks to evaluate them. You and your mentee may want to adjust Masonic development goals as your mentee's interests change.

TYPES OF MENTORING

There are three different routes one can take on the road to successful mentoring. The three routes to mentoring are:

- Traditional mentoring
- Planned mentoring
- Self-mentoring

Although these routes will lead you to the same destination, you need to decide which route to follow.

Traditional Mentoring

Traditional mentoring also referred to as informal mentoring, focuses primarily on the mentee. This type of mentoring promotes the examination of the mentee's Masonic path through goal setting. The mentor and mentee work together to devise an action plan that sets Masonic goals that will lead the mentee on the appropriate path. Traditional mentoring not only encourages the mentee to establish Masonic goals but also advocates setting personal goals. The overall development of the individual is the focus of traditional mentoring. Traditional mentoring is a natural process; that is, the mentor and mentee pair together by their own internal forces. Internal forces such as mutual respect, shared experiences, and common interests are the ingredients that create the relationship.

With this type of mentoring, you can say that a mentor and mentee come together through a special chemistry. Generally, traditional mentoring lasts between 8-15 years, although friendships that are formed through this type of mentoring can last a lifetime.

Another characteristic of traditional mentoring is that it involves frequent social interaction between the mentor and mentee. This type of mentoring relationship usually results in the mentor and mentee spending time together outside of the Lodge and sharing a friendly,

comfortable relationship. This type of mentoring is usually successful because the two parties have a genuine concern for each other's well being. Friendship, rather than acquaintance, keeps the two parties together.

Planned Mentoring

Planned mentoring, also known as formal mentoring, focuses on the goals of the lodge as well as the individual. This results in benefits to both the lodge and the mentee. This type of mentoring promotes a "formal" approach to the relationship so there is little or no out of Lodge social interaction. The mentor and mentee rarely see each other outside the Lodge. The mentor and mentee are not concerned with developing a friendship as much as they are interested in meeting the Lodge's needs. After all, the basis for the relationship is organizational commitment.

Planned mentoring usually lasts from six to eight months. This phase will entail assisting the mentee getting through his degrees proficiency. The relationship ends when the Lodge's goals are reached. This type of mentoring takes a systematic approach that consists of four steps:

- Write a formal contract: The mentor and mentee develop a contract (or plan) that outlines expectations and obligations. Both participants agree to the contract to bind the relationship.
- Train participants: The Lodge trains the participants to understand their roles as mentor and mentee.
- Monitor the relationship: The mentor and mentee monitor the mentoring program to ensure compliance with the formal contract.
- Evaluate the program: The program is evaluated to determine the results.

Note: Some mentoring relationships develop into a combination of both planned and traditional.

Self-Mentoring

Although self-mentoring can be considered a type of mentoring, it differs significantly from the other two mentoring types. Why? Because self-mentoring is more a strategy than a type as there is no mentor who promotes the development of a mentee. Rather, the individual cultivates his own Masonic growth through self-tutoring activities and resource-finding techniques. Self-mentoring requires the individual to be highly motivated and self-disciplined. The individual prefers to increase his Masonic knowledge and augment his Masonic obligations by building a body of knowledge in the craft and developing skills without the aid of other brothers.

There are several self-mentoring strategies that successful individuals have used. Here are five strategies that individuals have used to help advance their Masonic growth.

- Ask questions and listen carefully to the experts in Masonry. This includes finding out who is the authority on a subject and asking detailed questions. Talk to brothers who are in positions to which you aspire.
- Read and research materials in Masonry and related fields. Learn new information from magazines, books, and periodicals.
- Observe brothers in leadership positions. Individuals can learn a lot about the inner workings of Masonry and different leadership styles simply by watching those in authority.
- Attend educational programs. Educational programs may include conferences, seminars, night classes, or training courses.

- Seek out new opportunities. Volunteer for projects or join concordant organizations. You may want to alert your mentee to these strategies. A mentee should be encouraged to look for opportunities to develop independently, outside of the traditional mentoring arena.

MENTORING STAGES

Mentoring, as a dynamic and ever-changing process, consists of different stages that provide a mentee with the opportunity to learn and grow. A mentor needs to be aware that each stage requires that different roles be assumed. There are four stages of mentoring.

- Prescriptive
- Persuasive
- Collaborative
- Confirmative

Prescriptive

In the first stage of mentoring, the Prescriptive Stage, the mentee usually has little or no experience in Masonry or in the lodge. This stage is most comfortable for the novice mentee, who depends heavily on you for support and direction. This is where you are prescribing and advising your mentee.

The Prescriptive Stage requires you to give a lot of praise and attention to build your mentee's self-confidence. You will devote more time to your mentee in this stage than in any of the other stages. You will provide detailed guidance and advice to your mentee on many, if not all, Masonic issues and procedures. In this stage, think of the mentee as a sponge, soaking up every new piece of information you provide. You will share many of your experiences, trials, and anecdotes during this stage.

***TIP:** Give examples of how you or other people handled similar situations and what consequences resulted.*

Persuasive

The Persuasive Stage, the second stage, requires you to take a strong approach with your mentee. In this stage, you actively persuade your mentee to find answers and seek challenges. The mentee usually has some experience, but needs firm direction to be successful. During this stage, your mentee may need to be prodded into taking risks. Suggest new strategies, coach, question, and push your mentee into discoveries.

Collaborative

In the Collaborative Stage, the mentee has enough experience and ability that he can work together with the mentor to jointly solve problems and participate in more equal communication. In this stage, the mentee actively cooperates with the mentor in his Masonic development.

Confirmative

The Confirmative Stage is suitable for mentees with a lot of experience who have mastered the degree proficiencies, but require your insight into Masonic policies and procedures. In this stage, you act more as a sounding board or empathetic listener.

While everyone can benefit from a mentor at any point in his life, the ultimate goal of the mentoring stages is to produce a well-rounded, competent Mason who outgrows the tutelage of a mentor. Your relationship should evolve to the point where you mentee is self-motivated, confident, and polished. Ideally, you want your protégé to move on to become a mentor to another colleague.

Each mentoring stage is characterized by the degree of dependence your mentee has on you as a mentor. The degree of mentee dependency is greatest at the Prescriptive Stage, with dependency decreasing with each subsequent stage. This means that a mentee who is successfully capable of working independently most of the time would be comfortable in the Confirmative Stage. As the mentee grows in Masonry, the amount of dependence decreases, until the mentee is shaped into an independent and competent Freemason.

OBSTACLES IN A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

During the course of your mentoring relationship, you and your mentee may experience roadblocks. Roadblocks are obstacles that could hinder a developing relationship. There are obstacles unique to a mentor and obstacles that only a mentee may encounter.

The obstacles that could confront a mentor include a mentoring style that does not meet the mentee's needs or suits the mentor. What happens when ...

- A highly organized mentor has a mentee with a relaxed work style?
- A creative mentee has a mentor who practices the old school of thought?
- An assertive mentor has a mentee with a reserved personality?

Of course you can guess what would happen ...frustration!

As a mentor, your style of mentoring may not always match the needs of your mentee. Your mentoring style has a lot to do with who you are and how you interact with people. If you are a detail-oriented person, you probably tend to give extensive directions or outline each step of an assignment. If you are a person who tends to see the "big picture," you probably are more inclined to give looser, perhaps even vague, directions to your mentee. Of course, noting these differences does not make one style better than the other. However, differences in styles between you and your mentee can pose an obstacle. Both of you need to understand each other's styles. Be flexible, but remember that disorganization and sloppiness warrant improvement rather than acceptance.

Frustration may also occur when you don't adapt your style to meet the developing needs of your mentee. As your relationship evolves, your mentee's confidence grows as Masonic knowledge and proficiency develop and successes are relished. You need to adjust your mentoring techniques to keep in sync with your mentee's evolution. In time, detailed directions or certain problem-solving strategies may be considered stifling by your developing mentee. Consider giving less and accepting more from your mentee. Once you evaluate your mentee and discover the required amount of guidance, you can determine what style is appropriate for your mentee.

Another potential obstacle for mentors is insufficient time. Some mentors can't seem to devote enough time to their mentee. Other commitments in your life may prevent you from spending enough time with your mentee. If you start to sacrifice sufficient time with your mentee because of other commitments, he may lose faith in you and your mentoring relationship will suffer. Another obstacle involving time occurs when a mentor expects too much progress from

the mentee, in an unrealistic amount of time. You need to give your mentee time to grow in Masonry and to make mistakes along the way. Try not to be impatient with your mentee and expect too much too soon.

Unless you are your mentee's ritualistic instructor, you may find that the mentee's instructor feels excluded from the mentoring relationship. It is imperative that you do not undermine the authority of your mentee's instructor in teaching the trial questions and answers.

Another possible obstacle involves a mentee's inappropriate attitude toward the mentoring relationship. Some mentees expect too much from their mentors, demanding more time and attention than they actually need. Others may expect to control their mentors. Be firm with your mentee about commitments and responsibilities. In terms of social etiquette, you must be supportive of your mentee and sensitive to cultural differences. For example, in some cultures, there is a preference towards modesty, reserve, and control. Where as, with another culture, directness or emotionally intense, dynamic, and demonstrative behavior is considered appropriate.

These are just a few of the obstacles you and your mentee may encounter during your relationship, but with time and effort these obstacles can be overcome.

BENEFITS OF MENTORING

Mentoring provides benefits to the mentor, mentee, and Masonry. An overwhelming number of mentors have stated that one of the greatest rewards of being a mentor is the personal satisfaction of fostering the Masonic growth of their mentees. This personal satisfaction that a mentor feels is one benefit to a mentor.

As a mentor, you may reap the following rewards:

- A chance to cultivate your own Masonic knowledge, Masonic leadership, and interpersonal skills. You sharpen these skills by delegating challenging work to your mentee and by giving constructive feedback.
- A source of recognition from your peers. Others will respect the role you have in imparting Masonic to your mentee.
- The potential for developing rewarding Masonic contacts by interacting with other mentors, as well as with contacts made through your mentee.
- Learning from your mentee--mentors and mentees can learn from each other.

Here are some specific ways that a mentee can benefit from mentoring:

- The mentee is provided a role model and sounding board. By using the mentor as a role model, the mentee can learn from example. In addition, the mentee can use the mentor as a sounding board to express new ideas or to vent frustrations.
- For the novice mentee, mentoring allows for a smoother transition into the workings of the Lodge. A mentee who is new to Masonry may join the Lodge with unrealistic expectations and naive illusions. A mentor can make this adjustment period easier through communication, understanding, and guidance.
- The mentee will have an opportunity to work on challenging and interesting projects and can be given a chance to try different and more advanced tasks.

Appendix A
New Candidate Materials

- Between Friends Flyer
- A Response to a Non-Mason's Request for Information
- Petition for the Degrees of Freemasonry
- How Well Are We Guarding The West Gate?
- Investigation Report Form
- In Search of Light: An Annotated Bibliography of Masonic Resources

A Response to a Non-Mason's Request for Information

Thank you for your interest in Freemasonry! Our purpose in the next several minutes will be to tell you about our organization and to try to satisfy your curiosity. We want to deal with any further questions you may have, so feel free to ask questions at any time. We believe that becoming a Mason is a significant occasion in your life, and we want you to feel confident and comfortable with what is involved.

Masonry has a different meaning for each of us, but for all of us, it includes the practice of morality. It is often said that the basic principles of Freemasonry include brotherly love, relief, and truth. That is to say, we strive to be friendly, kind, and sincere in our dealings with others. Masonry also recognizes each individual's right to his own beliefs and practices. For this reason, we are not allowed to discuss matters of religious or political controversy in the context of the Lodge. This love and tolerance for all men, so fundamental in Masonry, leads to mutual respect and honor.

In Masonry, you will find men of good will and high ideals; men who believe in a Supreme Being and who try to live in a spirit of universal brotherhood. In general terms, a Masonic Lodge is a place where all can work together with a rare unanimity, looking towards a brighter tomorrow.

Freemasonry recognizes that you have obligations to your family, your work, your religious beliefs, your community, and yourself. These must take priority, and Freemasonry does not interfere with your ability to meet these obligations. It simply attempts to share brotherly love and fellowship, and to offer a helping hand. Although it is a fraternity, it is neither a service club nor a benevolent society. It does participate in and support many charitable activities. One of our first lessons is our responsibility to care for others.

As a member of the fraternity, you will have rights and corresponding duties. You will be expected to maintain the regulations of the fraternity; in general terms, to be obedient to your Worshipful Master and his officers, when acting in the discharge of their duties; to pay the dues that you may owe promptly; and to attend meetings when requested. These basic duties are common to every Lodge; others will be explained as you advance through the degrees.

The privileges that accompany these duties are equally important. They include the right to attend all meetings of the Lodge when qualified; the right to participate in voting on Lodge affairs; and the privilege of visiting other Lodges on appropriate occasions, when you are properly qualified. Your regular attendance at our meetings will give you a chance to learn more about Masonry, as you listen to our age-old ceremonies and discuss them with your brethren. You will also be able to enjoy fraternal fellowship and develop new friendships.

We encourage you to share your feelings about becoming a Mason with your wife and family, and to discuss Masonry and its objectives with them. There is much more that might be said; we have barely scratched the surface. For now, however, let me conclude by saying that we look forward to having you in our midst. All of us recall our admission into Masonry with a mixture of nostalgia and joy. You may be sure that an interesting set of experiences lies before you; they will be dignified, instructive, and sometimes even inspiring. In addition, once you are a part of Freemasonry, you will have many opportunities to do, to learn, to seek fulfillment, and to help others.

You should expect certain costs associated with becoming a Freemason. A degree fee is set by every lodge for the three degrees of Freemasonry. Each lodge sets these fees based on their particular circumstances. In addition, the lodge will also assess annual dues that are payable

by January 1 of each year. Currently the degree fees in our lodge are _____ and the dues are _____ per year.

If you wish to apply for membership, request a "Petition for Membership" from your contact person. If your petition is accepted, a committee will be sent to visit you. The committee's responsibility is to get to know you better and recommend your petition to the members. There is no reason to worry; every potential Mason must meet with a committee after petitioning.

You have heard about Freemasonry and now you have asked about the Fraternity. It is only natural that there should be some questions in your mind. This paper has been prepared for those who are not members of our Fraternity, to inform them of the aims and purposes of our organization.

Origins

Our traditions go back over the centuries to the days of the "Operative Masons", the men who built the cathedrals, abbeys and castles in times long past. In the 17th century, the need for such buildings declined, but the practices and customs of the Operative Craft left an influence on a new movement that began in the second half of that century. Groups of men began to meet occasionally in various places in England. Men who were not actually builders, but who evidently had some interest in the old Craft. Some, no doubt, had an actual connection with it. However, these new groups had no direct concern with the building trade. It would appear that they were men of integrity who enjoyed fellowship in an atmosphere of mutual trust amid the bitter divisions of the time. In order to give a basic form to their meetings it seems they adopted certain of the traditions and practices of the operative or working masons, and were influenced by the Scottish operative and Lodges. They called themselves "Masons", and when a man was admitted as a member of a group or lodge, he was said to have been "made a Mason".

In 1717 four such lodges that had been meeting regularly in London and Westminster decided to form a "Grand Lodge" and to elect a "Grand Master" as their head. As more Lodges were established in England they looked to this Grand Lodge for guidance. Thus over the years regulations were set up to govern the Craft, a Constitution was adopted, and the simple ceremonies of the earlier years were elaborated until they became the three degrees or steps which we now have. It was in this way that what we call Speculative Masonry gradually evolved.

From England Freemasonry spread to other countries where Lodges were formed, and eventually Grand Lodges were set up. There are now about 150 Grand Lodges in the world, with a total membership of nearly six million. One of these is the Grand Lodge of Texas, where we have over 800 Masonic lodges across the state.

Purpose

From very early times Freemasonry has provided an opportunity for men to meet and enjoy the pleasures of friendly companionship in the spirit of helpfulness and charity, and guided by strict moral principles. Its members are encouraged to practice a way of life that will sustain high standards in their relationships with their fellow men, in other words, the practice of Brotherhood. It is an organisation, which recognises no distinction between races, creeds, or social qualifications.

Organization

The organization of Freemasonry is based on a system of Grand Lodges, and each one is

sovereign and independent within its own territory. There is no central authority governing all Freemasonry, but each Grand Lodge, in order to be "recognised" by the others, must maintain acceptable standards and follow established traditions and practices of Freemasonry. The Grand Master, with his officers, supervises the "constituent lodges", and each Lodge and member is required to observe the regulations set out in the Constitution. The Lodge is the basic unit of Freemasonry. Each year it elects its officers to manage its affairs. Through them the members are encouraged to achieve a better understanding of the ideals and principles of our Craft. It is through the Lodge that a man becomes a member of our Fraternity. When he has been accepted, he receives, over a period of time, the three degrees of Freemasonry. It is through these degrees that our teachings are mainly presented, as each one conveys a moral lesson.

Religion

While Freemasonry has a religious basis, it is neither a religion nor a substitute for religion. Before he can be admitted a member, a man must profess his belief in a Supreme Being (by whatever name He is known), be of mature age and good moral character. Freemasonry does not go beyond that nor does it question a man's particular faith or religious dogma. It does urge him to practice the religious belief, which he holds.

Activities

Freemasons meet regularly in their Lodges for the transaction of necessary business, for fellowship, and for the discussion of matters of Masonic interest. They are pledged to preserve the moral fibre and quality of life, and to act in a spirit of helpfulness towards all men. They are taught to make Charity and Benevolence a distinguishing characteristic of their Masonic life. Our Grand Lodge has a number of charitable projects. It has its own Benevolent Fund, Community Charities Fund, and Bursary Fund, all built up by the contributions of our members. Freemasons do not appeal to the public for funds; all contributions come from our own resources. In this way an attempt is made to inspire our members with a feeling of charity and goodwill towards all mankind.

Other Masonic Bodies

The whole purpose and teaching of Freemasonry is communicated through the three degrees of the Craft Lodge. A member, however, may wish to extend his experiences of Freemasonry by participating in additional degrees such as the Scottish Rite or York Rite Masonry. There are other appendant Masonic bodies that require Masonic membership for affiliation.

Since membership in the Masonic Order is for men only, there are various women's and youth organizations, which may require sponsorship by Masonic Lodges, or for those who are relatives of Freemasons. The aims of these groups have an affinity with Freemasonry. Freemasonry does not interfere in their workings and is not responsible for their actions.

Qualification

A man becomes a Freemason only through his own volition. We do not solicit members. When he makes his application the decision as to his acceptance rests with the Lodge members. If a man has some thought of becoming a Freemason, he should approach a friend whom he knows to be a Mason, who will explain the procedure.

How Well Are We Guarding The West Gate?

Michael D. Nanny, Past Grand Master
The Grand Lodge of Texas A.F. & A.M.

Generally speaking, the ritualists are the only well-organized group in our Lodges today. They are organized because they have specific duties and responsibilities, and as a general rule, it is a group who take pride in the quality of the ritualistic conferral of the degrees. There ought to be many such groups in our Lodges, each with specific duties and interests, and each with its own enthusiasm and pride. For instance, many Lodges have a Funeral Group - composed of Brethren, many of whom are either retired or self-employed - who attend and participate in Masonic funerals and memorial services. Some Lodges have a well-informed group who keep track of the sick list, and another group who keep track of the widows, etc.

There is another group of even greater importance to the reputation of the Lodge - indeed of utmost importance to the reputation of the Fraternity - and that group is the ***Investigation Group***. Unfortunately, in many Lodges, it is a rather loosely organized group of members who are called upon from time to time to investigate the character and reputation of those who knock upon our doors for admission.

It is impossible to be too careful and painstaking in the investigation of a petitioner for the Degrees of Freemasonry. In these days, nothing is more dangerous - nor is there more potential for serious damage to the good name and reputation of our Order and to our Lodges - than a slipshod investigation of those who seek admission into our Order.

In some instances our own members have become more lax when it comes to recommending a man for membership; thereby placing an even more demanding burden upon Investigating Committees to ferret out the undesirable applicants. Such demonstrated laxity is doubtless generated to some degree by our zeal for new members, and the eventual outcome is dependent almost entirely upon those who perform the investigation.

The present "three black ball rule" has placed even more pressure upon the investigators, and has added to the frustration of well-meaning and sincere Masons whose sole purpose in exercising the black ball privilege is to keep undesirables applicants out of our Fraternity.

There are documented instances of well meaning Masons recommending a man for membership whom they have known for only a few days, and - yes, there have been instances of a man walking in off the street, and a member of the Lodge has recommended him; relying solely upon the Investigating Committee to dig into his past and make their recommendation - and in some instances - during the short span of a couple of weeks. Some are found to be convicted felons on probation, and the recommender knew nothing about his past. And, yes - some are elected to receive the Degrees of Masonry simply because lazy and indifferent members of the Investigating Committee have not been honest - either with themselves or with the literally thousands of good Masons who have completely relied upon their investigation of the petitioner.

For whatever reason we are unable to explain, the average member of a Lodge is reluctant to share any information about the petitioner - either good or bad - with the members of the Investigating Committee. Such sharing should be ***emphasized and encouraged*** by the Worshipful Masters of our Lodges, and it should be ***respected*** by the members of the Investigating Committee and by the Lodge.

Curiously, in a great many of our Lodges, little thought is given to selecting members of the Investigating Committee. Regrettably, there are Lodges whose process is to simply pick the

next three names from the Roster. Such practice is not logical. Would you pick a degree team in such a manner? Would you select a name from the Roster, call the Brother on the telephone, and tell him to be at Lodge next Monday to confer the Entered Apprentice Degree? Of course not! If you want a degree conferred with dignity and in an impressive manner, you choose a special member for his special skills and ability to fill whatever place on the degree team that would contribute to an impressive degree.

So, why should we not be equally selective when it comes to selecting those members whose special job is to carefully scrutinize those who knock at our doors? We are talking about scrutiny that should consist of much more than a casual interview, or a couple of hurried telephone calls to a petitioner's references, or an exchange of information with other members of the Investigating Committee. Let's be honest and admit that an increasing number of Texas Lodges have taken in members of whom neither they nor the Fraternity can be justly proud, and who - had they been *thoroughly* investigated would never have passed the ballot box.

Each Lodge needs a group of men who will not only consider the statements of the petitioner, but also will go behind them, and take them to pieces to see if they are *really* true in fact. If a petitioner is honest about the information he gives the Lodge, he should welcome a thorough investigation of his background - consistent with the relative laws governing individual privacy. If he is sincere in his desire to become a Mason, he will be patient with the process, and if he will make a good Mason, he will maintain his interest throughout the process of investigation.

In addition to being just plain difficult in many instances, our efforts are complicated by an ever increasing number of federal and state laws, rules and regulations concerning the privacy of individuals. Sometimes, we run the risk of *being* a criminal in our efforts to *identify* criminals. But, we have a job to do, and we must find a way to develop trained investigators - that is - trained to the extent of understanding the basic fundamentals necessary to thoroughly and properly do their job, and attempt to train and develop as many potential investigators as possible.

Needless to say, most potentially good ideas are beset with questions posed by nay-sayers whose standard offering is the age old; "*We've never done it that way.*" but Worshipful Masters - there *IS* a way to ensure good and thorough investigations of petitioners. Select members with a sprinkling of experience, wisdom, discretion, and knowledge; and bring some of the younger members into service to the Lodge so they can gain useful experience for future benefit of your Lodge.

Locate a Mason in your Lodge ...or possibly in your area... that is in some area of law enforcement... - and have your members meet with you, the Wardens, the Secretary, and the "expert." Rely upon the "expert" to point out the many facets of the investigative process; availability of information sources; legalities of certain procedures --- what *should* be done and what *should not* be done, etc. Add new talent from your newer members, and invite them to meet with the others periodically for review - even if you have no petitions to investigate. Keep them interested! In the long haul, qualified investigators will not only increase in *ability*, but in *credibility* as well.

The membership will learn to rely in great measure upon their expertise, and as they approach the ballot box to make the decision for themselves, the Lodge and for the Fraternity, they can do their duty with a great deal of confidence that the Investigating Committee has done its job. It is a decision that should - and must be made - with the best interests of Masonry in mind.

The Worshipful Master should appoint a **Chairman** of the Investigating Committee, and he should **insist** that the Chairman call a meeting of the Committee -- to meet **at the Lodge** as soon as possible. As “coordinator,” he should be in complete charge of the investigative process.

The first thing that should be done by the investigating committee is to review the petition itself. That instrument is literally loaded with vital information, which is too voluminous to be withheld from each member of the committee. In many instances, the Secretary is the **only** member of the Lodge - other than the recommenders - who actually sees the petition, but the Investigating Committee **needs to examine** the **petition** for comparison to answers given by the petitioner during the investigation. As a matter of fact, it would be an excellent idea to **invite the petitioner and his recommenders** to meet with the Investigating Committee at some point during their first meeting at the Lodge. For one thing, it would impress upon the petitioner the importance and seriousness of the step he has taken, and would put him on notice that he **must be honest and forthright** with the committee during the investigation.

Then, after the petitioner has been excused from the meeting with the committee, the Chairman should assign certain line of inquiry to be followed by each member of the committee. When this has been done, they should meet again to compare and correlate their findings, and finally should go as a body... or one member could be assigned... to visit the petitioner in his home. A petitioner with honest motivation and sincere desire to become a Mason should not be intimidated by such a visit.

Then, the committee should meet again for a final conference and decision as to their report and recommendation to the Lodge. Thus, each member of the Investigating Committee has made his own investigation as instructed on Form 28. A good report should and must reflect the opinion and recommendation of each member of the Investigating Committee.

How should we arrive at our recommendation to our Lodges? Well, we simply base our recommendation upon what our investigation shows to be in the best interests of a **worldwide** Fraternity of good men who desire to be better men. We do not base our recommendation on the possibility that our Fraternity might be able to **reform** a man of questionable character by the lessons of Freemasonry. We do not concentrate upon finding what is **wrong** with a petitioner.

Of course this is important, but it is equally important - if not more important - to find out what is **right** about him.

Here, then are some things about a petitioner upon which the members of the Investigating Committee should satisfy themselves. The suggestions, which follow, are not all-inclusive, but provide a basis for thorough investigation of petitioners:

FAMILY LIFE: If married, is he a good husband, father, and provider? Is he kind, gentle, and considerate with his wife? Does **she** support his desire to become a Mason? **Do both of them** understand that some “time away from home” will be a part of his Masonic endeavor? Does he guide his children by example? If divorced, does he provide for their education, share in, and maintain interest in their activities?

REPUTATION IN HOME NEIGHBORHOOD: What do his neighbors think of him? Part of the Investigator’s job should be to visit with his neighbors - tell him that you would like to know how he is regarded by his neighbors. There is really no reason to go into detail unless his neighbor happens to be a Mason. Ask his neighbors what kind of a neighbor he is. (You need to keep in mind that in today’s society, many neighbors never see each other, much less visit “across the fence” as in the old days.) Does he take pride in his home and property? Many

petitioners live in apartments and/or townhouses, but: what does his residence look like?

RECORD IN FORMER PLACE OF RESIDENCE: A good Investigator will not overlook information to be obtained by such inquiry. True, it will take some extra time and work, but is well worth the effort when it comes to a good, solid investigation. If he recently moved into your area from another city, call the Secretary of a Lodge in the town or city where he moved from, and ask for help - particularly in those instances where a petitioner has recently moved from a smaller community where people know people - what they do, and how they have been regarded as residents of the community.

CREDIT RECORD / LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES: Although the credit record of a petitioner cannot be obtained without his written consent for the purpose of Masonic investigation into his character, you may obtain at the county courthouse in which he resides, or has resided, copies of any civil judgement that has been filed against him, including those that arise as a result of failure to pay indebtedness, and copies of any criminal conviction; **you cannot obtain criminal background information from law enforcement officers, as it is illegal for them to provide it.** Also, you may obtain from the bankruptcy court that includes such county in its jurisdiction, a copy of any bankruptcy discharge.

It is the Grand Master's desire that the lodges know how to obtain such information from proper sources and the availability of such information while doing an investigation concerning a petitioner for Masonry. Our present form of "Petition for the Degrees" and the "Investigation Report Form" are woefully inadequate instruments by which desirable information may be gathered for benefit of the good name and reputation of our fraternity.

Steps will be taken, and recommendations will be made to implement the ability of the investigating committee to gather such information about the petitioners - possibly on a subscription basis through a designated source - and to make such information available to all Texas lodges.

CIVIC ACTIVITIES: Does he share in worthwhile community activities? Is he interested in the area of Public Education, in the School Board, in City and County government? Is he willing - if given the opportunity - to serve on Committees and Boards? Is he a registered voter? Does he participate in local, statewide, and national elections? Such information need not - indeed ...***MUST NOT*** ... involve partisan discussions, but such matters can tell an Investigator a lot about a petitioner. Among other things, it might provide some insight as to whether he plans to be involved in Masonic activities, or if he plans to be satisfied to simply be a member.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND RELATED ACTIVITIES: Does he belong to a church? While church membership isn't required for Masonic membership, such information is useful to a serious investigator. In your opinion, is he genuinely "religious" or does his "religion" appear to be a per functionary thing?

REPUTATION IN BUSINESS AND OCCUPATION: Is he self-employed? How do you perceive his competitors regard him? Is he ethical, or does he take advantage of others? If he works for others, what does his employer think of him? Does he give a full day's work for a full day's pay? What about his fellow-workers: do they hold him in high regard?

ARMED FORCES RECORD: Many petitioners either have served, or are presently serving in the Armed Forces. If a petitioner has served in the Armed Forces, ask to see his discharge record. You might learn something by such request. All discharges are **NOT** “honorable.” On the other hand, if he **HAS** been honorably discharged from the Armed Forces, he should be very proud to share his record with you.

REASON FOR PETITIONING: Such information is getting down to the nitty-gritty, and gives the investigator an opportunity to allow the petitioner his time to express himself. Does he want to be a Mason for “social, business, or political reasons?” Does he want to be a Master Mason as a stepping-stone to other “Rites?” Has his wife suggested that he petition to accommodate **her** desire to get into some organization predicated membership on her husband’s Masonic membership? Ask leading questions. Let the petitioner express himself. There are several reasons for a man to want to be a Mason. Perhaps the example set by a friend, family member - or simply following a family tradition. There is nothing quite as comprehensive as digging into motives!

It is undeniable that our gentle fraternity has - in some instances - sown to the wind with indifferent, hurried, and incomplete investigation of the character and qualifications of some who have knocked upon our doors for admission. The result of such carelessness and indifference on our part has been characterized by breaches of morality that have reflected unfavorably upon our gentle fraternity - traditionally composed of good moral men.

A prominent utilities company has a slogan for its employees: ***“No job is so important, and no service so urgent, that we cannot take time to perform our job safely.”*** Let’s paraphrase that slogan, and adopt the practice that: ***“No petitioner is so important, and no increase in numbers is so urgent, that we cannot take time to thoroughly investigate all who knock upon our doors.”***

And, Worshipful Masters, when you assign a Brother the task to investigate a petitioner, you might remind him that he not only has the responsibility of investigating for your Lodgeindeed.... his responsibility is to Freemasons throughout the entire world. His is an awesome responsibility to say the very least. It should be treated as such.

Guard well the West Gate! Your reputation is at stake!

In Search of Light

An Annotated Bibliography of Masonic Resources

This list began as an annotated compilation of five lists submitted by recognized Masonic scholars to *The Northern Light: A Window for Freemasonry*, the official publication of the Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, for its issue for May 1995 (Vol. 26, No. 2). Additional books were suggested and included on the list, some published after 1995, and others because they were readily accessible to the new Mason and his family or of particular interest to Texas Masons. Others were removed from the list primarily due to the difficulty in locating.

Basic, Readily Available

Monitor of the Lodge: Monitorial Instructions in the Three Degrees of Symbolic Masonry, as Exemplified in the Grand Jurisdiction of Texas, A.F. & A.M. Grand Lodge of Texas, 1982.

This is the "little blue book" given to each candidate when he became a Master Mason. It contains much of the information he was given during the degrees. There is nothing "secret" in this book. In fact, anything that is printed is available for ANYONE to read and all Masons would do well to encourage anyone to read information available on the Fraternity.

The Texas Lodge System of Candidate Information. Grand Lodge of Texas, 1980. 4 vol.

A four-booklet set providing an introduction to Freemasonry and explaining the significance and symbolism of each degree. The candidate should be given his own set upon beginning the degrees.

General Reading

The Builders: A Story and Study of Masonry by Joseph Fort Newton. Macoy, 1914.

Newton gives an interesting overview of Freemasonry. Here he relates the relation between architecture and religion. Accounts of Old Charges and Constitutions of Masonry are embodied in quaint and curious writing, both in poetry and prose. Also noted is the first Masonic book issued in America; published by Benjamin Franklin. Newton also speaks of several musicians such as Haydn and Mozart whose works had a Masonic motif. In Part II: Interpretation, he gives the definition, philosophy and spirit of Masonry.

Freemasonry: A Celebration of the Craft by John Hamill and R. A. Gilbert (ed.). JG Press, 1992.

If you've ever longed for a 'coffee table' book to stir interest in Freemasonry (that of your own or of visitors to your home), this is the one! From its gorgeously designed dust cover through the profuse illustrations, it's a work that one can enjoy in nibbles or by feasting voraciously. It's huge illustrations (this is a LARGE book in typical 'coffee table' size) and its enormously informative vignettes make it a work that truly delights all of the senses as well as the intellect. John Hamill is an internationally acknowledged authority on English Freemasonry and is the Librarian/Curator of the Grand Lodge and Museum in London.

One Hundred One Questions About Freemasonry. Masonic Service Association of North America, 1955.

Questions most commonly asked with brief, but complete answers.

A Pilgrim's Path by John J. Robinson. M. Evans & Company, 1993.

As a non-Mason himself, Robinson was often encouraged by the anti-Masonic faction to speak out against Masonry yet meeting thousands of Masons convinced him that this was indeed an organization worth joining. This book explains why prior to his death, Mr. Robinson became Brother Robinson to millions of Freemasons - and debunks the major religious/new world order slurs against Freemasonry.

General History

A Comprehensive View of Freemasonry by Henry Wilson Coil. Macoy, 1973.

Gives a concrete answer to many questions which occur: What is Freemasonry? What are the Basic Differences between Freemasonry in the U.S. and Europe? What are the Branches of Freemasonry in the U.S.? and many more answers. One learns much of Antiquity in this story of Masonry against the background of human history.

Freemasonry Through Six Centuries by Henry Wilson Coil. Macoy, 1966. 2 vol

Excellent study that traces the Craft through many lands and over six hundred years.

Freemasonry Universal by Kent Henderson. Global Masonic Publications, 1998. 2 vol.

These books present the most detailed, well researched information about the current state of Freemasonry in every country in the world, including background information about how Masonry developed in each place. Every Mason who travels at all should have these books, which give information about what lodges exist, where, under which jurisdictions, and how they interact with other Masonic groups.

Little Masonic Library edited by Carl H. Claudy. Macoy, 1977. 5 vol.

This five volume set contains a collection of 20 early Masonic writings as well as numerous Masonic poems. The sections are brief and can be read independent of the others.

The Pocket History of Freemasonry by Fred L. Pick & G. Norman Knight. F. Muller, 1953.

Brief histories of English, American, Irish and Scottish Freemasonry, and Freemasonry in the Armed Forces.

The Rise and Development of Organized Freemasonry by Roy A. Wells. Lewis Masonic, 1986.

The history of organized Freemasonry is shown to have commenced with the inauguration of the premier Grand Lodge in London on the Festival of St. John the Baptist in 1717. This book examines what preceded that event and what happened afterwards.

Early Freemasonry

Born in Blood by John J. Robinson. M. Evans & Company, 1989.

A very popular work written by a man who was not a Mason at the time. This book attempts to trace the unknown (but much speculated) history of Freemasonry back to the Knights Templars. As a result, this book should be considered primarily historical fiction. It is, however, a very interesting read and makes a wonderful 'case' for the 'Templar Connection'.

Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth Century Europe by Margaret C. Jacob. Oxford University Press, 1991.

This book is written by a college professor who has done a great deal of research, extremely well documented, showing that Freemasonry is in essence the living continuation of the Enlightenment, and was the training ground for democracy as it was developing in Western civilization. ***The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans***, an earlier book by Margaret C. Jacob, is similar in its theme and detail. These two books present the best explanation of the importance of Freemasonry in history and in society today.

Dungeon, Fire, and Sword by John J. Robinson. M. Evans & Company, 1992.

While the exact origins of the Freemason movement may never be known, Robinson provides seemingly credible evidence that modern Freemasonry is a society that developed from the Templar knights.

Freemasonry in America

American Freemason: Three Centuries of Building Communities by Mark A. Tabbert. National Heritage Museum/New York University Press, 2005.

A beautifully illustrated book that explains the history of American Freemasonry. It begins with a discussion of the beginnings of Freemasonry during the Enlightenment and progresses through the development of Freemasonry in America and even discusses some of the reasons behind the drop in membership. The book also contains an extensive suggested reading list.

Freemasonry in American History by Allen E. Roberts. Macoy, 1985.

Roberts gives an account of the introduction of Freemasonry in the New World in the 17th century. The most interesting aspect is the explosion of Masonry throughout all of 18th century America. Extensive amounts of letters and manuscripts from several sources throughout New England and all American colonies are found here. Most note-worthy are the articles on Freemasonry published in the "Pennsylvania Gazette" (published by Benjamin Franklin) and excerpts from Thomas Paine's "An Essay on the Origin of Free-masonry."

House Undivided: The Story of Freemasonry and the Civil War by Allen E. Roberts. Macoy, 1961.

Presents the most extensive information about the role of Masons in the U.S. Civil War, one of the key events in U.S. and world history. In addition to presenting interesting stories for Masons to enjoy, this book puts the actions of Masons in this era in context and explain what was going on around them.

Masonic Membership of the Founding Fathers by Ronald E. Heaton. Masonic Service Association of North America, 1965, 1974.

Examines evidence of Masonic membership of 241 Revolutionary patriots.

Miracle at Philadelphia by Catherine Drinker Bowen. Little Brown, 1966.

Not a Masonic book but the story of the Constitutional Convention. Supports the message that these men of good faith, from various walks of life, fought for the best interests of their constituencies, and when necessary for the good of the nation, they pragmatically arbitrated their differences.

Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730-1840 by Steven C. Bullock. University of North Carolina, 1996.

Similar to Margaret Jacob's books in that this is also an excellent, detailed study by a college professor, this time about the role of Freemasonry in America. It presents the best explanation of what Freemasonry represented in the early and developing U.S., and why and how it helped shape our institutions and attitudes.

The Antimasonic Party in the United States 1826-1843 by William Preston Vaughn. University of Kentucky Press, 1983.

This is the only book that presents a complete and well researched description of the rise and fall of the Antimasonic movement and the political party it developed in the early 1800s in the U.S. Many are not aware of the way in which Masons contributed to their own problems, but also the overall context in which this movement grew and was very successful for a long time. Another scholarly book by a professor of history.

Freemasonry in Texas

Masonry in Texas: background, history, and influence to 1846 by James D. Carter. Grand Lodge of Texas, 1958.

In addition to covering Freemasonry's influence on the settlement and development of the Republic of Texas, this book also provides a brief history of Freemasonry as well as its impact on the American colonization, Revolution, and development.

Education and Masonry in Texas by James D. Carter. Grand Lodge of Texas, 1963. 2 vol.

Traces the development of education under Spanish rule up to the beginning of the Civil War. Shows the Masonic fraternity "as the strongest organized support of education in Texas prior to 1846."

Biography

10,000 Famous Freemasons by William R. Denslow. Missouri Lodge of Research, 1957.

This very rare and long out of print biographical collection is a basic resource for Masons. It is available as an "e-book" on CD-Rom

William Preston and His Work by Colin Dyer. Lewis Masonic, 1987.

William Preston was an early English Mason who did much to develop the Masonic ritual. This book in addition to being a biography of Preston contains the complete texts of Preston's lectures.

Symbolism

The Craft and Its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic Symbolism by Allen E. Roberts. Macoy, 1974.

The preface states symbolism is "what distinguishes Freemasonry from other fraternal organizations. It is the principal vehicle by which the ritual teaches Masonic philosophy and moral lessons." The book presents the symbols of Freemasonry by dividing into each of the three degrees in which they appear.

Ethics and Philosophy

The Freemason at Work by Harry Carr. Lewis Masonic, 1976.

Carr has compiled the answers he gave to questions during his twelve years as editor of *Quatuor Coronati Transactions* in this book. Only the best and most interesting subjects are included and every question will be relevant to most brethren in the course of their work in the lodge – hence the title, *The Freemason at Work*.

Key to Freemasonry's Growth by Allen E. Roberts. Macoy, 1969.

Utilizes the principles of good management to assist the Masonic leaders to realize the goals of Freemasonry.

Whither Are We Traveling? by Dwight L. Smith. Masonic Service Association of North America, 1962.

A short series of articles that ask and answer ten questions regarding the purpose and future of Masonry. *Why This Confusion in the Temple?* a sequel by Smith contains an additional 12 essays.

Anti-Masonic

The Boy Who Cried Wolf: The Book That Breaks Masonic Silence by Richard Thorn. M. Evans & Company, 1995.

Thorn attacks the critics of Masonry, showing where they err in their assumptions and providing some good insights into the nature of the Masons' "secret" society. He also draws on his own fundamentalist background to explain the theology behind the fundamentalist attacks on the craft.

Is It True What They Say About Freemasonry?: The Methods of Anti-Masons by Art de Hoyos and S. Brent Morris. Masonic Information Center, Masonic Service Association of North America, 1997.

This book presents the best and clearest explanations of the attacks that are made against Freemasonry, and the truth, with complete details, that can be used to respond to those who make these attacks. As of the date this bibliography was completed the full-text was available at <http://www.tx-mm.org/adehoyos/chap1.htm>.

The Clergy and the Craft by Forrest D. Haggard. Missouri Lodge of Research, 1970.

Discussion of some of the problems in the relationship between Organized Religion and Freemasonry. The author 'objectively examines and discusses areas of conflict that have been cited by individuals or spokesmen for Organized Religion and Freemasonry.'

Workman Unashamed: The Testimony of a Christian Freemason by Christopher Haffner. Lewis Masonic, 1989.

Reverend Haffner carefully examines the main accusation levelled at Freemasonry by those in the Christian community who have preconceptions that Freemasonry is not compatible with Christianity. He examines the basis of these claims. In one part Haffner says, "...Freemasons are not concerned with salvation and conversion, but with taking men as they are and pointing them in the direction of brotherhood and moral improvement. Insofar as the Order is successful in this aim, it is content, and leaves the member to devote himself to his own religious faith to receive the grace of salvation."

Miscellaneous

Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia by Henry Wilson Coil (revised edition by Allen E. Roberts). Macoy, 1961, 1995.

This is an excellent all around review of every subject relating to Freemasonry. It is interesting just to read random sections, and it is essential as a start for all Masonic research.

Directory of Worshipful Masters, Wardens, and Secretaries of Constituent Lodges in Texas. Grand Lodge of Texas.

Published annually, this compact (4" x 6") directory lists addresses, phone numbers and meeting dates for each of the lodges in Texas as well as addresses and phone numbers for the Master, Wardens, and Secretaries of the lodges. Buy a couple of extra and stick them in the glove compartment of your car.

List of Lodges Masonic. Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company.

An annual listing of Grand Lodges recognized by most other regular Grand Lodges.

Lodge of the Double Headed Eagle: Two Centuries of Scottish Rite Freemasonry in American's Southern Jurisdiction by William L. Fox. University of Arkansas Press, 1997

Presents an excellent history of Freemasonry, focusing on the Scottish Rite, and its role in American History. Fox also edited a second book, ***Valley of the Craftsmen, A Pictorial History: Scottish Rite Freemasonry in American's Southern Jurisdiction 1801-2001***, published by Supreme Council, 33, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction in 2001.

Masonic Trivia & Facts by Allen E. Roberts. Anchor Communications, 1994.

Asks and answers more than 600 questions covering the story of Freemasonry from its earliest days to the present.

The Master's Book by Carl H. Claudy. Temple Publishers, 1935.

The Master's Book has for many years been the preferred reference for Worshipful Masters and those heading to the East or wanting to learn about a Masonic Lodge's internal operations.

The Mystic Tie by Allen E. Roberts. Anchor Communications, 1991.

This is a collection of many of Allen E. Roberts short speeches and articles, concentrating on what Freemasonry meant to him and many others.

The Temple and the Lodge by Michael Baigent & Richard Leigh. Arcade, 1989.

Suggests many of the ideals of Freemasonry were adopted by America's Founding Fathers as a working model for our federal system.

Tied to Masonic Apron Strings by Stewart M. L. Pollard. Macoy, 1969.

Pollard has rounded up the cream of the crop of humorous incidents that occur in Masonic gatherings, sweetened them with a number of unusual Masonic poems and brief inspirational articles, and seasoned well with those 'spicy and funny' cartoons from the pages of the Royal Arch Mason Magazine. An armchair delight and a ready 'wit' to brighten Masonic talks.

York Rite of Freemasonry: A History and Handbook by Frederick G. Speidel. Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, 1989.

This comprehensive, illustrated booklet explains the degrees, history, symbolism, and benevolent programs of the Blue Lodge, Royal Arch Chapter, Cryptic Council, and Commandery of Knights Templar.

Sources for Purchasing Masonic Books

Anchor Communications <http://www.goanchor.com>

P. O. Box 70, Highland Springs VA 23075-0070

Grand Lodge of Texas, A.F. & A.M. <http://www.grandlodgeoftexas.org>

P. O. Box 446, Waco TX 76703; 254-753-7395

Kessinger Publishing, Inc. <http://www.kessingerpub.com>

P. O. Box 160, Kila MT 59920

(some of their stuff is a little *STRANGE*, but they are a good source for reprints of older works)

Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America

<http://www.knightstemplar.org>

5097 North Elston Ave, Ste 101, Chicago IL 60630-2460

Lost Word Books <http://www.lostword.com/books.html>

P. O. Box 8142, Charlottesville VA 22906-8142

M. Evans & Co., Inc. <http://www.mevans.com/index.html>

216 East 49 St., New York NY 10017

Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Co., Inc. <http://www.erols.com/macoy>

P. O. Box 9759, Richmond VA 23228-0759

Masonic Book Club <http://www.freemasonry.org/mbc/>

P. O. Box 1563, Bloomington IL 61702-1563

Masonic Service Association of North America <http://www.msana.com>

8120 Fenton ST, Silver Spring MD 20910

Masonic Renewal Committee of North America <http://www.masonic-renewal.org>

P.O. Box 87, Harbert, MI 49115-0087

Other Sources of Masonic Information

Grand Lodge of Texas <http://www.grandlodgeoftexas.org>

Check out the Monthly Education Programs, Information Center, and Bookstore. Plus it publishes a quarterly magazine, the Texas Mason Magazine. The website also contains links to many Masonic-related sites that provide the browser with access to Masonic education and information.

Grand Lodge of California <http://www.freemason.org>

Most Masonic Grand Jurisdictions in the US maintain websites that contain useful Masonic information. Many include Masonic Education programs accessible to the public. The website for the Grand Lodge of California is singled out for its very well developed Masonic Education page that includes a multipart education program for the new Mason (Basic Education for Candidates) and a mentoring program (Candidate Mentor Program).

Masonic Service Association of North America <http://www.msna.com>

Short Talk Bulletins (\$6/year) can be ordered from <http://www.msana.com/stb.htm> or the Masonic Service Association.

The Masonic Information Center <http://www.msana.com/mic.htm> is also an excellent online resource for current public relations topics on Freemasonry.

Texas Lodge of Research <http://pentium2.gower.net/Community/tlr/>

P. O. Box 684684, Austin TX 78768-4684

TLR publishes annual transactions containing copies of papers presented at the quarterly meetings. Many lodges own the transactions which began in 1959. An index to the Transactions is available in print and online.

The Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction , USA <http://www.srmason-sj.org/web/index.htm>

There are several “pages” on this website that are worth visiting, but don’t miss these...

The Scottish Rite Journal <http://www.srmason-sj.org/web/journal-files/journal-main.htm>

Subscription Information as well as online past issues are available at the website. There are often interesting short articles as well as a regular book review column.

The Library <http://www.srmason-sj.org/library.htm>

Albert Pike Chapter, DeMolay <http://www.albertpikedemolay.org>

Links to most major Masonic organizations’ web pages.

TexShare Services <http://www.texshare.org/>

Information and links for the program of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission in partnership with academic and public libraries in Texas providing access to excellent databases used to locate books and articles on a wide variety of topics.

Urban Legends Reference Pages <http://www.snopes.com>

This is not a Masonic website; however, many of us receive various emails that sound “too good to be true.” At snopes.com you have a very useful site in sifting internet fact from fiction, a sometimes-daunting task in the cyber world.

Search Strategies

The strategies shown below can be used on the Internet when using a search engine such as Google or Yahoo. They can also be used when searching specific databases such as WorldCat or any of the indexes to journals and magazines available through the TexShare Databases available through your local library. Every search engine and database will have a *HELP* link that will explain how to use these strategies in the particular database you are using. Also, don't forget to ***ASK YOUR LIBRARIAN!***

Use <i>OR</i> to broaden your search	Masonic or Freemasonry	Will provide "hits" containing either word
Use <i>Truncation</i> to broaden your search	Mason* or Freemason*	Will provide "hits" containing Mason, Masons, Masonic, Masonry, Freemason, Freemasons, Freemasonry...
Use <i>AND</i> to narrow your search	Freemasonry and symbolism	Will provide "hits" which must contain both words
Use <i>NOT</i> to narrow your search	Freemasonry and symbolism not occult	Will provide "hits" that do not contain the words specified
Use <i>Nesting</i> to make your search more specific	((Mason* or Freemason*) and (symbol* or light)) not occult	Will provide "hits" that combine a variety of the functions
Use <i>Phrase Searching</i> to identify a proper name or distinct phrase	"Masonic Book Club"	Will only pull up "hits" where the words appear as a phrase.

One Last Hint...

When you are on a webpage and do not want to have to read the entire page to find the information you are looking for use <Ctrl><f>. A box will pop up and you can type a word or phrase you are looking for and click the *Find* button and it will take you to the first occurrence on that page. You can repeat this process to move through the page hitting only the spots where the word or phrase appears.