

# Masonic Mentoring



## MAINE MASONIC MENTORING HANDBOOK

GRAND LODGE OF MAINE, A.F. & A.M.  
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# *Grand Lodge of Maine*

## MAINE MASONIC MENTORING HANDBOOK



Many events and individuals collectively join to shape our personal perspectives, our priorities and our work ethics. Our mentors may include our parents, teachers, religious and scouting leaders, military drill instructors and workmates, especially those to whom we reported. Some leaders may have commanded our respect, others earned it through how they treated and nurtured us – instilling in us both the ability and the commitment for personal development and growth.

The Grand Lodge of Maine is endeavoring to strengthen our beloved fraternity in many ways: first, by helping to build strong, productive ties between Grand Lodge and subordinate Lodge leaders; second, by helping to share perspectives on how Lodges might enhance their organizational, financial and fraternal operations; and third, by embracing new tools that will reinforce the bonds between Brethren and with their Masonic fraternity.

The Dirigo Leadership Seminar is designed to influence Lodge leaders by instilling perspectives and knowledge intended to increase the perceived and realized value of membership in our fraternity, as well as the strength of our Masonic bodies.

The Masonic Rookie program provides a defined path for new Masons to become involved in the operations and activities of their Lodges, so that the fraternal bonds of these new Masons may become strong and thereby less likely to be broken in future years.

The new degree instructional videos and the *Lodge Instructors Manual*, as well as the publication of the updated book *Maine Freemasonry* provide educational tools to instruct candidates and new Masons on the history, organization, charities and symbolism of Freemasonry.

Masonic mentoring brings all these initiatives together where it is most likely to benefit both our candidates and current Lodge members. Mentoring builds relationships during a candidate's formative degree taking period and in the months that follow. This is when the candidate begins to comprehend the important lessons and protocols to which he is exposed during the degrees and instructional periods.

The Grand Lodge of Maine recognizes with brotherly affection the generosity of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Hampshire and Isle of Wight, under the United Grand Lodge of England, for making their mentoring efforts available for our use. Their contributions have aided greatly in the design, development and implementation of Maine's Masonic mentoring initiative.

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## INTRODUCTION TO MENTORING

“Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.”

Eric Parsloe, The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring

To be selected as a mentor for the Freemasons of the future is true recognition of your Masonic integrity, enthusiasm and ability. This is your opportunity to share your knowledge and experience, and to guide newer Brethren to fulfill their Masonic potential.

The following message came from a Brother who was questioned why he had sought to demit from his Lodge within just two years of joining.

*“I didn’t really know what I was joining, but I knew that my Proposer was a decent and honorable man and he always spoke so highly of Freemasonry. My first night was overwhelming and I’m still not sure what it was all about. I remember everybody was very friendly, so much so that I was struggling to remember everybody’s name. My Proposer was an active officer in the Lodge, but he made sure he had plenty of time to look after me that night.*

*“Everybody was asking what I thought of it all and a few said that it would make more sense if I quickly visited another Lodge in the area, so that I could watch the ceremony from the sidelines. My Proposer said that this was a great idea and he would give me a call to arrange it. Well, everyone was busy and I never managed to visit before the next meeting. The next meeting was a little confusing, as I was asked to leave quite soon in the ceremony and I had to sit in the dining room. I had a good chat with the Stewards, but before I knew it everyone was leaving the Lodge room and it was time for the meal.*

*“As I said, my Proposer was an active officer and he was really busy that night so I had to spend the rest of the evening with people I didn’t know. They were very nice but I felt as if I couldn’t really ask them the questions I wanted to, maybe I didn’t even know which questions to ask. My wife and grown up children showed interest at first, but when I couldn’t answer their questions their interest soon waned.*

*“I’m afraid the rest of my short Masonic career was a bit like that, as I never got to do much visiting and I went through all my degrees without really understanding any of them. As soon as I had reached my Third Degree, someone asked if I wanted to join something called the Chapter. It was at this point I stopped and asked myself what I was doing. I was in something that I didn’t really understand, nobody had the time to tell me what was going on, and I was being asked to get involved further.*

*“That was when I decided to leave. I’m in business and when my company takes people on, we make sure that they are looked after until they know their way.”*

You may think the above statement a little contrived, but it is a true story. Fortunately, the new Mason was persuaded to hold off on his decision and with a little support and encouragement he is currently an active officer himself. Furthermore, he has now proposed his son as a candidate.

What do we learn from this?

Look at the key points from the previous statement:

1. Didn't really know what he was joining
2. Not sure what the first night was all about
3. Did not manage any visits to other Lodges
4. Confused when asked to leave the next meeting (business meeting or a higher degree?)
5. Felt embarrassed with his lack of knowledge
6. Became a Master Mason without understanding the ceremonies
7. Did not have the answers to his family's questions
8. Asked to join an appendant body, again without any understanding

Let's ask ourselves the question: "Does any of this happen in my Lodge?" If we are truthful with ourselves, we may not like the answer.

This is where mentoring may help. Mentoring is an established developmental tool that has long been used in business, to guide new workers and to motivate and develop existing employees, thereby helping them to fulfill their true potential.

At the start of the initiation ceremony the candidate is told to "...arise, follow your conductor and fear no danger." So begins a symbolic journey from darkness to light, from ignorance to Masonic knowledge. The work of the mentor is to be the new Mason's guide, leader and coach once the ceremony has finished. The mentor should not only explain the workings, traditions and organization of our Craft, but also lift the veil of allegory and reveal the meaning behind the symbols. The new Mason will thereby better understand and appreciate the organization that he has joined.

Thus the whole focus of Masonic mentoring is to enable the new Mason to gain in knowledge, involvement and confidence in Masonry, so that he can grow and benefit from his membership.

## **WHAT IS MASONIC MENTORING?**

The textbook says:

"Mentoring is a fundamental form of human development where one person invests time, energy and personal know-how in assisting the growth and ability of another person."

Make sense? Let's make it a little more relevant:

"Masonic mentoring is a learning process where a more experienced Brother invests time, energy and Masonic experience in assisting and caring for a new Brother so that he may enjoy and benefit from his Masonry to the full."

What does that last bit "...to the full" mean?

Well, not everybody wants the same from their Masonry. **The main thing is to ensure that our newer Brethren are valuing their Masonry so much that they not only wish to stay, but also wish to take an active part, and to recommend membership in the Craft to a friend.**

Mentoring may be primarily aimed at candidates and newer Brethren. However, it may also be used to reactivate other Masons who have stopped attending.

While any mentoring initiative, by its very nature, should inevitably be tailored to the needs of the candidate, it is not only the candidate who will ultimately benefit. In the longer term, great benefits will also accrue to the Lodge in terms of continuity, by ensuring that active younger men are available to pick up and carry the baton. Mentoring will also help to build strong fraternal relationships among Brethren.

## **THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP**

It is important to gain an understanding of the relationship between a Personal Mentor and his Apprentice who is on the first step in Masonry...as he just begins to gain useful knowledge about Freemasonry. When carried out properly, this relationship will change as the candidate develops his understanding and engagement within the Craft.

The role of a Mentor is much more than just a teacher, being more of an advisor, coach, confidential counselor and sounding board. In fact, the role of a teacher will only exist during the initial stage of the process. Yes, there is a lot to learn for a new Mason and there will be times when a Personal Mentor sits down and imparts knowledge (teaches), perhaps by explaining a section of ritual or the role of a specific officer. However, this is really just the basic part of the mentoring process that will probably occur mainly at the start of the relationship as the candidate progresses through the three degrees. True mentoring will come when a candidate starts to manage his own learning and is guided along this path by his Personal Mentor.

Great **teachers** share their knowledge and make learning enjoyable and effective. They focus on the three I's: Inspiration, Implementation and Integration. Firstly, they inspire people to want to learn. Secondly, they provide implementation tools that work. Thirdly, they help people to integrate their learning into their daily lives. We never forget a great teacher. As mentioned, this role will mainly take place at the start of the relationship.

Once the basic knowledge has been grasped, the relationship will develop into one of coaching. Good **coaches** often take three steps. Firstly, they encourage people to build on their strengths. Secondly, they equip people to tackle areas of improvement. Thirdly, they enable people to achieve ongoing success. Good coaches also recognize that people have different learning styles. Before communicating knowledge, coaches ask themselves: "How can I put this message in a way that the person can accept?"

A Personal Mentor will also act as an advisor. **Advisors** are people we seek out, to obtain specialist knowledge or advice on how to deal with a certain situation. To be able to carry out this role, the Personal Mentor needs credibility with the candidate and needs to hold his respect. But how do you gain such credibility and respect? Several tips are worth bearing in mind. Firstly, be true to yourself. Secondly, be clear on your strengths. Thirdly, be clear on your limits.

A candidate may also look upon their Personal Mentor as a role model. **Role Models** are people we admire. They provide examples that we may wish to copy and emulate. Teachers for example can have a profound impact on us if they are inspiring and bring their subject to life. Positive role models at work, for example, teach us about ‘the things you need to do to be successful around here.’

A Personal Mentor may also be asked to perform the role of counselor. **Counselors** meet people who want to solve a problem they are experiencing in their personal or professional lives. This can be just as true within their Masonic lives as well. The classic method is to create a safe environment, practice listening skills and be non-directive. Providing the Counselor acts as a good ‘third ear,’ the person is often able to find his own answers to problems.

## **SKILLS AND QUALITIES OF A MENTOR**

The old adage that the Grand Architect of the Universe gave us two eyes, two ears but only one mouth so that we could look and listen four times as much as we speak can certainly be applied to the mentor.

### **Observational Skills**

Keeping a watchful eye on your Apprentice will provide useful indicators on how he is settling into his Masonry.

1. Does he join in with the Brethren, or is he often to be found standing apart on his own?
2. Does he appear interested in the proceedings of the Lodge? His body language will tell you this. Is he watching what is happening and does he appear to be focused on the ritual; or does he appear to be inattentive and easily distracted?
3. Facial expressions, gestures, posture, eye signals, body movements all transmit a message. Body language, it is claimed, can be a window to our thoughts, indeed it often speaks louder than words – we may say one thing, while our bodies say another.

### **Questioning Skills**

Mentors need to bear in mind that their primary role is to help and encourage their Apprentices to develop. A meaningful coaching or mentoring session depends upon using questions that provoke positive responses.

A more difficult skill to develop perhaps, but one that is essential to guiding and supporting a learner, is to use open-ended questions that enable the mentor to:

1. Establish rapport and put the other person at ease
2. Free up the other person to answer as they choose and in their own words
3. Encourage uninhibited feedback
4. Help explore opinions and values in more detail
5. Create involvement and commitment
6. Determine understanding more comprehensively



## Listening Skills

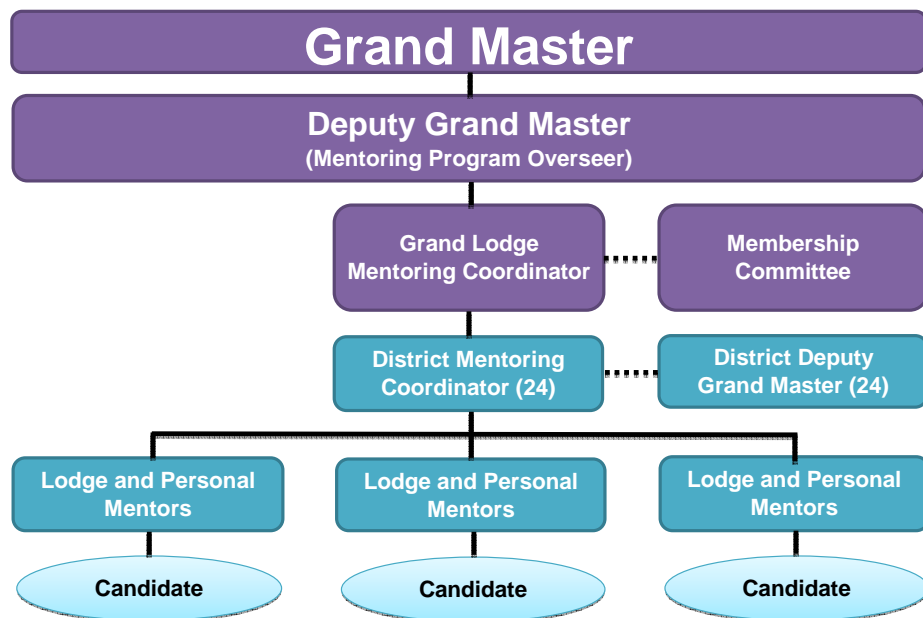
It is the ability to listen 'actively' that defines good communicators. This involves really concentrating on the message being transmitted, by trying to understand not only what is being said, but also how and why it is being said.

When in a discussion, listen for a note of confidence or hesitation in a candidate's voice. This will indicate whether he really understands the topic or is still trying to grasp what is being discussed.

A successful mentor who employs the above techniques will soon discover that they are very useful, as they will quickly enable him to gain a true picture of the candidate's strengths and abilities. By doing so, the mentor will be able to start making judgments on how his Apprentice may be able to contribute to the Lodge, if he so wishes. Does he have flair for public speaking, a good way with figures, an ability to form relationships quickly, or the ability to organize people and events?

By identifying such skills, the mentor may see the potential for a future secretary, treasurer, charity worker, ritual instructor, personal mentor, committee chairman, etc.

## MAINE MENTORING ORGANIZATION



## The Lodge

The essence of mentoring is the one-to-one relationship between the Personal Mentor and the new member and it is vital that the Lodge chooses **the right man for the job**. This is done best in Lodges where a mentoring coordinator has been appointed. The Lodge mentoring coordinator (**Lodge Mentor**) has essentially an organizational and support role for the Personal Mentors. He is responsible for the operation of the local mentoring program once the Lodge has adopted mentoring as a way to strengthen Masonic bonds and increase the value of being a Mason. The Lodge Mentor should select and recommend the Personal Mentors for the Lodge and ensure that they fully understand their responsibility and are trained in what needs to be done. **To help the Lodge Mentor select the most suitable Personal**

**Mentor for a particular candidate, the Lodge Mentor should meet the candidate before his initiation (perhaps by serving on the Committee of Inquiry),** and the selected Personal Mentor should also meet his new Apprentice prior to the evening of his initiation to prepare him for his introduction to Freemasonry.

In short, the role of the Lodge is to:

- Implement the mentoring system in the Lodge
- Appoint a Lodge Mentor who
  - o Ensures applicants receive a fitting introduction to Masonry
  - o Assigns each Apprentice a suitable Personal Mentor
  - o Tracks the progress of the mentoring system in his Lodge
  - o Liaisons with the District Coordinator and sister Lodge Mentors
  - o Willingly takes on the role for a number of years

The Lodge Mentor should have a pool of Personal Mentors whom he will have trained in anticipation of an applicant for Freemasonry. He will also arrange for the Entered Apprentices or Fellow Crafts to be coached while they are out of the Lodge room during a higher degree ceremony.

Let's not forget that Schools of Instruction (SOI) achieve a lot in terms of helping Brethren learn about Freemasonry and feeling included. While a SOI is of course a major vehicle for building officer teams, mentoring extends significantly further into caring for our Brethren...in many more ways and on a much more personal level.

### **The District**

The role of the District Mentoring Coordinator is pivotal to the success of the mentoring initiative within the lodges comprising his District. His role is to support the District mentoring system, by:

- Assisting Lodges to implement mentoring
- Providing advice and guidance to Lodge Mentors (coordinators) and Personal Mentors
- Organizing training workshops and encouraging mentors to attend
- Listening to Lodges' experiences
- Measuring the effectiveness of the mentoring system in his District

The key roles of the **District Mentoring Coordinator**, working with the District Deputy Grand Master and District Educational Representative, is to monitor all mentoring activities within his District, to ensure training workshops are organized, and to report to the Grand Lodge Mentoring Coordinator, who reports directly to the Deputy Grand Master and works with the Grand Lodge Membership Committee.

The format of his report will depend upon the amount of information requested by the Grand Lodge Mentoring Coordinator, but should include the following information:

- Number and names of Lodges actively employing mentoring within the District
- How many Lodge Mentors and Personal Mentors there are within the District
- Training and workshops sponsored or attended within the last year
- Feedback received on such activities

- Best practices identified
- Notable successes to be celebrated
- Improvements identified for the next year
- Masonic Rookies recognized within the District during the reporting period

## Grand Lodge

The role of Grand Lodge will be to:

- Provide continuing sponsorship of the mentoring system
- Provide a variety of instructional materials and training on a state-wide and District basis for District Coordinators as well as Lodge and Personal Mentors
  - Engage the Maine Masonic College to provide educational programs throughout the Grand Jurisdiction relevant to mentoring and Masonic education
- Learn of and share best practices in Districts and other Masonic jurisdictions
- Provide central support to Districts and Lodges
  - Maintain and provide a mentoring toolkit
  - Maintain Masonic mentoring material
  - Advise Districts on how to implement mentoring
  - Measure overall effectiveness of the mentoring initiative

## THE ROLE OF THE MENTOR

There has to be a special relationship between the new Mason and his Personal Mentor. This is a one-to-one relationship and, except in the case of very small or special Lodges, the concept of a “Lodge Mentor” for all candidates is not the best way forward. In many cases the obvious choice for a Personal Mentor might be the candidate’s Proposer or Secunder. Where this is not possible, they should be consulted on the choice of someone else. Whatever the decision, the Personal Mentor **should be carefully chosen** and have particular qualities. It has been observed many times that the greatest difficulty in this personal support program is to find suitable mentors.

## THE LODGE MENTOR

It is the responsibility of every Lodge to look after and care for its members, and all Lodges are encouraged to ensure that a Personal Mentor is appointed for every candidate. The Lodge Mentor has a vital role to play as it is his responsibility to ensure that the mentoring process is not only implemented, but that it also works effectively in his Lodge. To do so, he needs to:

1. Be fully aware of the mentoring process, what it is trying to achieve and what ‘success looks like.’
2. Make sure that all Lodge members are aware of mentoring and what benefits it will bring to their Lodge.
3. Ensure that Personal Mentors fully understand the aims and objectives of mentoring.
4. Ensure that Personal Mentors attend available training courses or workshops.
5. **Match the right Personal Mentor to the candidate.** This will of course vary according to the size of Lodge membership and the availability of suitable mentors. It would be helpful to be involved at the early stages of a candidate’s application to the Lodge, such as by serving on the

Committee of Inquiry. This will allow the Lodge Mentor to start thinking of a suitable Personal Mentor for the new applicant, that is a Brother who might share the applicant's reasons for becoming a Mason: his pursuit of strong fraternal ties; his interest in giving back to his community and fellow men; his Masonic legacy – following in the footsteps of his father or grandfather; or his curiosity and interest in Masonic history and symbolism. Remember not to disregard the Proposer or Seconder, as they may be best able to fulfill this role.

6. Take time to ensure the candidate and his Personal Mentor form a good initial relationship. Do they sit together both in Lodge meetings and dinners, and at social events? Is there a good relationship between them and the Proposer and Seconder?
7. Report findings to the Lodge; the Lodge Mentor should be given an opportunity to give his annual report in open Lodge.
8. Perhaps deliver a short paper on Masonic mentoring (Appendix A) in open Lodge.

## **THE PERSONAL MENTOR**

The role of Personal Mentor is the key position within the whole mentoring process. It is the Personal Mentor who imparts his knowledge, spends time with the candidate, and guides and supports him throughout his initial Masonic journey. By helping his Apprentice to correctly take his first crucial steps in Masonry, the Personal Mentor will be guiding him on a path that will change his life, and the lives of those around him, for the better.

The responsibilities of a Personal Mentor are great, but his role is also, in many ways, an easy and enjoyable one. Mentoring is not rocket science. It is simply a process of spending time with and caring for a candidate, exposing him to information in a controlled manner, *i.e.* in small understandable chunks that he can easily digest, while making sure he starts to understand what is happening around him. Once he has this basic knowledge, your role will then change from 'teacher' to 'mentor.' This may involve some elements of counseling, acting as a confidential advisor and being a role model. These are all things you have done successfully many times before, but you thought of it as *friendship*.

By its very nature, this role will involve continuous review, as the Personal Mentor and his Apprentice will be meeting on a regular basis to review progress.

It is the responsibility of the Personal Mentor to give feedback to the Lodge Mentor. This will include how the mentoring relationship is progressing with the candidate and will contain such points as:

1. How often do they meet?
2. Have they met after each of the degree ceremonies?
3. Does the candidate make any positive/negative comments about any aspects of the Craft?
4. Has the new Mason taken part in any ritual or shown interest in doing so?
5. What are the Apprentice's interests in Masonry and how are they being pursued?
6. What recognizable skills does the candidate have that may be useful to the Lodge in the future, *i.e.* a head for figures (treasurer), compassion (widows or visiting committees)?
6. Is the new Mason visiting other Lodges?
7. Does he attend social events?

The Personal Mentor will have plenty of support from both the Lodge Mentor and the rest of the Brethren, for it is in everyone's interest that he is successful as a mentor.

You may know of mentors in other Lodges and, if so, it will be good to speak with them from time to time, to exchange ideas and best practices. Look out for any training opportunities and workshops – sponsored by Grand Lodge, the Maine Masonic College or by non-Masonic organizations – that may be available for you to attend, and keep in close contact with the Lodge Mentor who will be very interested in the progress you are making as a Personal Mentor and with your assigned Apprentices.

Ideally, the Personal Mentor should be formally reintroduced to his Apprentice in open Lodge at the end of the initiation ceremony to congratulate the new Mason and to welcome him into the Lodge. It might also be appropriate at this point for the Personal Mentor to be invited to present his candidate with the second Pollard Plan booklet, *The Entered Apprentice*, as well as the candidate lesson book. This process would then be repeated after the Fellow Craft and Master Mason Degrees.

**A successful Personal Mentor should be:**

- A person with stimulating ideas,
- Someone interested in discussing the ideas of others,
- Supportive of change – personal, institutional and educational,
- Able to adapt to change in time to influence and control future developments,
- Able and willing to give time to the relationship to allow it to develop,
- Ready to share concerns with other Personal Mentors,
- Open, inspiring, trustworthy and circumspect,
- Encouraging, helping Apprentices to value their own work and development,
- Focused in approach, sharing clear aims, goals or objectives,
- Able to inspire confidence,
- Deserving but not demanding respect, and
- Knowledgeable, but not overbearing or nit-picking.

## **PROPOSER & SECONDER**

When looking at the role of the Personal Mentor, an obvious question to ask is: “Isn’t that the role of the Proposer or Secunder,” *i.e.* those who signed his application?

To some extent, the answer to this question is “yes, it is.”

Some Candidates are fortunate to have a Proposer or Secunder who has not only a sufficient level of knowledge, but also the time and ability to pass that knowledge on to the candidate. Sometimes this is not the case, through no fault of either the Proposer or Secunder.

1. They may have an active office in the Lodge that prevents them from spending quality time with their candidate.
2. They may still be at an early stage of their own Masonic career, without the required level of knowledge to be able to answer the candidate’s questions.
3. They may be unable to attend Lodge meetings on a regular basis, for reasons of family interests, business commitments or distance from Lodge.

This is where the Personal Mentor comes into his own, as someone who can provide the time and the knowledge required to care for the candidate and develop his understanding of Freemasonry.

It is clear from the above, that the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship between the Personal Mentor and his Apprentice will very much depend on the knowledge, skill and availability of the mentor. If the Proposer or Seconder is able and trained to fulfill this role, one or both of them should be appointed to serve as the Personal Mentor. Alternatively, it may be that they and the assigned Personal Mentor can work together. No matter how the relationship develops, the **Proposer and Seconder should always maintain a close relationship with their candidate.** They are often the reason why he joined the Craft and their enduring friendly relationship with him will only further enhance the work of the Personal Mentor.

## CONCLUSION

If mentoring is properly conducted, the Lodge will have a new member with a clear understanding of the fundamentals of Freemasonry and a Brother who will have met, enjoyed and benefited from the companionship of Lodge members. By attending the District Schools of Instruction, the Maine Masonic College and the Lodge of Research, and by pursuing the Masonic Rookie Program, he will have become involved in the ritual and ceremonial proceedings of the Craft more quickly than may otherwise have proved possible. He should therefore be in a position to value greatly his Freemasonry. **In short, by looking after, taking care of and instructing the new Brother, the Lodge has gained a valuable new addition to its membership ... and the Craft in general is strengthened.**

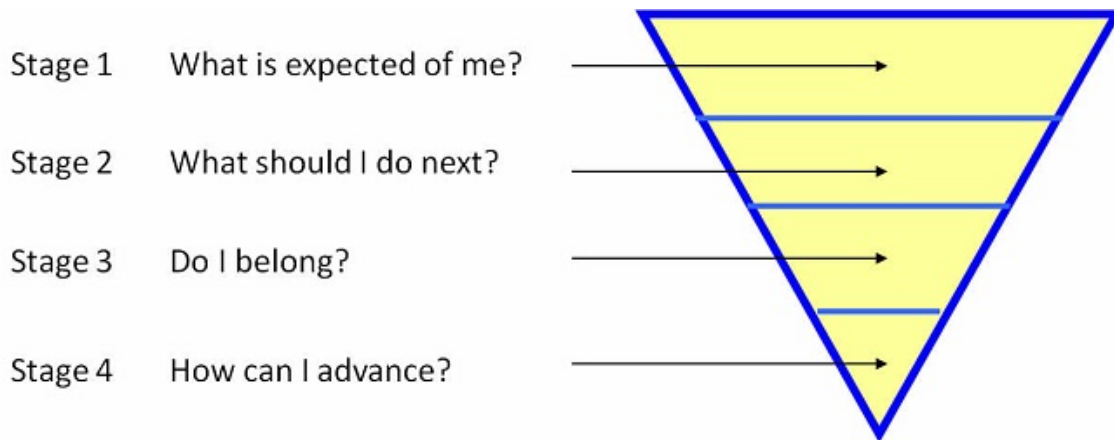
Be in no doubt that the future of Freemasonry is in the hands of our newer Brethren. But in whose hands are they? Who is shaping those who will shape the future of Freemasonry?

The answer is you! His Personal Mentor! As his Masonic mentor you will be helping your Apprentice to embark on a full, rewarding and enjoyable Masonic career. And you will also be safeguarding the future of your Lodge.

**‘When does mentoring stop?’** in truth, the answer is probably **‘Never!’**

**Help keep the future of Masonry vibrant by mentoring and caring for your Brethren!**

# Mentoring Checklist



Upon joining Freemasonry, your Apprentice will have some basic questions needing answering. This is called Stage 1.

## Stage 1

At first he will be a little bewildered, but he may soon ask “How often do we meet and when?” “Who is who?” “What is a Warden, Deacon etc.?” “What are the fees used for and how often do I pay them?” “What am I expected to wear and who provides the regalia?”

It is important that these very basic questions are raised and answered at an early stage. Only when your Apprentice has answers to these questions, should you guide him towards the next stage.

Once a new Brother is happy with this first stage, the basic ‘administrative’ side of things, he will move on to Stage 2.

## Stage 2

Stage 2 is where he needs to understand the relationship of the Three Degrees and the symbolic meanings of each as he completes them in turn.

This is a great opportunity for the Personal Mentor to help him understand what is going on around him. Sit with him in the Lodge room and go out with him if he has to retire during a higher degree.

Only with a full understanding of the ceremonies and their meanings will your Apprentice appreciate the essence of Masonry. Without this, he will never become fully engaged with the Craft and it will be difficult for him to maintain further interest.

This is also when the new Mason should be introduced to the Maine Masonic Rookie initiative, being provided the form that identifies the basic and optional opportunities for involvement available to new Masons. While the Rookie accomplishments are to be completed within twelve months of the Third Degree, they may be started as soon as the Entered Apprentice Degree is conferred on the new Mason.

### **Stage 3**

By Stage 3 your Apprentice will have an educated grounding in Freemasonry. He will ask himself “Do I fit in?” or “Is this for me?” The answer to these two questions will be “yes” only if the first two stages have been satisfactorily completed.

This is when the Personal Mentor asks whether his Apprentice wants to be involved in performing part of the ceremony and confirms that he is taking part in the social side of Lodge activities. There are many opportunities for becoming involved in the Lodge meetings and degrees, even before considering whether to become an installed officer. Many are listed in the Masonic Rookie forms, but they may also include delivering a charge before pledging allegiance to our nation’s flag, after a degree and at the closing of Lodge; delivering part of a lecture; contacting Brethren and encouraging them to attend a Lodge meeting... The opportunities are unlimited.

### **Stage 4**

By Stage 4 a Brother should be enjoying and valuing his Masonry, having struck a happy balance between his home, work and Masonic lives, and wishing to progress further. Such progression could be ‘up the ladder’ to the Worshipful Master’s chair, or into an active role on charity and other committees; as a treasurer, secretary, organist ... and perhaps into other Masonic bodies.

It is here that the Personal Mentor will guide his Apprentice along a sure path, and provide support and encouragement whenever required.

### **Checklist for Stage 1**

As a minimum you should aim to cover the items listed below:

1. Give an explanation of the term ‘Mother Lodge’ and identify any other Lodges that meet in the area. You might also wish to cover the subject of the difference between ‘privacy’ and ‘secrecy.’
2. Explain the setup of the Lodge and the various officers (Master, Wardens, Secretary, etc.).
3. Give him a written list of names and contact numbers of the officers and perhaps other members of your Lodge.
4. Provide a written list of the dates of Lodge meetings, social events and educational opportunities that he might qualify for attending in his or neighboring Lodges.
5. Advise him what he is expected to wear to Masonic meetings.
6. Make a Lodge tour, explaining the layout of the furniture, tracing boards, etc.
7. A great way to cover some of these issues is outside of the Lodge. Meet your Apprentice socially.
8. Tell him what he will need to bring to the Lodge in the way of cash. How much he pays for his degree fees, meals and other transactions.
9. Explain to him the procedure for introducing a guest to the Lodge.
10. Remember to counsel your Apprentice on maintaining a sensible balance between Freemasonry, family, work and other interests.

### **Checklist for Stage 2**

Have your Apprentice reflect on the ceremony he has just completed (Initiation, Passing, Raising).



1. Explain the relationship between the Three Degrees.
2. Visit a neighboring Lodge that will be performing the same ceremony. Make sure that you sit with him and encourage him to ask questions. Remember – visiting is not compulsory. Excessive visiting commitments can soon turn a man away from Masonry. Visiting should be at a level where it is a pleasure rather than a chore.
3. Always retire with him if he is required to do so. Explain why he had to retire.
4. Explain the basic messages that are symbolically conveyed in each of the three Degrees.
5. Attend Masonic lectures and demonstrations when possible. Information can be found on notice boards and in communications to your Lodge.
6. Let him know of your Lodge's Masonic library (or that of Grand Lodge) that he may use.
7. Share information on reputable and educational Masonic web sites on the Internet.
8. Encourage him to earn the Master Mason Rookie recognition as opportunities present themselves and to undertake basic and optional tasks. Accompany your Apprentice to another Lodge conferring the degree he has just received.

### **Checklist for Stage 3**

1. Involve your Apprentice in the social side of your Lodge. Encourage active participation.
2. Inquire whether he has ideas for social events? Encourage attendance at social events arranged by other Lodges.
3. Discuss with him whether he wants to take part in the ceremony, slow and easy at first. Don't push him.
4. Introduce him to your School of Instruction. Help your Apprentice with ceremonial work. If you are not good at it yourself then introduce him to a Brother who is.
5. Tell him about the Library, Museum and Masonic Store at Grand Lodge (at the intersection of Routes 1A and 46 in Holden) that it is open to the public and well worth a visit if in the Bangor area.

### **Checklist for Stage 4**

1. Explain the organization of Grand Lodge and the District, and their relationship with your Lodge.
2. Attend a District Meeting with him.
3. Introduce your Apprentice to District and Grand Lodge Officers. They will be aware of the mentoring initiative and will be happy to spend a little time with your Apprentice. This is best done when they are not on official duty and have more time to spare. No doubt they would appreciate being forewarned of your intentions.
4. Inform your Apprentice of the York Rite, Scottish Rite and Shrine and explain their importance in gaining further light in Masonry. Introduce him to a member of these bodies for further discussions, but only if he shows interest. Remember, as in all aspects of mentoring, never rush or push him into anything. A note of caution here! We all know of Brethren who have joined everything at once, found that they had overstretched themselves and lost interest in it all, including his Lodge. Encourage him to take it slowly.
5. To reemphasize, remember to counsel your Apprentice to maintain a sensible balance between Freemasonry, family, work and other interests.

# Short Paper on Mentoring

This paper is designed to be presented in open Lodge to give a brief explanation of Masonic mentoring – its background, current activities and future developments.

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Brethren, let me ask you a simple question. Where does the future of Freemasonry lie?

“Ah, that’s easy!” I hear you say, “It’s in the hands of the younger Masons.”

But in whose hands are they? Who is shaping those who will shape the future of Freemasonry and our Lodge?

As I look around this room I can see that it is filled with a great deal of Masonic experience – experience that is held by those with a love and a passion for Freemasonry.

We need to harness this knowledge and hand it onto the next generation.

To this end the Grand Lodge has launched Masonic mentoring as an extension of our caring for our Brethren.

Mentors will be provided with training and support to enable them to stimulate, engage and develop newer Masons to take a thriving Masonic fraternity in this the third century of Masonry in Maine.

This presentation is designed to provide a short overview of the subject of Masonic mentoring; its background, current progress and future developments.

## **What is Masonic Mentoring?**

Mentoring is a process where an individual can pass on his Masonic knowledge and experience to a less experienced Brother. Mentoring is widely used in the business world as part of a person’s career development, and what we are trying to do is to map that process into our Masonic lives.

Think back to when you first came into Masonry and you will realize that entering Freemasonry can be a daunting and, often, overwhelming time. The very nature of our organization often leads to men joining with little, or even no, idea of what it fully entails and what they can gain from membership. A Personal Mentor should be there to help during these crucial, formative years.

But, I hear you thinking, that is the job of the candidate’s Proposer or Seconder...those who signed his application. At this point I need to stress that a Masonic Personal Mentor in no way takes the place of a Proposer or Seconder, but is there to provide support and guidance in ways that I will explain later.

## **Why do we need it?**

It is a sad fact that there has been a steady decline in recent years in the number of Freemasons in Maine and in most other jurisdictions. That’s not all. Two further worrying trends compound the situation. Many

of our newer Brethren leave within the first five years of their Masonic life and the number of active Masons in each Lodge is often declining, while the average age is increasing.

It is this situation that has prompted our Grand Lodge to initiate Masonic mentoring. It has the full support of our Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master, and is seen as an integral part of the development of Freemasonry in this jurisdiction.

### **What's happening in Maine?**

All Lodges are being encouraged to designate Personal Mentors to help in the education, engagement and retention of our newer Brethren. Launched in 2013, the mentoring program builds upon the work of the Masonic Education and Lodge Services (MEALS) Committee, the Membership Committee and the new Dirigo Leadership program. It incorporates the Lodge Instructors Manual and DVD together with the Masonic Rookie Program, and seeks to identify the best mentoring practices in place throughout Maine. These initiatives will then be supplemented with courses on mentoring skills and Masonic knowledge that are being developed by and for the Maine Masonic College for presentation throughout Maine.

### **What does a Personal Mentor do?**

The role of a Personal Mentor is to ensure that a new Brother becomes engaged, included and cared for, and is educated with respect to the ideas and aims of Freemasonry.

By engaged we mean someone who is committed to Freemasonry; regularly attends his Lodge and takes an active role in Lodge life. By comparison someone who is disengaged may be a Mason by right of membership, but not in tune with the aims of the Craft, not attending regularly, and certainly not trying to apply his Masonic learning to his everyday life.

### **But isn't that what the Proposer and Secunder are meant to do?**

In an ideal world, the answer to this is YES, but unfortunately the Proposer or Secunder may not be able to effectively act as Personal Mentor for a number of reasons:

1. The Proposer or Secunder may hold an office in the Lodge and may not be able to spend quality time with their candidate on a Lodge evening.
2. The Proposer or Secunder may be relatively new to Freemasonry themselves and may not have the experience and knowledge required.
3. A situation may arise where the Proposer or Secunder cannot attend Lodge due to family, work, distance or other reasons.

It is in such situations that a Personal Mentor is essential, to provide the candidate with support, advice and above all, friendship in partnership with the Proposer and Secunder.

### **How do they do this?**

The key to supporting and befriending a new Mason is to take everything one step at a time. The candidate has a great deal of information to assimilate and the Personal Mentor has a wealth of

knowledge to impart. Controlling the passing on of this information is perhaps one of the most important tasks, for the process should be governed by the candidate's ability to digest the information and not by any wish on the part of the Lodge officers or the Personal Mentor to proceed quickly to the next stage.

It is therefore important to bring some structure to the mentoring initiative and identify what the candidate needs to know and when he needs to know it. This is perhaps best achieved by splitting the undertaking into four stages, namely:

1. **The candidate initially asks: "What is expected of me?"** These are all the basic questions, such as: What fees will I owe? When will I attend? What do I wear? Should I eat before the meeting? Who will I be meeting and what are their roles? What will I be expected to learn?
2. **He then wonders: "What do I have to do next?"** Once the basic 'administrative' side is dealt with in stage 1, the next step is to ensure that the new Mason understands the lessons of the degrees (not just the ritual) – that is, the relationship of the three degrees and the symbolic meaning of each as he completes them in turn. It is only with a full understanding of our ceremonies and their meanings that a new Brother will realize the essence of Masonry. Without this, he will never become fully engaged in the Craft and it will be impossible for him to maintain further interest.
3. **The next logical question is then: "Do I belong?"** This is when the question arises: "Now that I understand the meaning of the degrees and the work of the Lodge, do I fit in, is it for me?" The answer to this can only be 'yes' if the first two stages have been completed satisfactorily. This is when the Personal Mentor asks if his Apprentice – the new Mason who is on the first step of his Masonic life, seeking to attain useful Masonic knowledge – wishes to be involved in performing part of the ceremony, and ensures that he is fully immersed in the social activities of the Lodge.
4. **"How can I advance?"** is the question posed in the fourth stage when a Brother values and enjoys his Freemasonry, has struck a happy balance among his home, work, religious and Masonic lives, and wishes to progress further in his Lodge. Such progression could be 'up the ladder' towards Worshipful Master, or into a role such as secretary or treasurer, or working on Lodge committees. It is here that a Personal Mentor will conduct his Apprentice along a sure path, guiding him in the right direction and providing support and encouragement whenever required.



**MENTOR'S JOURNAL – NOTES**

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