

Masonic Mentoring



A GUIDE FOR LODGE AND PERSONAL MENTORS

**GRAND LODGE OF MAINE, A.F. & A.M.
2013**

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Acknowledgements

The Masonic Mentoring Program of the Grand Lodge of Maine springs from the efforts of past generations of Maine Masons as well as the fruitful endeavors of Freemasons in other Masonic Grand Jurisdictions.

This *Guide for Lodge and Personal Mentors* draws from Pollard Plan booklet number five that was last published in 1971. That booklet explained the role of “Elder Brothers,” Masons who were committed to passing down their knowledge and love of the Craft.

The overall design of the Masonic Mentoring Program for Maine benefits from the significant work of the United Grand Lodge of England and its Provincial Grand Lodge of Hampshire and Isle of Wight. Our British brethren have generously allowed our Grand Jurisdiction to employ the designs laid down on their Trestleboards for the nurturing of their new Masonic brethren.

MW A. James Ross, Grand Master

**RW David A. Walker, Deputy Grand Master and
Mentoring Program Overseer**

Grand Lodge of Maine A.F. & A.M. Mentoring Team

RW Thomas E. Pulkkinen, Chairman

Bro. Jonathan S. Cail

RW Christopher M. DiSotto

Bro. John T. Jenkins

RW Charles W. Plummer

RW Christian A. Ratliff

RW Robert D. Stratton

RW Lawrence M. Vennell

Bro. Tye E. Zimerle



A GUIDE FOR LODGE AND PERSONAL MENTORS

Dear Brother:

The Worshipful Master of your Lodge has placed you in full charge of mentoring elected candidates and new Masons, and for all non-ritualistic instruction offered to candidates under the Grand Lodge educational program employed in your Lodge.

There are two important mentoring roles to be fulfilled in each Lodge. The **Lodge Mentor** oversees mentoring for the Lodge, while the **Personal Mentor** works directly with an elected candidate who will soon become your Masonic Brother. These are important and responsible assignments in which you can render a most valuable and worthwhile service to the Fraternity and each new Masonic Brother. The duties associated with these mentoring positions are further delineated in the *Maine Masonic Mentoring Handbook*.

The need for personal mentoring and a more adequate system of candidate instruction in our Maine Lodges has long been felt. Our ritualistic instruction leaves nothing to be desired, but too many of our candidates have little knowledge of the application of Masonic lessons to our daily lives, the aims and relationships of the Craft, its long history, its present organization and functions, or a Mason's responsibilities and obligations to the Craft and his Lodge.

The purpose of our new mentoring initiative is to make such information available to new Masons, but more so, to provide a Brother who will accompany and guide the candidate and new Master Mason during the first year of his journey in Freemasonry. This Brother will serve as the new Mason's teacher, coach, advisor, counselor and above all his Masonic role model. Lodges will largely depend upon you and your fellow Masonic mentors for the success of our mentoring efforts and the strength of our new Masonic relationships.

Each Master will designate brethren to either oversee the Lodge's mentoring initiative as the Lodge Mentor, or serve as the Personal Mentor of new Masons. Some Lodges may at least initially have one Brother serve in both roles. These mentors should be interested and trained brethren who regularly attend their Lodge meetings.

The **Lodge Mentor** will keep a watchful eye on all Lodge mentoring activities. He will assist the Worshipful Master in finding suitable Personal Mentors, impress upon these brethren the importance of their job, and see that they are properly trained. He will also ensure that educational materials are available for the Personal Mentors and their *Apprentices* – brethren standing on that first step in Freemasonry, where they should industriously occupy their minds in the attainment of useful Masonic knowledge.

The **Personal Mentor** – sometimes also known as an *Intender* – may well be a Brother who signed the candidate's application, a neighbor, fellow employee or worshipper, or business associate. If none of these are available, the Master may assign one of his junior officers or another trained Brother to perform this important role.

The Grand Lodge mentoring team – or the District Deputy Grand Master, District Education Representative or the District Mentoring Coordinator of your District – will furnish all designated mentors with the working

tools needed for these important assignments. These tools include a copy of the *Lodge Instructors Manual*, the new *Maine Masonic Mentoring Handbook* and *The Craft and Its Symbols* by Allen E. Roberts. In addition, mentors will receive copies of the first four Pollard Plan booklets for The Accepted Candidate, Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason. A supply of these materials may be acquired from Grand Lodge.

Whether you will be serving as a Lodge Mentor or Personal Mentor, your first duty will be to read the first four Pollard Plan candidate booklets and to familiarize yourself with their contents, so that you can discuss them comfortably with the candidate and answer his questions. The subject matter of these booklets, which is fully explained in the *Lodge Instructors Manual*, may be an old story to you, but it is certainly no old story to the candidate. Try to put yourself in his place, and endeavor to anticipate the questions that will arise in his mind.

In addition, you should become familiar with the *Lodge Instructors Manual* and *The Craft and Its Symbols*, so that after each degree is conferred on your Apprentice, you will be able to knowledgeably refer to these teaching materials when you address his questions. Your preparation for becoming a mentor will not only benefit the candidate, but as any teacher preparing for a new course will affirm, this preparation will greatly expand your knowledge and appreciation of Freemasonry and its many lessons as well.

As soon as possible after a candidate has been elected to receive the degrees in your Lodge, you as his assigned Personal Mentor should make personal contact with him. The time, place and circumstances of this contact are left entirely up to you. It may be on the street, at the candidate's place of business or in his home. You should introduce yourself, explain that you come from the Lodge, congratulate him on his election and assure him of the fraternal welcome that awaits him in the Lodge. Explain to him your role as his Personal Mentor – his new guide and Masonic Brother, and your pleasure in being selected to assist him during his introduction to Freemasonry.

At this point, you should present him with a copy of Pollard Plan Booklet No. 1 addressed to The Elected Candidate, which you should direct him to study carefully. If the time and circumstances of your meeting permit, you may ask him to read the booklet, which is very brief, in your presence; after which you may discuss it with him and answer his questions on the spot. Discuss with the accepted candidate the attire preferred to be worn in your Lodge as well as whether there will be a dinner associated with his first meeting. Also offer to bring him to the meeting and give him a copy of the *Maine Mason* so he might learn more about the Craft he is about to join. Your job is to make him feel truly welcomed into your Lodge and comfortable in the degrees that lie ahead.

If all these matters were discussed in your first meeting, no further contact with the candidate is necessary prior to his initiation. If on the other hand you merely left the booklet with him at your first meeting, a second contact is needed before he receives his first degree. Make sure that he has read and understands the booklet, and answer any questions that he may ask. Be particularly careful that he has no mistaken idea of our initiation ceremony, such as might result from the idle talk of foolish and misguided brethren.

As soon as the candidate has received his first degree, he should be presented with Booklet No. 2 – The Entered Apprentice. Before he is passed to the second degree, check to see that he has read and understood the material and, if possible, accompany the new Mason to an Entered Apprentice Degree being conferred on another candidate in your Lodge or another Lodge. This procedure should be followed after each degree. Your meeting with the candidate after he has become a Master Mason is important. Much practical and important information is contained in the Master Mason booklet and it is essential that the candidate understands this information; however, your mentoring role does not end then.

All too often in the past, after being the center of attention while receiving his degrees, the candidate is thereafter left to his own resources. This is a tragic mistake. The first year of a man's Masonic membership is of vital importance. In it, he may acquire habits of attendance or non-attendance, interest or lack of interest, or activity or inactivity that may well persist throughout his Masonic life, and perhaps even hasten his leaving the

Craft altogether. Accordingly, mentoring is expected to actively continue to serve the candidate throughout the first year of his membership to insure that good Masonic habits are formed during this vital period and that his bonds with the Lodge are strong.

The Personal Mentor will see to it that the new member is reminded of all Lodge meetings, encouraged to attend, and made to feel at home in his Lodge. The mentor will coach him in the little niceties of Masonic etiquette and Lodge room deportment that can only be learned by actually sitting in Lodge. He will also encourage his Apprentice to visit neighboring Lodges, attend district meetings, and, in general, to get the most out of – to realize true value from – his Masonic membership. Also encourage the candidate and new Mason to earn the Masonic Rookie designation as an approach to becoming an active member of our Masonic fraternity and your Lodge.

Pollard Plan Booklet No. 4 – The Master Mason – and your Lodge Instructors Manual contain lists of the books especially recommended for the new Mason. The books may be found in the Grand Lodge Library or purchased either from Grand Lodge or other book sellers. Encourage him to use the Library and the Grand Lodge web site, and help him in preparing his initial application to borrow or purchase books.

In your work, you will discover a wide diversity in candidates. Some will ask few if any questions; others will be insatiable in their thirst for knowledge. You will be able to answer most of their questions from your own Masonic experience and knowledge, or by reference to the *Lodge Instructors Manual*, *Maine Masonic Textbook*, *The Craft and Its Symbols* and other available materials. However, if you should fail to locate good and complete answers, do not hesitate to call upon your District Deputy Grand Master, District Education Representative, a member of the Masonic Education and Lodge Services Committee, or upon any Grand Lodge officer. Someone will certainly be able to provide an informed answer to any question!

Lodge Mentors will report annually to the District Mentoring Coordinator on how mentoring is working in your Lodge. Tell him frankly whether the reaction to the mentoring initiative by your brethren (from long-time Lodge members to new Masons) is favorable or unfavorable, how effectively the booklets are doing the job for which they were intended, and what measure of support the plan is receiving in your Lodge. Also provide him constructive feedback on what you feel may be improved and how. The Grand Lodge Mentoring Coordinator, who reports directly to the Deputy Grand Master, would also welcome any comments or suggestions that you might care to make. Feel free to contact him at any time.

Finally, my Brother, if you ever find it impossible to give sufficient time to your mentoring duties, please resign promptly, so that the Worshipful Master can name your successor and the essential instruction of the candidates can be carried on without interruption.

If we all work together to make this mentoring plan a success, it will result in a better informed and more interested membership in the years to come.

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PO Box 430
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