

Mentoring Program and The Chapter Education Team

(A Work In Progress)

So you want to be a mentor? Or perhaps you just don't understand why you have 100 members in your chapter and still can't find someone to be Ruth. Good for you! That is exactly the way of thinking our Order needs. So many Sisters and Brothers are lost only after going through the process of initiation.

Lets start with the applicant phase. How long are you holding your applicants? Don't wait for Official Visit to do an initiation, get the candidate in as soon as possible. We live in an instant society where we get what we apply for in short order. A couple today can apply for a mortgage and get approval in 2 hours from the time of the application on a Sunday. So let's not keep them in the wings to long.

This program is adopted from the Colorado Masonic mentor program, and it is one of the finest and most complete I have ever seen. We thank them for the source material.

Purpose

To ensure that every Candidate is properly instructed in the fundamentals of the Chapter and the Order.

Mechanics

Upon election of a petitioner for the Initiation, the Worthy Matron appoints a Mentor for a one-year term to serve as part of a chapter education team. In the event a chapter does not have an education team, the first four Mentors appointed, will form it. Until then, the Mentor may work alone to enact the program. Every Mentor should familiarize himself or herself with this Material.

Method

The Mentor will contact the candidate and advise him of the tentative initiation schedule, and invite the candidate and his/her partner to any open chapter functions. The Mentor will maintain contact during the time leading up to the candidate's initiation and will assist him/her in preparing for the ceremony. The Mentor will ascertain if the candidate has any particular Masonic or Eastern Star Members who are friends or associates, and would like to be invited to attend or assist in the initiation. The Mentor needs to be sensitive to, and aware of, the fact that the friend may belong to a Eastern Star Or Masonic group that is not recognized by Grand Chapter. The Mentor needs to have a explanation ready for this if he/she is presented with this problem. The Mentor should not be an elected officer of a chapter if it can be avoided, as they are traveling a lot and can

easily overwhelm a new member. This post should not be filled lightly however it is one of the MOST important in the official line. The very future of your chapter depends on these mentors, so treat the appointment like the chapter's future depends on them.

Above all, the Mentor will make the new Sister/Brother a part of the chapter family.

The Candidate meets with the Mentor a minimum of **FIVE** times.

A continuing program of support through fraternal chapter visitations, mentor counseling, and event participation is encouraged for the new Sister/Brother in their first year as members of the order. It is recommended that the New Sister/Brother be invited to join her/his chapter sisters and brothers at the next occurring of Grand Session.

Prior to the First Meeting

Upon the election of a Candidate for initiation, the Chapter sends the Candidate a congratulatory letter.

Assign a Mentor to the Candidate. Preferably a seasoned member who is knowledgeable about the chapter and the order, and who has read this Manual. The Mentor will serve as one of four members of the Chapter Education Team or he may work alone if need be.

The Purpose

Every candidate is a stranger to Eastern Star, and Eastern Star is a stranger to them. It is not merely a chapter that he/she joins, but a great society with a history stretching back over many centuries, an intricate system of laws, a large number of purposes, ideals and Obligations, a set of rights, privileges and duties, a set of customs to be preserved, the whole carrying on a program of activities of great variety.

It is too much to expect of any one that without guidance he or she shall be able to make himself at home in such a society, or that unaided he or she shall be able to take his own proper place in the chapter's work with credit to himself or herself and honor to the Order. He has every right to expect that the chapter itself shall give him much of the information he needs. It is because so many new people never receive this information, and are permitted to come - and perhaps go - undirected and uninstructed, that they either cease attending chapter at all, or, too often, for lack of knowledge, blunder into humiliation to themselves and damage to the chapter.

There is nothing new in these statements. For years responsible leaders have been only too aware of them, and have realized that this failure to properly prepare the candidate for his or her new duties and privileges is both a failure on the part of the Chapter to discharge its just obligations to him, and a weakness in the fundamental system of Initiation which incurs the danger of weakening the whole structure by attempting to build enduring walls with a unstructured foundation. Moreover it is not solely a matter of teaching the new member the ceremonies he or she is to go through; it is necessary that

he or she become excited with the spirit of our Order and to believe in, as well as to understand, its purposes and ideals. Our order does not rest on compulsion or military rule; if its own members are at odds with its aims it becomes a house divided against itself. In many cases when members cause dissension in a Chapter, it is not out of malice or a desire to make mischief, but because they do not understand the rules and laws we have freely chosen to live by.

It is not only the candidate that profits by the "Mentor Program." The chapter itself is strengthened from having new members who from the beginning are able to take part in its activities; who are likely to become regular attendants; and who can quickly grasp the aim and purpose of the chapter's endeavors. They come in already prepared for work! And the Worthy Matron has a larger staff of trained members to work with as a result.

Phase 1: The Seven Steps To Keeping A Member

Step I

Immediately after election of the Candidate, the Worthy Matron of the Chapter announces the name of the new Candidates' Mentor. The Mentor's name, address, and phone number is sent along with a letter from the Worthy Matron and the Worthy Patron of the chapter. The letter informs the Candidate that he or she has been elected to membership in the chapter, and of the time and place of initiation. This letter should also notify him that his or her Mentor will either pick him or her up or meet him or her at the Masonic Center approximately one hour prior to initiation.

The Mentor should call the Candidate immediately after the Mentor's appointment and introduce himself or herself, explain his or her relationship as Mentor. If possible a meeting should be set up which could include other Sisters or Brothers. He or she should also remind the Candidate of the time and place for his or her initiation and encourage him or her to invite any OES member or Master Mason he might know to his degree. (Keeping in mind the fact that the friend may belong to a eastern star group not recognized by Grand Chapter. The Mentor needs to have an explanation for this ready if he/she is presented with this problem.) Now is also the time to find out if he or she will need a ride to the Masonic Center or meet his Mentor there one hour prior to his initiation.

Step 2

The Mentor meets the Candidate one hour before initiation. It is the Mentor's job to make the Candidate feel comfortable and relaxed. He or she should answer as best he can any questions or concerns that the candidate might have. He or she should also give him or her a tour of the Masonic Center facility (other than the chapter room itself) at this time and introduce him to other chapter members as they arrive. He or she should also stay with him or her at all times prior to the initiation, as well as interact with him or her afterwards to answer any immediate questions.

Step 3

The Mentor should meet with the new Sister or Brother, at their home or at the Masonic Center, prior to his first meeting to discuss and answer questions concerning the Opening and Closing and the signs and passes they will be expected to know.

The Mentor should meet with the new Brother or Sister, at the Masonic Center, one hour prior to his or her first meeting to discuss and answer his or her questions concerning the following:

- Opening and closing of the Chapter
- Form and contents of the Chapter
- Officers and their stations
- Method of conferring degree, and meetings. (i.e. How he or she was dressed, long white, short white long color suit, tuxedo, tuxedo with tailcoat, when and by whom they are worn).

After answering his or her questions, the Mentor should stay with the Candidate through the meeting to answer any immediate questions.

Step 4

The Mentor and new Sister or Brother should again meet prior to his Second meeting to answer questions and discuss the Obligation and its meaning. This can be either at the Masonic Center, or in the Mentor's home.

Step 5

The Mentor should meet with the Sister or Brother after his or her second meeting, either at his or her home or at the Masonic Center, to discuss and answer questions concerning the officers duties He or she will also help him or her to become aware of the resources available at his chapter, and those of the Grand Chapter.

Step 6

The Mentor attends **FOUR** chapter functions with the new Sister or Brother. This should include two Stated Meetings, one initiation (preferably an official visit), and a Social, Family, or Installation Night.

Step 7

The Mentor arranges and accompanies the new Sister or Brother on a visitation to another Chapter (Other than Official Visit). This should be a Stated Meeting, Initiation, or Installation Night. The Mentor instructs the newly raised Sister or Brother on the

differences between the chapters and also the similarities between the chapters. If not already discussed, the Mentor should answer questions concerning the history, customs, and traditions of their chapter. The Mentor will also invite the new Sister/Brother to join his Sisters and Brothers at the next Grand Session.

Meeting Number One

Could be as an Investigation Committee or a friendly welcome meeting.

Setting

Preferably in the Candidate's home with the Candidate's family present.

Dress

Dress appropriately for the setting of the meeting.

Recommended Time Limit

One Hour, not to exceed One and One-half hours including discussion.

Mentor and Chapter Education Team

Introduce by giving an overview for his/her or their (if family is included) consideration, appreciation, and discussion. Engage in open discussion; encourage the Candidate and their family to ask questions.

Indicate to the Candidate that he or she need be clothed in special garments for their initiation - garments which have been worn by all members on the occasion of their Initiation. (long white, suit etc.) Determine if he or she is able to rest on his knees (advise Worthy Matron and make accommodations if he or she is not). Inform the Candidate of the Initiation date and offer him or her transportation.

Indicate to the Candidate that you will contact them and inform him or her where the next meeting will be held following the Initiation Ceremony.

Key Points

Congratulations - Enthusiasm Concern

This first impression is a lasting one. Ignite Eastern Star pride.

Meeting Number Two

Prior to Meeting Number Two the Chapter sends a welcome letter to the spouse of the new Sister/Brother, to come to stated meetings with her/him and partake in a social gathering after the meeting. See that a couple of members stay outside in the lounge of the Masonic Center to provide company to the spouse. The sentinel will be helpful here as well. Inform the Worshipful Master that the husband of a new sister may attend and be seated in the lounge so perhaps he can "drop in" and greet him. The Lodge also informs the new Brother or Sister By mail of the time and place of Meeting Number Two.

Setting

The Chapter Room or the home of the Mentor. You may wish to use the Chapter Room if there are a large number of new Brothers or Sisters.

Dress

Dress appropriately.

Recommended Time Limit

One Hour, not to exceed One and One-half hours including discussion.

Mentor and Education Team

Welcome the New Sister/Brother - put him/her at ease.

Outline the information covered in your first Meeting. Engage in open discussion; encourage questions, use the Chapter Room to illustrate. Use this meeting to get it all out in the open. Do not ask if they have any questions, and leave it at that. Our initiation has so much information in it that they most likely do not know how to frame the questions that they want the answers to.

Discuss

Passes and Signs. Review Ritual material and help the new Brother/Sister learn the meaning of the Lectures.

The Signet

The cabalistic word and phrase and its meaning

The Colors

The Flowers and their meaning

What did the initiation mean to the new Brother/Sister? What did he or she personally get out of it? Share what it meant for you, what it means for you now. Do not do this off the cuff, say it over a couple of times, and get it ready for presentation.

The Masonic World and Universal Brotherhood/Sisterhood

Privileges and Duties

Indicate the next Mentoring Session will follow. He or she will be notified of the time and place of the meeting.

Meeting Number Three

Prior to the third meeting the Chapter sends an appropriate letter explaining the date and time of Meeting Number Three.

Setting

The Chapter Room or the home of the Mentor. You may wish to use the Chapter Room if there are a large number of new Members.

Dress

Dress appropriately.

Recommended Time Limit

One Hour, not to exceed One and One-half hours including discussion.

Mentor and Education Team

Welcome the Sister or Brother - put them at ease.

Outline the information covered in your Second Meeting.

Discuss

- Charities the chapter is involved with.
- Fund Raisers
- Chapter Committees
- Chapter Officers and their duties

He/She will be notified of the time and place of the the next Mentoring Session.

Meeting Number Four

Prior to the Fourth Meeting the Chapter sends the new Sister/Brother an appropriate letter explaining the date and time of meeting number four.

Setting

The Chapter Room.

Dress

Dress appropriately.

Recommended Time Limit

One Hour, not to exceed One and One-half hours, including discussion.

Mentor and Education Team

Welcome the Sister/Brother - put her or him at ease.

Outline the information covered in your Third Meeting.

Inform the new Sister/Brother that the Mentor will be her/his guide for the next year and will continue to communicate information as she/he progresses.

Key Points

Warmth of friendship – Congratulations - Enthusiasm - Concern

Mentoring Program Follow-up After the Fourth Meeting

Mentor

Stress support in following year.

Stress need for participation.

Stress need for other chapter visitation.

Stress need for attendance at School of Instruction, Rehearsals, and Stated Meetings.

Stress need for attendance at Memorial and Funeral Services.

Offer the new member rides to chapter, sit with her/him whenever she/he is in attendance, call her/him directly if she/he misses a meeting and express concern, secure some job for the new member to be responsible for.

Recommend

Full participation in all Chapter and District Functions. Attendance at the next Grand Session.

Advise

Continued support of Mentor and all chapter members.

Key Points

Warmth - Friendship - Congratulations - Enthusiasm and assurance of continued interest, support, and assistance.

Phase II — Meeting Number Five

For the benefit of all chapter members

Meeting Number Five

Within one month of initiation.

Setting

The Chapter Room.

Dress

Dress appropriately.

Recommended time limit

One Hour, including discussion.

Purpose

To ensure that the following does not happen:

A problem in our Order is that so often the new Sister/Brother is permitted to drop from sight after she or he has gone through initiation. If the chapter can retain her/his interest during this most critical period of her or his membership, and give her or him guidance and encouragement until she or he has had time to form habits of interest and activity for hers or himself, she or he will develop into a working, active Member. Otherwise, she or he is likely to stop attending after a few meetings and either lapse into chronic indifference, or find her or his way out of the Order itself.

The new Member needs to know and understand her or his duties as a Member and what her or his rights and privileges are. She or he should be taught how to visit other Chapters. She or he needs information about the traditions and work of the Order as a whole.

Topics to cover

- Chapter etiquette
- Protocol
- Chapter and officer duties
- Leadership skills
- Our rights and privileges

The Chapter Member

With rights, we assume responsibilities.

Living according to our Obligations and adhering to the principles of the five heroines.

To Ballot with integrity. If used thoughtlessly, it becomes an injustice to the petitioner and to the Chapter.

To abide by the Constitutions of our Fraternity and the By-Laws of our Chapter.

To assist the Worthy Matron to the best of ones ability in the duties she assigns.

To be generous with gifts in particular to benevolence and charity.

Visit sick and shut-in Sisters make inquiries and offer comfort to those who cannot attend Chapter Meetings.

Help, instruct, inspire, and support all new Sisters and Brothers. Encourage them, as you have been encouraged. You will ignite their Eastern Star pride, and in helping them, you will ignite your own pride.

Enjoy Eastern Star. Be a part of it. Ask questions.

The new Sisters or Brothers brings with them enthusiasm, unique skills, and interest. It is the duty of the Chapter and its members to ignite his pride in Eastern Star. In doing so, the new Member will achieve even greater accomplishments within our Circle. The Chapter must be aware of those activities that interest the new Member. And when he is ready, assign him to a function that she or he enjoys. All Chapters have administrative needs, Officer needs, and program and planning needs. Every new Sister and Brother bring new ideas and skills to a Chapter, use them and do not discourage them with statements like "That is the way we always did it." or "We do not do it that way." Try to stay away from "That is against the law book" or "Honey, Jurisprudence ruled we should do it this way." The new member doesn't understand these concepts and they need to be handled in a way that is sensitive and that she or he understands that she/he is not being refused and rebuffed. Try something different sometimes it will not kill us.

The duties of a Mentor are for one year. Do not leave the newly made Member alone to fend for her or him after the initiation is over. For that year you should be on the phone with your charge before each meeting making sure they have a ride, or ask them for a ride.