

St. John's Lodge No. 9, F. & A. M.

Trestleboard

March 2023

Jim Russell, editor



Serving Seattle since 1860

meets: 7910 Greenwood Ave. N.

Lodge phone: (206) 623-0261

jimrussell58@frontier.com

[web: www.seattleMasons.org](http://www.seattleMasons.org)

FROM THE EAST

[Eric Koteles](#), Master



Eric Koteles
Master

Brethren,

During our last stated meeting we gathered together to discuss what needed to be done to improve our Lodge. We realized that in order to progress, we must evolve, be flexible, and most importantly, trust and treat each other as true brothers. It is important that we do not forget that by simply sticking to the same old formula, nothing will improve. Routine is rust for the soul, and we cannot allow the soul of our Lodge to become corroded.

We should not expect different results if we are not willing to change our old ways. Therefore, I must stress once again that we must be careful with traditions because some of them may have started as bad habits.

Having one conversation will not be enough to bring about the changes we need. It is important that we follow up with actions and work together as a team.

Lastly, please remember the true meaning of trust and brotherhood and let us act accordingly. Together, we shall stand.

Brother

“Brothers support and challenge one another, share knowledge and wisdom, and provide light and hope in times of darkness.”

Trust

“Reliance on the Veracity, Integrity, and other Virtues.”

“Help, Confidence, Protection, Support, Comfort, Consolation, Fidelity.”

“Faithful, Firm, Solid, Steadfast, Reliability.”

Fraternally,

WM Eric Koteles

Disciplinam et Concordia



APRIL ZOOM HOSTS AUTHOR AND BRO. TONY HARVEY

The Seven Habits of Highly Successful Lodges

St. John's April 5 Zoom session will feature Bro. Tony Harvey, who will speak to us on *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful Lodges*. Bro. Harvey has written on the subject and is highly acclaimed.

Habits 1, 2, and 3 are focused on self-mastery and moving from dependence to independence. Habits 4, 5, and 6 are focused on developing teamwork, collaboration, and communication skills, and moving from independence to interdependence. Habit 7 is focused on continuous growth and improvement and embodies all the other habits.

Tony offers practical approaches to address the principal barriers to success, growth, and sustainability.

CALENDAR



- **March 9 (6pm): Officers Meeting** *teleconference check your email for new ID*
- **March 15 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated *WB Pekka Granroth visits from Finland***
- **March 25 (1-3pm): District 4&5 Reception for the Grand Master** *(at Greenwood)*
- **April 5 (7pm): Fellowship Zoom** *teleconference **The Seven Habits of Highly Successful Lodges.***
- *April 9: Easter Sunday*
- **April 13 (6pm): Officers meeting**
- **April 19 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated *Ill. Robert Davis, guest speaker***
- **April 29: Final Day to Apply for Student Scholarship**
- **April 29 (10am): Masonic Service Bureau on Zoom**
- **April 29: Grand Masonic Day** *Vancouver Masonic Centre*
- **May 3 (7pm): Fellowship: topic TBA**
- **May 17 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated *Deputy of the Grand Master Official Visit***
- **May 20 (11am): FABulous Family Appreciation Brunch** *Columbia Tower*
- **June 21: Visit to Tenino Stone Quarry lunch with Tenino Brothers**

St. John's Lodge No. 9 meets every 3rd Wednesday at 7910 Greenwood Ave. N., Seattle

- Social “hour” 5:30pm
- Free parking available after 6pm on the St. John Catholic Church playground. Located ½ block west of Greenwood Ave. N. on southside of N. 80th Street.
- Dinner 6:15pm
- Stated Communication 7:30pm
- Refreshments and fellowship following

FINNISH BROTHER TO VISIT ST. JOHN'S LODGE IN MARCH

You've been hearing about him in and around Lodge lately.

You've may have seen and talked with him on St. John's Lodge Wednesday Night Zoom Fellowship hours.

But, this month we meet him in person.....our now friend and brother, WBro. Pekka Granroth of Savo Lodge 14, Savo, Finland. On the evening of March 15, WBro. Granroth will join us for dinner and attend our Stated Meeting. During tiled Lodge he will present "Freemasonry in Finland" as an extension of our Masonic Education.

In the spring of 2016, WBro. Granroth was supposed to competitively sail across the Pacific and ultimately planned to visit St. John's Lodge the week he was to land in Seattle. A shoulder injury prevented his sailing and we never met in person as brothers. However, WBro. Granroth's name and e-mail contact remained with the Lodge and he continued to receive our Trestleboard.

In the spring of 2020, as the corona pandemic threatened the world, Bro. Pekka read that the Lodge was starting to hold weekly Zoom meetings instead of its monthly stated communications and he received permission to join in our sessions.

WBro. Granroth continues to share in our Zoom sessions when he can and our St. John's Lodge brothers who join in Zoom look forward to his participation.

Bro. Pekka now looks forward to seeing his Seattle brothers in person this month. Bro/Veli Pekka will be arriving at SeaTac March 11 and departing March 20. During this time, he will mainly be staying with Bro. Paul Doak's family in Bothell, with some skiing planned at Stevens Pass on the 12th and 19th. St. John's Bothers are welcome to meet our Finnish guest at Stevens as well as do a little skiing.

The days of March 13 - 15 he will be staying with WBro. John Louderback in Hoquiam and visit the sites of the Olympic Peninsula.

At 11:30am on Friday March 17th Pekka will have **lunch with a few of our brothers at Ivar's Salmon House**. A couple of seats are still open.

Also, *if anyone knows of any degrees during the 16th, 17th, or 18th of March, please let us know, as WBro. Pekka would be pleased to attend.*



Please make your dinner [reservations](#) with the secretary at 206 623-0261 by Friday, March 10. Do you know of a brother who has not attended Lodge in a while? Call him and ask if you can pick him up and bring him to Lodge.

GRAND MASTER RECEPTION MARCH 25

Most Worshipful Grand Master Edward C. Woods will be meeting with brothers of Districts 4 and 5 Saturday afternoon, March 25, at the Greenwood Masonic Center. ***Refreshments will be offered before and after the 1 – 3pm meet.***

Communications and reports from members of the Grand Lodge Team and the two Deputies of the districts will be offered. The Grand Master Achievement Awards for a representative of each district will likely be announced.

St. John's brothers are encouraged to participate, meet, and greet our other brothers in the districts and share thoughts with our Grand Master. Suit & tie appropriate.



GM Edward C. Woods



WB Pekka Granroth to speak of Freemasonry in Finland

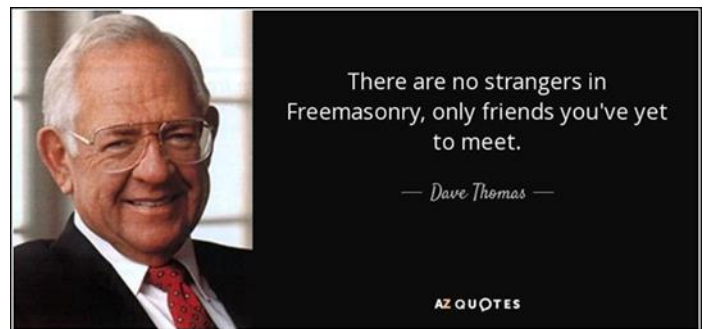


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Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, June 8th – 11th; Wenatchee Convention Center. **REGISTRATION WILL OPEN APRIL 1st**

Get ready for the visit of MW Bob Davis

MWBro. Robert G. Davis, author of "The Mason's Word," will be guest speaker at our April 19th stated communication. On his visit, he will also speak at the Seattle Scottish Rite.

MWBro. Davis is one of the finest thinkers and important leaders in American Freemasonry. He is the author of numerous essays and several well-received books. It will be time well-spent to read some of his brief essays at <https://robertgdavis.net/>

He was Grand Master of Oklahoma in 2021 and recently retired as Secretary of the Guthrie Scottish Rite Center. MWBro. Davis is well known both in the areas of Masonic Research and Masonic Renewal.



.... to read a short biography and an overview of two of his outstanding books.

Freemasons present firefighting tool

The portable unit can drop the temperature of a house, garage or shed fire by 1,000 degrees.



Members of the Barnes Lodge 365 of Free and Accepted Masons of Wisconsin present the Solon Springs Volunteer Fire Department with a portable fire suppression tool.

SOLON SPRINGS — Freemasons from Barnes Masonic Lodge 365 presented the Solon Springs Volunteer Fire Department with a GreenPort Portable Fire Suppression Tool on February 11 at the Solon Springs Fire Department.

These small devices fit in the trunk of squad cars or other emergency response vehicles and can dramatically reduce fire and water damage in enclosures like houses, garages, stores or sheds. They are lightweight and easy to deploy: just "pull the pin and throw it in" and within 35 seconds, the fire is suppressed and the temperature inside the enclosure drops over 1,000 degrees, making it a safer environment to extract trapped firefighters or citizens.

Barnes Masonic Lodge members said they were proud to donate the devices, which could save lives, to help make the community a safer place.



Portable fire suppression tool

Junior Warden's Message

WBro. David Flood

BE TEMPERATE

To be temperate is to have the quality of moderation or self-restraint. To develop temperance in our behavior we can gain some insight from the Latin roots of the word. Originally it meant to mix ingredients proportionately just as a potter will mix clay and water in the right proportions to obtain a usable consistency. We will say a friend or brother has a good temperament when his actions, speech and mind are harmonious because they are combined in the right proportion.

In *The Republic* Plato names temperance or moderation as one of the virtues that later generations called the cardinal virtues. For Plato the virtues are the skills that we need to attain happiness. As Masons, of course, one of our goals is happiness.

By being temperate we can deal with our passions. Passions can arise from the instinctive part of our self, and also from social norms that we have internalized as we grow and mature. As a tool for dealing with our passions the Entered Apprentice degree presents the symbol of the compasses. The message of the compasses is to keep us within due bounds and temperance is the skill we need to do so. The lecture of the first degree tells us that the compasses are dedicated to the Craft. Why? Within Freemasonry and within our Lodge there are differing visions of how things should be. By paying attention to the message of the compasses we can moderate our desires and passions and with diligence and prudence arrive at a proportionate and harmonious outcome.

Finally, the message of the closing charge is universal. We are admonished to behave with temperance not only with our brothers but with "all mankind". Do good unto all!

MASTER MASONS RAISED IN MARCH

Date Raised:

3/28/1953	Howard C. Harris, Sr.
3/28/1958	Gilbert N. Hain
3/26/1966	David G. Coghill
3/26/1969	Gerald S. Ostroff
3/31/1977	Michael J. Davis
3/27/1981	David L. Bolson
3/8/1984	Kenneth W. MacArthur
3/8/1995	Boe E. Lindgren
3/5/1998	Robert F. Sluder
3/28/1998	D. Joseph Lund
3/27/1999	Mark A. Gfeller
3/22/2003	Vaibhav Vijay (Vince) Kodikal
3/23/2006	Brian J. Downie
3/1/2013	Seann P. Maria



Grand Masonic Day

Vancouver Masonic Centre 1464 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6H 4H2 Canada (Second Floor)

It appears St. John's Lodge will be represented by nearly a dozen brothers on Grand Masonic Day in Vancouver, Canada, Saturday, April 29. Any brother *not* on the list of attendees should contact Lodge Secretary VWBro. Jim Russell.

Taking place at the beautiful new Vancouver Masonic Centre, the 2023 Grand Masonic Day program brings a diverse set of speakers and workshops offering practical knowledge to help newer brethren build a strong foundation, with content to inspire and challenge more advanced leaders in the Craft.

Grand Masonic Day 2023 features one of the most influential thought leaders in North American Freemasonry, Bro. Andrew Hammer, whose 2010 book *Observing the Craft* sent shockwaves through Freemasonry. Twelve years have passed since the publishing of this landmark book and more than twenty since the Traditional Observance or Observant Lodge movement in North America began. But these 20-odd years have not been without tension, debate, controversy, and even conflict over the stated aims of bodies like the Masonic Restoration Foundation and the 'Best Practices' of so-called Traditional Observance Lodges.



Andrew Hammer



Scott Kenney

In addition to Bro. Andrew Hammer, Professor (Bro.) Scott Kenney of Memorial University will be providing the morning keynote. Bro Kenney has devoted much of his academic career to examining Freemasonry as a social phenomenon as detailed in his several published academic papers and his 2016 book *"Brought to Light, Contemporary Freemasonry, Meaning, and Society."*

His talk will focus on Lodge Retention, with a breakout workshop exploring case studies of life transformation through Masonic involvement.

In addition to the two keynote speakers there will be breakout workshops, seminars, and debates exploring such things as the use of Hebrew language in Masonic ritual (including proper pronunciation, historic importance and symbolic meaning), the importance of Masonic record keeping, minute taking, and archiving which will be of particular use to current and future Lodge Secretaries, Directors of Masonic Education, and Historians, and an open house of the newly redeveloped Vancouver Masonic Centre which will house the beautiful Grand Lodge archives and library.

St. John's will cover the cost of admission for our members. Admission tickets include lunch along with refreshments and snacks available throughout the day. For \$45 you will receive a copy of the newly published

book of the most noteworthy Masonic papers and presentations given over the past 75 years of labor by the Vancouver Lodge of Education & Research.

In 2022 the Vancouver Lodge of Education & Research celebrated its 75th anniversary and with it the 40th Annual occurrence of Grand Masonic Day, BC's Grand Jurisdiction's premier Masonic Education event, which it has organized since 1982. Masonic education is consistently identified by newer brethren as something of great value, keeping them engaged and interested in Freemasonry and committed to the business of the Lodge.

Here is additional information for those considering attending Grand Masonic Day in Vancouver, BC Saturday April 29: "Americans driving to Vancouver, BC, or taking a ferry to Victoria **must have one of these designated documents:** a passport, passport card, Washington State enhanced driver's license or a "trusted traveler" document such as the Nexus card." We are advised to dress business casual, no aprons or collars, but carry your name badge in case you find others are wearing their's.

If you know where your membership (dues) card is, that might help to identify you as a Mason if challenged when checking in.

Freemasons Rededicate Memorial Cornerstone



Former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore addresses the crowd as the keynote speaker at the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial February 20.

Thousands of Freemasons from around the world gathered at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Feb. 20 for a rededication ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone 100 years ago and to celebrate the Memorial's next century of service.

Former Governor Jim Gilmore was the featured speaker at the rededication, which was attended by dignitaries, politicians and local Masons.

"It was a great day for the city and a great day for America," said Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Virginia Grand Historian McArthur Myers. "Masons from everywhere gathered together representing all of humanity."

The Memorial is a National Historic Landmark representing Freemasonry's tribute to George Washington.

OPENING CEREMONY

When preparing the Minutes of the stated meetings of the Lodge, your Secretary includes this or a variation of the following:

A Lodge is opened in due form to transition from the outer world to the inner harmony that should prevail within. The Opening Ceremony should never be rushed but should allow time for the Craft to forget the worries of the day and find peace for a time among brothers. While opening the Lodge the Master is reminded of the dignity of his character; and the brethren of the homage and veneration due from them. A reverential awe for the Deity is inculcated, and the eye fixed on that object from whose radiant beams only light can be derived. This ceremony teaches us to adore the Great Architect and to supplicate his protection on our well-meant endeavors. The Master assumes his government in due form, and the brethren, with one accord, unite in duty and respect, and the ceremony sets the tone for the business at hand.



Our Master reminded the brethren last month that he expects our brothers to please turn off cell phones, refrain from sideline conversations or interruptions, and to respect the opening or closing of the Lodge. When desiring to address the Master or

brothers during the meeting, please stand to be recognized and after recognition, always use the microphone. **We have members who find it difficult to hear what you probably find of importance to the brethren.**

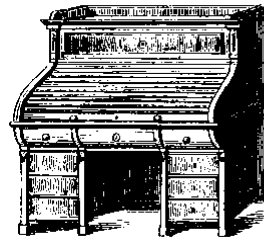
MARCH BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS

Date

- 1 Paul G. Winter
- 5 John R. Lilyengren
- 5 Jonathon D. Munday
- 10 Douglas L. Knight
- 11 David G. Long
- 13 Karl P. Niedermann
- 14 James A. Wold
- 16 Ken Woo
- 19 John R. Samudio
- 20 J. Michael Wilderman
- 22 Frederick M. Hutchinson
- 23 Charles C. Hopper
- 23 Gary G. Jentoft
- 23 D. Joseph Lund
- 27 Neil P. Quinn
- 27 Daniel C. Wolfenbarger
- 28 David G. Coghill
- 30 Joseph W. Ackermann
- 31 Donald J. Zuck



PAY YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES



From The Secretary's Desk

During the Entered Apprentice lecture, the new Mason is introduced to the jewels of the Lodge when he is told there are six such jewels, three immovable and three movable. In the United States, the Immovable Jewels are the square, level, and plumb.

The square, level, and plumb are indeed important and valuable tools for the builder for without them, he cannot carry out his trade. For the Freemason, these tools become symbols related to building our moral selves. This point is brought home in the Fellowcraft degree where the plumb, square and level are introduced as the working tools for the degree.

For the purpose of our discussion, let's address the level.

The level is used to prove horizontals in operative masonry.

In speculative Masonry the level is a symbol of equality indicating that all men have the same duties to God *and the same*

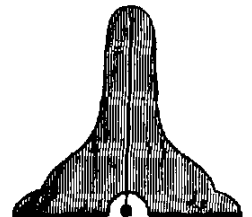
responsibilities and rights before his fellow man. Equality does not

mean that all men are equal in skills or abilities but rather that all men should be treated with respect, dignity, and understanding. We are all individuals, yet we should be a universal brotherhood before God where men can achieve mutual respect and understanding regardless of their differences.

The Entered Apprentice lecture tells us that the square teaches morality, the level equality, and the plumb rectitude of conduct. Symbolically, as Freemasons, we are building a spiritual building that requires hard work and effort throughout our lifetimes. We must build a level foundation based upon an understanding of the equality of man before God. Upon this foundation we build our moral standards that guide our dealings with our fellow man while always striving to walk uprightly before God.

Perhaps the monitorial explanation for the working tools of a Fellowcraft Mason is a fitting way to close this discussion.

"The Plumb is an instrument used by operative masons to raise perpendiculars; the Square, to square their work; and the Level, to lay horizontals; but we, as Free and Accepted Masons, are taught to make use of them for more noble and glorious purposes. The Plumb admonishes us to walk uprightly in our several stations before God and man, squaring our actions by the Square of Virtue, and remembering that we are traveling upon the Level of Time to that undiscovered country from whose bourne (*destination*) no traveler returns."



Let's LOOK AT THAT A LITTLE CLOSER

The Craft is designed to fully teach ourselves to be open, to work to remain non-reactive to each other when conflict happens. We watch for our weaponized words. We guard against being "right," causing disharmony in the Lodge building and the building of our inner temple. Further still, to be careful with our intentions towards our brothers: Am I secretly angry at a brother? What weapons do I prepare in the silence against him? Can I set my weapons down? Will I have sufficient strength to relent?

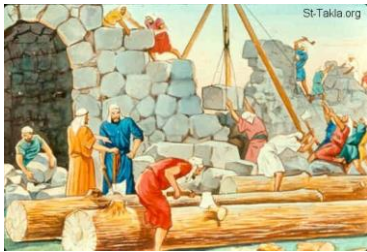


No Iron at the Building of Your Temple

by Midnight Freemason Contributor

Bro. Erik Marks

The lesson in lecture that there was no sound of iron tools at the building of the temple has many implications in the application of Masonry to everyday life. We are taught in our ritual from Deuteronomy 27:5 "and there shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar



of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them (stones)." Taken literally, we understand there were no iron or metal tools used at the site where the temple was constructed. Though an

amazing feat, as (Free)Masons we seek and learn more from the symbolic interpretations.

Freemasonry is simultaneously a psychologically strengthening and disarming process. In truth, the two are always correlated; the stronger the psyche the greater the cognitive flexibility and less need for constant vigilance or a defensive/offensive stance. No, personal disarmament doesn't have to do with amending the United States Constitution, nor the constitutions of Freemasonry. Perhaps a détente of sorts, this process is not militaristic, though fully about easing interpersonal and intra-psychic tensions.

over time, we come to know one another

As we are prepared, we recognize one another to be of equal value thereby being leveled with all others; we are disarmed, psychologically, and choose to make ourselves vulnerable—intentionally. Introduced to a new sense of safety, we find ourselves amongst other men, many of whom we have never before met. At first, this is a symbolic expression of an ideal: when light is revealed, the hoodwink removed, it is confirmed we are fully protected by others who care deeply about our wellbeing and development. We are given the concept through ritual, not so much didactically, as a lecture. As we return to Lodge regularly, over time, we come to know one another and the ideal vision is made manifest through a trust we co-construct. Therefore, I understand in the description that no sounds of metal heard at the worksite has to do with the manner in which we address the brethren and ourselves. These, in turn, a training ground for how to be in the larger world.

In the symbolic edict, we could consider both tools and weapons made of iron specifically, but any weapon, generally. With this interpretation, we are told there were no weapons brought to the building of the temple. It

would be in keeping with the idea that the building of a spiritual edifice would be wholly a reverent activity, not combative. At very least an expectation that the temple would be built in relative safety, far from the reach of enemies, combat, or the need for arms. This concept is extended in that one leaves weapons at the door of the temple, to be disarmed before the Divine, and others in its presence, to commune. We leave the protection of the Lodge to the Tyler.

Consider the following quote:

"Every stone which was touched by iron, even though it was not damaged, is disqualified [for use] in building the altar..." as it is stated (Shemot 20:25): "By lifting your sword against it, you will have profaned it." (Hilkhot Bet Ha-Bechira 1:14-15).[i]

When we consider the personal temple being constructed and each man a living stone of the larger societal temple, we could say this interpretation implies we must not take up a weapon against any stone in the construction of the spiritual temple. In this reading, stone could refer to the individual brother or brethren as a collective; and as the purpose of Masonry is to shine light into the world, it refers, by extension, to our actions in every-day life. The literal meaning is to not be violent towards your brothers. In the course of coming to Lodge with increasing regularity as we progress, we get to know one another more deeply and quite naturally drop our defenses. We speak our minds and bond over food and ritual. At times, we may disagree on matters and agitate one another. Here the call to harmony is literal and interpersonal/psychological: don't act out, physically, relationally, internally. The craft trains us to be fully ourselves, open, and to work to remain non-reactive to each other when conflict happens.

A slightly more interpersonal reading might suggest we watch our words (Tyler and inside sentinel are corollaries to psychic and interpersonal guards.) We watch for our weaponized words. We guard against passive-aggressive forays into being "right," thereby causing disharmony in the Lodge building and the building of each inner temple. We could take this construction further still to be careful with our intentions towards our brothers: Do I harbor resentments? Am I secretly angry at a brother? What weapons do I prepare in the silence of my sanctum against him? Can I set my weapons down? Will I have sufficient strength to relent?

The road to hell . . .

I've heard said, and have said it myself in the past, until I knew better: "the road to hell is paved with good intentions." Though one interpretation of the seemingly clever "intentions" quip is that remaining in a planning phase leads to lack of action. However, the quip has the

profound negative effect of causing men to devalue their intentionality and not take into account motives and urges we disavow or keep from our conscious selves. By repeating this phrase to self and others, we relinquish our willingness to accept responsibility for the root causes of our actions and all their outcomes, internally and in the world.

The antidote: catechism, our ritual. It is a systematic dialogue with oneself, initially introduced to each man in Lodge through ritual. We are taught the procedure in each degree by our officers, who symbolically represent aspects of our psyches in a command relationship with the Divine[ii]. We observe the process with each entry, passage, and raising of a stone. Through personal experience, observation, rehearsal, and performance of the exchanges, the desired outcome is that each man has the opportunity to operationalize this internal procedure to question himself and his intentions, urges, motives in real-time through the tests and trials of daily life.

Not every Mason shares this understanding of our work and may choose to not use the education in the intended manner. Some, who are not ready for this level of self-examination, may not engage self in this way because it is mildly to wildly uncomfortable to remain in this level of self-examination for any length of time. Practicing Masonry at this depth can evoke a great deal of uncertainty and vulnerability, which is natural and expectable. It can feel aversive until we walk the winded stair repeatedly over years. Then, a broader familiarity with self allows for greater foundational stability and decreased reactivity.

The iron as symbolic weapon

Taking this interpretation to the lone builder, working day and night on this personal temple we would inquire as to what weapons does he point at himself to his own detriment? Is he rough (The intra-psychic ruffian) with his own mind and demand too much progress or secrets before he is fully prepared[iii]? Is he caught in a conflict between the psychological officers of his inner Lodge? Is he at odds with himself? The iron as symbolic weapon takes the form of verbal and linguistic cruelty, meanness, harsh thoughts directed at his Self. Rather than building, the inner assaults tear down progress made. Instead of strengthening, morale and spirit diminish and the foundation deteriorates.

Do we believe that being harsh, mean, or cruel, towards ourselves, in our own minds makes us stronger? The idea is a lie. Our symbols and ritual have always held the antidotes to the lie in the alchemical blend of beauty (emotion, aesthetics, junior warden, plumb) and strength (rationality, containment, senior warden, level) to produce

Wisdom (compassion, mediation, empathic intentionality, master of the Lodge, gavel).

The idea that cruelty at self or other is strengthening is a lie on the universal level, because if everything manifest in the world is the divine's attempt to understand or express itself, when one raises a sword against the stone as self through being cruel, harsh, or mean, one raises that sword at a reflection of the divine and is therefore committing a heinous act against that which one professes to revere most.

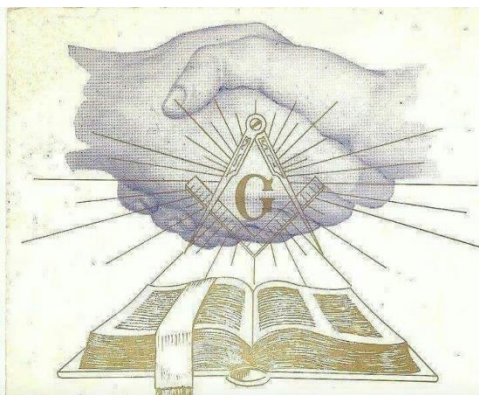
Many of us have had this lie installed from before we could talk. It was the air we breathed; handed down over generations or implied by criticism levied against us, often by one or both parents. It is in our collective conscious and unconscious. Like a virus, the lie is adapted to infect humans, and is pernicious in the psyche. It is self-reinforcing and challenging to extract: "If I'm not hard on myself, who will be?" The implication that only through punishment, cruelty, harshness, and aggression are we able to progress. Just because this virus is relatively ubiquitous does not mean it is right. I see it far too often in my practice, far more in men than women. It both communicates and hides a deep level of shame we keep

from light. If we bring the light, we will see. If we see, we will feel the shame and its pain. However, in the process of coming to light, we heal the shame and pain.

As Mason's, we have an opportunity to use the content and methods of the fraternity to increase the probability we might remove and keep the iron from the process of perfection; that on the deepest levels, perfection can only happen without

using metal tools in the construction. In our craft, we are encouraged to offer relief and charity to brothers, their families, our communities. The high regard for self is inherent in the architect's blueprints. We are of no use to others if we hollow out our own structure, psychologically. In the fields of psychotherapy and counseling, Self-compassion training has gained prominence in the past fifteen years for both people being treated and those treating them. Recent research shows that self-compassion training has wide ranging benefits for everyone[iv] [v], men[vi] and veterans[vii].

The lie damages the psyche and Self because harshness and cruelty never evoke enduring strength, resilience, or determination; it pulls for and builds fear, doubt, resentment, and self-hatred. These ineffectual tactics tear down the work of the temple and defile the inner altars constructed to the divine, like foes engaging us using PsyOps[viii] (Psychological Operations, employed by military to influence motivations or break the morale of an opponent). Further still, adept leaders know positively focused constructive criticism and inspiration—bringing spirit to others or self—are the most effective motivational tools. **(continue next page)**



As one experiences, then witnesses, and eventually performs the ritual, it works upon the psyche to elevate the idea of harmony, charity, and effective construction rather than using violent language in a vain attempt to move toward self-improvement. Moreover, as men progress through the line, becoming increasingly proficient in each officer's tasks and their psychological corollaries, one has greater capacity to build with efficacy. The education inherent in our ritual and practices allows men to continue their development and move toward the possibility of a more mature masculinity[ix].

Now is the time to test your metaphoric and symbolic metal: leave literal and psychological iron at the door of the temple. Search out the ore of ill intent in heart, mind, and gut. Set down the swords and daggers, the cruelty and mean-spirited reactivity directed at Self and others. As you labor with these ideas, it is my assertion your ability to find and tolerate more exponentially expand. It may bring up a lot of discomfort, even painful memories. This is the sign you are onto something important, you are developing and growing.

As you endure, persist with compassion, and train your psyche not to attack itself, you might find yourself with more energy and ease for the tasks in your life; eventually you may have more patience and tolerance with people with whom you interact towards those you care (though initially, patience may decrease due to the taxing nature of this emotional labor). In what seem like a paradox, your inner officers may also begin to test you more diligently, giving you rougher edges to smooth and, alas, resulting in increased wages. When this task is elusive or challenging to accomplish, talk with your brother builder about it and consult the designs of the Architect.

Brother Erik Marks is a clinical social worker whose usual vocation has been in the field of human services in a wide range of settings since 1990. He was raised in 2017 by his biologically younger Brother and then Worshipful Master in Alpha Lodge in Framingham, MA. You may contact brother Marks by email: erik@StrongGrip.org

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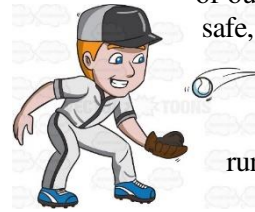
Did You Miss the Movie in February or Want to Review the Lesson? Watch on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/Txy6DwbwZ9g>

Are we ready to change?

ST. JOHN'S LITTLE LEAGUE TEAMS

St. John's Lodge will again sponsor a couple of Little League baseball teams in the north end of Seattle this season. Little league plays an important part in the lives of our young kids. Players participate in a safe, well-organized, well-coached league for 10 weeks – from April through June. And many keep on playing during our summer season, which runs from June through August.



NWSLL charges families a certain amount to cover the cost of field rentals, which continues to rise. In addition, an important part of their mission is to provide financial assistance to families so no one will be turned away from this opportunity because of cost. Our involvement makes it possible for hundreds of children to have fun playing baseball and softball as they make positive, lifetime memories.

Visit Our District 5 Brethren

District 5 Lodges	Next Meeting	Time
St. John's 9	Wednesday, March 15, 2023	7:30pm
Eureka 20	Monday, March 6, 2023	7pm
University 141	Monday, March 6, 2023	7:30pm
Daylight 232	Saturday, March 18, 2023	10am
Lafayette 241	Thursday, May 4, 2023	7:30pm
Queen Anne 242	Thursday, May 11, 2023	7:30pm
Esoterika 316	Tuesday, April 25, 2023	7:30pm

Return to

AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

St. John's Education Committee

Again this year we're exchanging ideas and Masonic Enlightenment at our stated communications and on Zoom

Masonic education is the study of Masonic values, history, symbols and myths. It also encompasses lessons in leadership, self-improvement and community building. Our purpose is to help members learn more about Freemasonry and their own personal growth.

- New Meeting ID **826 6692 5984** to join our Zoom Fellowships
- Enter passcode **1860**

- * **March 15 Stated: Freemasonry in Finland**
- * **April 5 Zoom: The Seven Habits of Highly Successful Lodges – Harvey**