

The Path to Moral Leadership **Katy Lodge No. 1439 A. F. & A. M.**

A successful journey to the East and active participation in the Lodge can help us to become Moral Leaders.

As a member progresses through each office of the Lodge, he takes on greater responsibility, more is expected and required of him, and he has the opportunity to put into practice what he has learned.

Through self-examination, experience, and mentorship, he can obtain the essential skills of leadership. As a member of the Lodge, and by working hand in hand with those who take that journey, we can also learn many of the valuable lessons of leadership.

The Virtuous Path to Moral Leadership - Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, Justice, Faith, Hope, Charity

The Intellectual Path to Truth - Perception, Examination, Reflection, Knowledge, Understanding, Wisdom, Truth

Subordinate Officers and Members of the Lodge

Senior Steward, Junior Steward, Marshal, Master of Ceremonies, Tiler, & Members

Under ideal circumstances, these officers and members comprise the pool of candidates for the position of Junior Deacon.

While serving in one of these positions, a Brother has the opportunity to decide if going further up the line is something he truly wants to pursue.

Observing these Brothers and working with them, gives the elected officers and Past Masters an opportunity to evaluate who best demonstrates the ability to fill the role of Junior Deacon, thus beginning the process of being prepared to assume the position of Worshipful Master.

These offices are positions of service to the Lodge and other officers. The duties assigned to these offices, although often left unnoticed, are critical to the overall wellbeing of the Lodge.

During this stage of service to the Lodge, a Brother learns to listen, observe, and get to know the members of the Lodge. Working in the kitchen, serving as a greeter, and working in the trenches to perform the less glamorous tasks that must be done in order for a Lodge to run smoothly, provides an opportunity for these officers and members to get closer to other members, and become familiar with the Lodge facilities. This is their opportunity to work with others, demonstrate self-control, and display their initiative and desire, to support the Lodge.

Humility, Self-Control and being willing to serve and follow, are the first steps toward becoming a leader.
(Temperance) (Perception)

Junior Deacon

The office of Junior Deacon is generally considered the first true step in the journey to the East and the office of Worshipful Master. Careful consideration should be given to this appointment, and the Worshipful Master should ask for the counsel of his fellow elected officers and Past Masters before making his choice. Remember that this is not a popularity contest. The person best suited to meet the long-term goals of the Lodge, should be selected. It should not be expected that serving as Junior Deacon automatically entitle the Brother advancement to Senior Deacon. Although, it would hopefully, be the case.

Once appointed, this office is where a member begins to learn how to create a “Team Effort” approach to accomplish the “task-at-hand”. As the senior officer to the SS, JS, MR, MC, & TL, he now has the responsibility to see that the duties assigned to them are completed.

This position also provides the first opportunity to be co-chair of a committee. The position of co-chair requires active input, creative thinking, teamwork, listening, and active participation. It also provides an opportunity to begin to learn how to delegate while at the same time taking ownership of projects and responsibility for their outcome. It is also, where he begins to understand his own shortcomings and realizes how much he must learn to become a successful leader in the Lodge.

The Senior Deacon, having filled the role of Junior Deacon, will be able to offer counsel and guidance when needed, thus providing a safety net for the Junior Deacon as he begins to take on more responsibility, build self-confidence, and learn to overcome obstacles.

The ability to Persevere and instill a sense of teamwork, are qualities that every great leader possesses. *(Fortitude) (Examination)*

Senior Deacon

As Senior Deacon, a Brother not only has a more active role in the degree work, but also in some of the more important aspects of running the Lodge, he becomes the chairman of two important committees; Building & Grounds, and Social Activities. Having served as co-chairman of both committees as Junior Deacon, he is familiar with what has to be done, and has learned which members he can count on to make sure that the projects and events associated with these committees, have the desired outcome.

This office is where a Brother should begin to display the self-confidence that he has been building upon in lesser positions in the Lodge. He now has real authority along with real and visible expectations from the other officers as well as the members of the Lodge. He will be expected to carefully think things through and make the right decisions. Decision making, becomes more of a responsibility, and the results of those decisions, will have a more visible impact on the Lodge than ones he may have made in the past as a more junior officer.

This is also, where the Brother learns to be resourceful, and takes real ownership for developing and organizing a project or event, within a planned budget. He must now evaluate the capabilities of his subordinate officers and utilize their talents and other available resources effectively.

Being confident, decisive, having the ability recognize talent, to organize, be resourceful and make good decisions, are all critical traits of great leadership. *(Prudence) (Reflection)*

Junior Warden

The office of Junior Warden is where a Brother should develop his understanding of Masonic Law and assumes the position of Lodge Lawyer and Parliamentarian. It is his duty to become familiar with the Grand Lodge Law Book, Lodge By-Laws, and Lodge Procedures. Sitting in the South may require him to be involved in mediation and answering questions regarding proper protocol and Masonic offenses. He will be required to be impartial and fair to all members of the Lodge, giving every man his just due when necessary.

As Chairman of the Education Committee, the Junior Warden is also responsible for the Masonic education of the Entered Apprentices, Fellowcrafts, and Lodge membership in general. He is expected to be capable of dispensing knowledge and understanding on the various aspects of Freemasonry. With a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Ritual and Symbolism of Freemasonry, he will be better equipped to

help the members to understand their relationship with God and their fellowman, realize the beauty and harmony of nature, and the perfection of their Divine Creator. Consequently, he must be well versed in these areas, and should invest the necessary amount of time to learn as much as he can.

The education committee is the only committee that he is Chairman of, and consequently, emphasizes the importance of his commitment to its success. Mentoring, Study groups, Masonic Light programs, and proficiency in the esoteric work, should be his focus. Due to his active participation and focus on education, he must learn how to delegate and then follow up on the other Lodge responsibilities that are assigned to him.

Fairness, competency, the ability to teach and delegate, are other essential attributes of a great leader.
(Justice) (Knowledge) (Beauty)

Senior Warden

As Senior Warden, a Brother is now involved with more committees than ever before and might be required at any time to sit in the East in the absence of the Worshipful Master. Fortunately, his training and experiences thus far will have prepared him for the day-to-day operation of the Lodge. He is the Worshipful Master's right hand man and must be knowledgeable of all lodge activities, projects, and events.

It is as Senior Warden that a Brother should truly begin to get to know the membership and begin to understand their needs. As Chairman of the Membership and Sickness & Distress committees, he is responsible for the well-being and morale of the Lodge. Assisted by the Chaplain, he will comfort the distressed, help restore peace to their troubled minds, and instill faith that they are all on the proper path to serve their god, and Mankind.

His ability to provide comfort, understanding, and insight, are crucial to the active participation and retention of existing members, and the attracting of new ones. Here he realizes that in order to retain and gain active participation in the Lodge from the members, there must first be involvement by the members, then encouragement for their actions, and finally, recognition of their accomplishments.

At this stage of his Masonic Career, he should be able to take on nearly any task presented with confidence and effectiveness. Ideally, he will have earned the respect of the membership and other officers and have little trouble securing the support he needs to accomplish whatever needs to be done.

In his role as Senior Warden he will be expected to demonstrate all of the knowledge he has gained up to this point in his Masonic career. He will be expected to be a strong and dependable leader.

Dependability, Compassion, Empathy, and understanding, are all necessary qualities of a great leader.
(Faith) (Understanding) (Strength)

Worshipful Master

As Worshipful Master, the Brother has now assumed the most responsibility and greatest challenge of his Masonic career. He is the caretaker of the Lodge Charter and responsible for the reputation of the Lodge. His leadership will set the tone for the year.

He is the Chairman of four committees, three of which, Arbitration, Fraternal Assistance, and Yearly Transition, though important, would typically, not require a large amount of his time. The fourth committee, Community Relations, however, is essential to the reputation, growth and continued existence of the Lodge. A deliberate and active involvement in the welfare of the community by the Lodge will go a long way towards accomplishing the ultimate vision of Freemasonry.

Our vision is for the world to recognize and appreciate Freemasonry as an institution that exists for the benefit of Mankind, without question... We are thereby obligated to do so.

With most of the operation of the Lodge delegated to the subordinate officers, the Worshipful Master should be able to act primarily as the role of counselor and advisor. Having passed through all of the chairs and having overseen every aspect of Lodge activities, he can now focus on the long-term goals of the Lodge to make sure that progress is being made to achieve them. This is the time in his career when wisdom and fortitude should be at their utmost. A real vision for the future of the Lodge and its perpetual existence must be his primary focus.

With the hands on experience of the last five to six years, the Worshipful Master should now be able to offer advice and counsel on all issues related to the operation of the Lodge.

When things go as planned, and the event or project at hand go well, he should let the officers underneath him take full credit, even if he has been instrumental to their success. On the other hand, when things do not go as planned, he should take responsibility, and through his optimism, be able to instill confidence and unwavering hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Wisdom and Optimism are among the most valued traits of a great leader. *(Hope) (Wisdom)*

Past Master

Having left the East it does not mean that one should abandon it. As a Past Master, the Brother is obligated to give back the knowledge that he has attained over the last several years to the upcoming officers and members in general. He should be available to counsel, teach, mentor, and inspire, but never to meddle.

It is as a Past Master, that he is afforded the opportunity to freely assist where needed, and demonstrate his real love for the Lodge, the membership, and the Fraternity. *(Charity/Love) (Truth)*

In Summary

Each office of the Lodge is designed to build upon the previous and help to prepare a Brother for his next position within the Lodge. Along the way he builds confidence, learns how to evaluate talent, organize, plan, make decisions, inspire, and in general, to get things done. After sitting in the East, creating a budget, planning a meeting, social event, or project, will be second nature, and having to stand up in front of a crowded room of people to give a presentation, should now be a welcome opportunity rather than a dreaded concern.

Guided by the moral lessons of Freemasonry and having earned the respect and support of other members of the Lodge, a Brother can now go on with true confidence and real ability to help others obtain the same life lessons the he has learned. He will also be able to apply those lessons to his daily life outside the Lodge, at home, at his work, and in his community.

However, it should also be remembered, that residing in the East is not the goal of every Mason, nor is it practical or possible for everyone to do so. Fortunately, with time, by serving on committees, and by taking an active role in the workings of the Lodge, a Brother will, in nearly every way, be afforded the opportunity to learn the same skills and virtues as if he had gone through the chairs.