



Education Monthly

January 2012

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Chairman: Committee on Masonic Education

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I'm dedicating this month's issue to a brief outline of what I consider the main concern of Masonic Education at this time. As Chair of CME my main objective is to enable the following

1. Make Masonic education a core component of lodge activities
2. By so doing restore freemasonry to the important role it once had in Society.

The monthly bulletin is necessarily a brief outline of any given topic. It is designed however to provoke thought and discussion. Not everyone will agree with my ideas but all are necessary discussion points leading to our common objective , "to make good men better"

Firstly then let me enumerate the basic principles of ADULT education. Not all of us are familiar with these having had most of our education prior to adulthood. If we are going to educate Masons however we need to understand how adults learn best.

The principles are:

- Adults are autonomous and self-directed. They must be free to direct the course of their own education
- Teachers MUST allow learners to find their own way -- to choose their own method of learning
- Teachers are FACILITATORS, guiding learners to their own knowledge NOT supplying them with facts
- "Education is NOT like the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire"
- Adults have life experience and previous knowledge. Our job is to link these experiences to new learning and therefore we must draw out of them their experience and prior knowledge
- Adults are goal oriented. A program must show participants how it will enable them to reach their goals
- Adults are relevancy oriented. They must have a reason for learning something. It must be applicable to their lives or work
- Adults are practical. They may not be interested in knowledge for its own sake: they need to be shown how that knowledge will be useful to them.
- Adults must be shown RESPECT. There must be acknowledgement of their experience
- Adults learn at different speeds.
- Adults need positive reinforcement.

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If we are to implement these principles in our LODGES¹ we have to overcome several obstacles. The main ones, in my view, are:

1. An obsession with growth
2. Failure to give priority to quality over quantity
3. The vital need to conduct high quality ritual frequently
4. A lack of rigor in the sponsorship role.

All of these factors are important and there will be more or less of them in any given lodge. YOU must decide how YOUR lodge deals with this issue.

I'd like to suggest that you, dear reader, initiate a discussion along these lines in your lodge, record your conclusions and ideas and through the medium of the Masonic Education Committee and its various facets, disseminate your thoughts. I'd also challenge you to seek a forum for presentation at a particular Masonic event, one of which you will find announced below!

On behalf of the Committee on Masonic Education I wish you all a Happy New Year.

John Forster, Chairman.

THE OTTAWA CONFERENCE ON MASONIC EDUCATION

JUNE 7,8, 2012

OTTAWA MASONIC CENTRE

2140 WALKLEY ROAD, OTTAWA

This is a preliminary notice of a conference devoted to Masonic Education. It is a joint initiative of the Committees on Masonic Education and Workshops and Seminars. The conference will consist of invited speakers on masonic subjects as well as discussion groups on papers presented by participants. The day will be divided into a number of sessions and participants will choose in advance which sessions they wish to attend. There will be an optional lunch and a formal Saturday evening dinner with an after dinner speaker who will be asked to speak on a NON-Masonic subject.

The number of participants will be limited and there will be a fee for the conference, the amount not yet decided. Within the next few weeks there will be a call for papers. Applicants will be asked to submit a brief abstract of their paper. Those chosen will present their papers at the conference in a small group session. Papers will be brief and time allotted for questions and discussion. The participants will carefully evaluate the conference so that future conferences can reflect improvements.

Following the conference the proceedings will be published and distributed.

This is a preliminary announcement only. Further details will follow shortly.

If you received this Bulletin by e-mail please pass it on to as many of your brethren as you can

¹ *Note that I apply my ideas to the lodge, rather than the District or the Grand Lodge. Masonic Education MUST occur principally on the floor of the lodge*

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