



# Learning Ritual

**A menu of strategies**

**Mentoring team of Lincolnshire**



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## **Feedback**

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**SUCCESS**



**WHAT PEOPLE THINK  
IT LOOKS LIKE**

WWW.ATBREAK.COM



**WHAT IT REALLY  
LOOKS LIKE**

REAK.COM



# Introduction

The aim of this document is to try, and support you to become increasingly more proficient in learning ritual and help you achieve your best.



There are many ways of Learning ritual, all require an amount of time, concentration and dedication. This document is a toolkit and offers you a menu of learning strategies. If you already have a method that works for you then you may want to stick to it and look no further.

If however, you feel you could benefit from a different approach then hopefully this document may be helpful and give you another dimension to consider for learning ritual.

Don't forget your Personal Mentor/Lodge Mentor or an experienced ritualist are always available to offer further guidance.



# How to use this guide



Here are some tips and tricks and pointers...



...For a new Brother to consider how to learn ritual

...For a Brother eager to maintain his daily advancement

...For discussion between a Mentor and Mentee

...For a discussion in a LOI

Use this document as a menu of strategies and ideas to support you in learning ritual - grasp the nettle and you will get so much more out of your masonic journey.

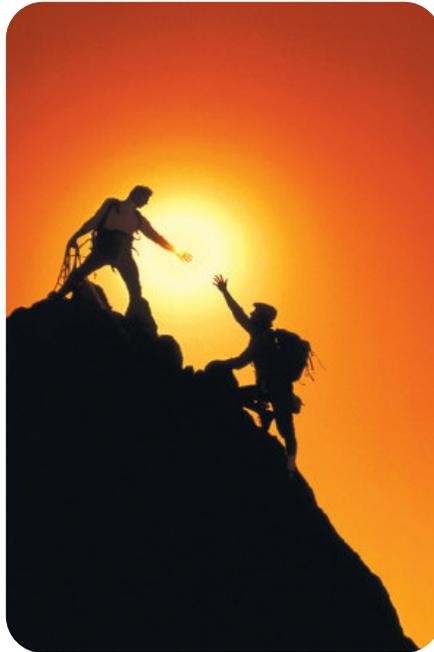
Remember we are all individuals. There's no one-size fits all approach. We're all on a journey. Learning is a process and you can get better. We've all been there - times when we can't do it **YET** .....





# Why is ritual important?

## Approach to Life



Our purpose and meaning, our values, our Masonic conduct and protocols, seek to ...

- reinforce thoughtfulness for others,
- kindness in the community,
- honesty in business,
- courtesy in society and fairness in all things

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## Understanding & Tradition



Masonic rituals and symbols are extremely important in understanding Freemasonry

## Teaching



Our Ritual and symbols are the primary way of teaching Masons the ...

**“Ideals of Freemasonry”**



## Ritual done well is inspiring

To see a Brother deliver a piece of work with sincerity and confidence with just the right amount of light and shade, humility and humour, authority and yet tenderness, is inspiring, enthralling and entertaining.

**Ritual when done well is stimulating and to witness what seems more like a conversation and shared experience between a Brother and candidate is truly a joy.**

Brethren hearing amazing, polished performances of complicated ritual sometimes think to themselves 'I can't ever do that'.

***The following short menu of strategies will help you to learn, retain and recall ritual easier, help you believe and conquer your fear.***

***The good news is you already have all of the skills you need to do this; you just need to find the right key to unlock your hidden potential.***

# INTRODUCING OUR INNER VOICE

**We all have an internal dialogue going on most of the time in our heads – an inner voice that comments about what’s going on and what we are thinking about**

In fact thinking is just like an internal conversation with ourselves. In thinking we are using words, as in a normal conversation except we are talking AND answering. We play two roles, we both ask and answer the questions in our minds and even though this is done in silence we can almost hear the conversation in our heads – **like an inner voice.**



Now in situations where we feel uncomfortable the inner voice can sometimes become really negative and take hold of us. The inner voice can really chip away at our confidence, for example, in situations like learning and delivering ritual.

**We call this negative voice “the Inner Critic”**

In our experience, the principal reason people under-perform in front of groups is the Inner Critic they hear speaking inside their own head. This is both the good news and the bad news.

The good news is that because the problem is in your mind, the solution is too. The bad news is that the Inner Critic has probably been there a long time and may take some shifting.



*You might want to practise a little inner attention and see if you can catch your internal voice at the moment. What are you saying to yourself about this idea right now? Can you hear it? If not, don't worry – just keep checking your thought processes every now and again.*

# The Inner Voice



We spend the first year of our lives being encouraged to stand up and talk .....

and the rest of lives being told to sit down and shut up



There is no wonder the Inner Critic has a field day. BUT you can be sure that it is the negative messages you give yourself about your performance that do the damage.

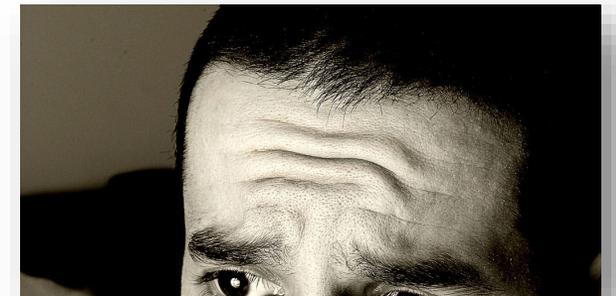
The inner critic evokes a distracting anxiety that can affect our ability to both learn and deliver ritual.

It is not your ability that holds you back, it is the Inner Critic's view of your ability that works away at you.

## Quotes from the Inner Critic



- *You're going to get too nervous and muck it all up!*
- *Senior brethren are watching - anything less than perfect is not good enough!*
- *They don't want to listen to you, you are not important enough.*
- *You're going to forget something important, miss a bit out.*
- *You won't get it right and there will be lots of tutting.*
- *I haven't prepared properly I will forget bits and go to pieces.*
- *I don't feel safe.*





# Managing the critic

Tell him to go play with the traffic!

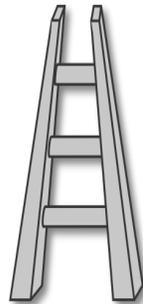


You can do it with careful preparation, by taking your time, and building your own confidence levels



## *Don't forget - Masonry is a progressive science*

Some people will always be better than others, everybody can do it well enough to go through the Chair



Brethren get better at ritual as they progress up the ladder and take on bigger pieces, it may be helpful to look at gradings like this

Level	Examples
Beginners	Badge Charges & South East Corner
Intermediate	Working Tools, North East Corner & Deacons work on the floor
Advanced	Charge after Initiation & Tracing Boards
Master	Obligations & Signs and secrets



# Mindset and Memory

## *Believe and Succeed*



Mindset and self-belief, underpins you and a 'can do' attitude is the first step in ensuring that you remember more. It is quite literally 'all in your mind' and the more positive you are, the better you learn.

Yes, you might not be able to perform a set piece of ritual now, but tell yourself, you can't do it **yet** - **but YOU will.**

*Never say never*



You can do it if you focus.  
You just need time and dedication.  
You can get there.

# Motivation

Most of us, when seeing ritual for the first time, can have thoughts like

- ☹️ I can't do that!
- ☹️ I can't remember all that!
- ☹️ I'm too busy to do it!
- ☹️ I'm scared of being in the spotlight!
- ☹️ I will embarrass myself and the lodge!
- ☹️ People will think badly of me!
- ☹️ There are others better at it than I will ever be so why bother!



Try thinking like this instead

- 😊 I will give it a go, there is nothing to lose and lots to gain.
- 😊 Lodge is a friendly place to try something new.
- 😊 If I get it wrong, so what! When I get it right, I will feel great and enjoy lodge even more.
- 😊 Some make it look so easy, so I'm going to see for myself.
- 😊 Some seem to be able to learn everything, so I'll see how far I can get.

Recommended read: 'Feel The Fear and Do It Anyway' by Susan Jeffers



# How do you Learn?

We all remember the world in different ways - discover your secret ...



Firstly, think of something you remember easily?

You may be good at general knowledge, recall films easily or outstanding at remembering car journeys.

Some of us recall images easily, some of us remember what we hear and others just feel the emotion.

*The Brian is an amziang thnig, taht you can raed tihs wtih jsut the fisrt and lsat letetrs in pclae is so celevr.*

---

**You can use this super computing ability to learn ritual in innovative ways.**



# Learning STRATEGIES

People often say that they cannot learn ritual, when what they really mean is that learning ritual is less easy than they would like.

*We remember the BEGINNING and the END - so focus on the middle*





REPEAT

REPEAT

REPEAT

*Did you know that if you see a word 100 times in 14 minutes you WILL truly know it.*



How many times have you heard the ritual in Lodge?

Learning is simpler, when you repeat it.



**Memory is a muscle** which needs to be toned. Practice, practice and more practice will make your memory grow. A little and often is the key.



80% of detail fades after 24 hours so you need to read ritual a little and often over time. That way it moves from your short-term memory to your long-term memory.

**REPETITION IS  
THE MOTHER OF  
MEMORY**

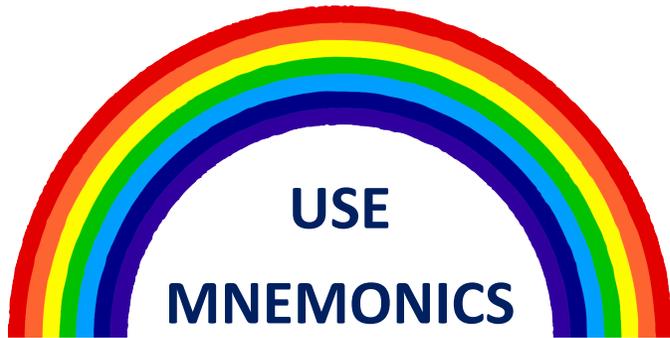
*A few minutes a day is perfect*



# small CHUNKS & spotting patterns

Just as you do not eat a 3 course meal in one sitting you cannot learn ritual overnight.

You do need time for it to digest so try learning a little and often.



USE  
MNEMONICS

Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain

It takes a matter of hours to become a Freemason and years on a journey.



*A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step*

# small CHUNKS & spotting patterns

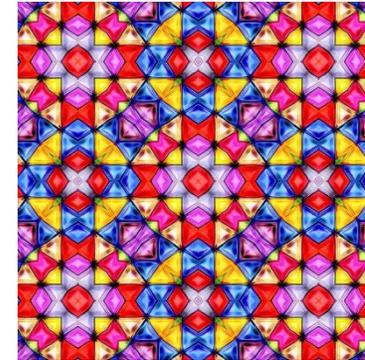


## RITUAL BOOK

Break it down- learn a sentence each day

Learn a word.  
Learn a word, then a sentence.  
Learn a word, then a sentence, then  
a paragraph ...

**HOOK** words - learn the first word  
of every sentence



Is there a pattern?

- Words in **ALPHABETICAL ORDER?**
- Words in **PAIRS?**
- Words **REPEATED?**

*You'll remember what's **unusual** or connected*



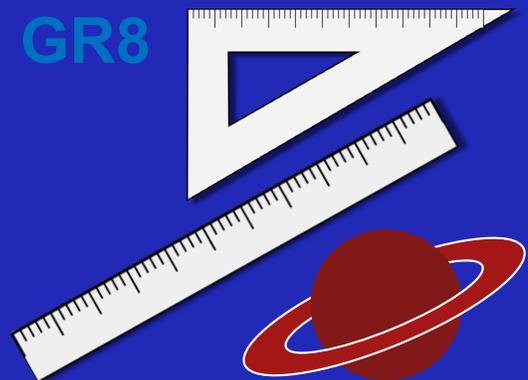
# If Visual or seeing is your thing



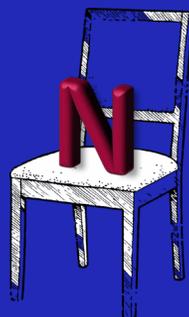
Make INDEX CARDS of sentences



GR8



CONDUCT Bro .....



Map out  KEY WORDS

Talk to a MIRROR and see yourself speak



Colour & HIGHLIGHT THE RITUAL BOOK

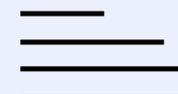
Make Flowcharts of sections



Draw and make pictures in your mind – it paints a thousand words



ESSAY



10 / 10 A\*

... the tongue of good report



Welcome to the worldwide fraternity of Freemasons.



# If Hearing sounds is good to you

*Try the following*

Practise speaking out **LOUD**



Great

Job



**Discuss it with a Brother or Mentor**

Say it to a rhythm

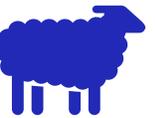


and use light and shade



 **Record** ritual and listen

Use a rhyme: *Mary had a little lamb*

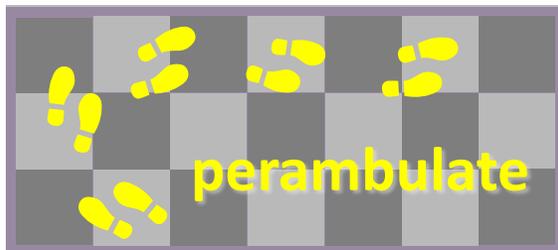


Put your r--it-ual to **music** la la

# *Understand the story and meaning*

Remember **THE FIRST LINE**  
of a paragraph

and use **TRIGGER**  
Words, the rest will  
naturally flow...



Sort words  
in order to  
help  
**REMEMBER**  
THEM



Cut out  
copies  
of ritual

Use  
Post-it  
notes

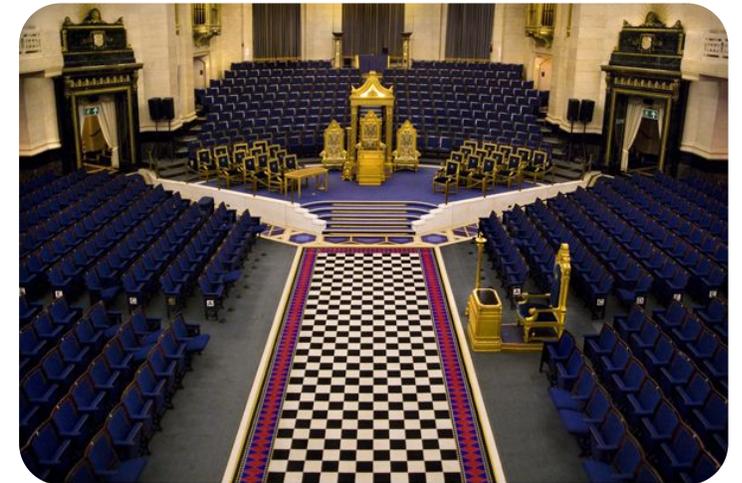
*Move around, change position, use the space, tell a story*



# Use the Memory Palace & become an expert



- Picture yourself in a familiar place – like your Lodge
- Plan the journey or route you will take
- Go through it in your mind
- Place words and images of the ritual in various places
- Ensure the images are humorous and memorable
- When you are in Lodge focus on the journey!





# Who do you admire?

Take a few moments to think about the Brethren whose ritual really resonates with you and you wish to emulate.

Try and imagine it now, exactly what it is that sets them apart from others?



*Really concentrate on ...*

- *what you are **HEARING**,*
- *what you are **SEEING** and crucially*
- *what you are **FEELING**.*

# Whatever else you do .....

# DO IT YOUR WAY



## To Recap

## and remember ...

- Practise before the evening
- **Go to LOI and Rehearsals**
- Practise in front of another brother
- **Expect to feel nervous but take a breath, speak slowly and clearly.**
- Remember the first line of a paragraph
- **Start and enjoy**

- You are in control.
- Establish who is prompting you, tell them not to interrupt if you stop for a breath or a quick thought, tell them you will look for a prompt.
- The floor is yours – if you need to reposition the candidate then feel free do so.
- Finally, after you complete your amazing piece of ritual, always salute or give a court bow to the WM.



Finish, sit down and feel proud  
you have gained respect and will get so much more out of the journey.

# The Apprentice becomes The Master

and remember we retain ...



**10%**

of what we **READ**  
E.g. Ritual book



**20%**

of what we **HEAR**  
Play back a recording



**30%**

of what we **SEE**  
In Lodge or LOI or both



**50%**

of what we **SEE & READ**  
Read and watch the ritual



**70%**

of what we **DISCUSS**  
With another brother



**80%**

of what we **EXPERIENCE & DO**  
Perform the ritual



**90%**

of what we **TEACH** someone else



*The more involved you are,  
the more you'll retain and  
remember.*

*Adapted from Metcalf, 1997, University of Texas.*



# You're on the floor, now do more



When Ritual **FEELS** right



It is exciting

Everybody in the Lodge  
is rooting for **YOU**





## Further useful resources:

### *Reading:*

‘Feel The Fear and Do It Anyway’ by Susan Jeffers  
‘Learning Masonic Ritual’ by Rick Smith

### *Videos:*

Courtesy of UGLE Solomon - Norfolk Blues Video links: -

Learning - <https://youtu.be/wmoBtDrmlvA>

Practising - <https://youtu.be/6bRkoyHQy7I>

Presenting - <https://youtu.be/ov-iFPcFtNw>



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