

Step 8: Supporting the New Freemason 1 of 2

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This Step starts immediately after Initiation and follows the new Freemason as he goes through the degree ceremonies and experiences elements of Freemasonry for the first time.

WHY IS EARLY SUPPORT SO IMPORTANT?

- At this point the new Freemason is at his most vulnerable; a significant proportion of new members leave the Craft within two years of Initiation, often before becoming Master Masons.
- The Personal Mentor and sponsors have a small window of opportunity to respond to all early reactions, to address any questions or concerns and to provide the support that the new Freemason needs.
- If the new Freemason perceives either the ceremony or the actions of Lodge members to be anything other than positive, or if his expectations are not met, he may consider terminating his membership.

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GUIDANCE FOR PERSONAL MENTORS

- Arrange to meet with the new member soon after each ceremony, to help him reflect, practice signs, address questions and relate the latest ceremony with the previous ones.
- Draw on topics for discussion with a new Freemasons but proceed at his pace. Avoid “force feeding” him with what you think he should know and understand.
- Gauge the new member’s level of interest and enthusiasm and respond at that level.
- Pass on any communications or resources provided by the Lodge and the Province. Help him to find the information that he wants from the various materials he will have been given.
- Sit with the new Freemason in the Lodge and on any visits. Explain what is happening and always demonstrate correct behaviours, such as obeying the gavel.
- Prepare him for the ceremonies of Passing and Raising by helping him to learn the questions leading to the degree and the answers to give in open Lodge.
- Represent his needs and interests within the Lodge.
- Be the first source of advice and guidance on Masonic matters.
- Look out for any discomfort or drops in interest, attendance or commitment and respond early.