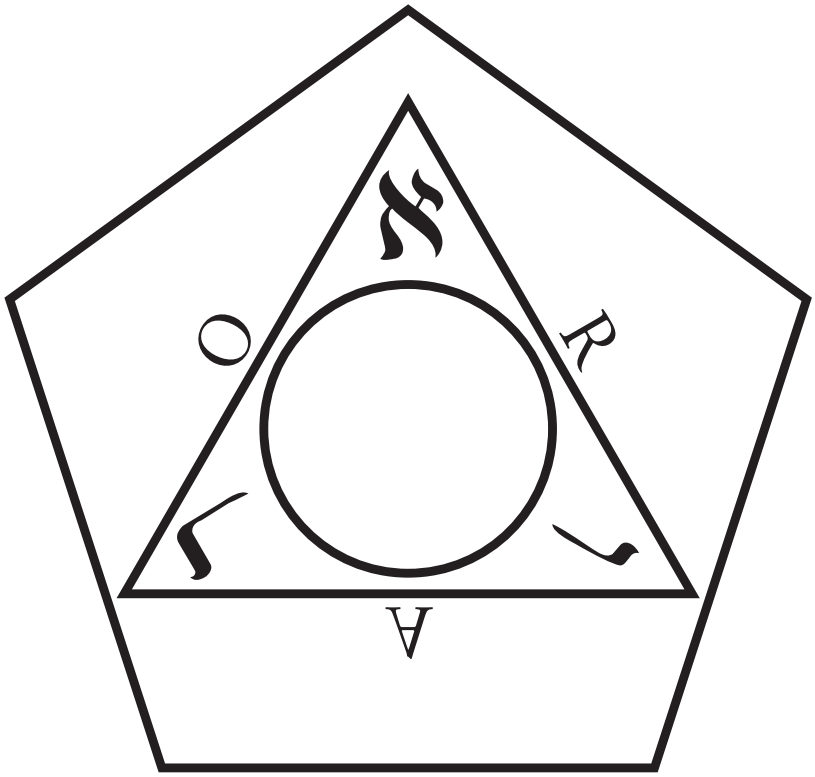
Academy of Reflection

— COURSE MATERIAL —



Basic Methods in the Intentional Practice of Awareness

AOR1000

Prerequisite Courses

- *None*

Prerequisite Reading

- *Meditation: A Primer for Freemasons on the Intentional Practice of Awareness (AOR0000)*

Course Guidelines

- Work on Part 2 can occur during the same weeks as work on Part 1 or 3.
- No other part should be done concurrently with any other.
- Once Part 1 has been completed, the ongoing practice of silent sitting is highly recommended, whether or not you practice other methods. It is at once the cornerstone and the keystone of all meditative practice.

Part 1 – Silent Sitting

Begin practicing silent sitting in sessions of at least 10 minutes, on at least 3 days each week, for as many weeks as are needed to accomplish the objectives below. In each session, perhaps at the start, take some time to practice counting your breaths as described in *Meditation: A Primer for Freemasons on the Intentional Practice of Awareness* in the section entitled "*How do I start practicing meditation?*".

Objectives:

- The ability count your breaths through 3 cycles of 10 inhalations/exhalations without losing count.
- The ability to sit with your eyes closed and remain physically still and quiet for at least 20 minutes.

Part 2 – Mindfulness

Approximately once a day for 2 weeks, practice mindfulness while performing some otherwise routine task, such as walking a path you frequently follow, shaving, or eating a meal.

Objectives:

- Document a total of at least 90 minutes of mindful activity over the 2 weeks.

Part 3 – Discursive Meditation

Perform discursive meditation on at least 3 days each week, for 3 weeks. Avoid reading about or discussing the things you choose as focal points until you have completed working with them in this part. Instead, allow your own insights to arise.

Objectives:

- For the first week, work with one Masonic symbol as your focal point for all meditations.
- For the second week, work with a Masonic word or short phrase as your focal point for all meditations.
- For the third week, choose the recollection of a particular action you routinely observe or do during Masonic ritual. It may be something done by one of the officers, or by one of the players in a degree.

Part 4 – Self-Hypnosis

Practice self-hypnosis on at least 3 days each week, for 2 weeks.

Objectives:

- Choose one of the Four Cardinal Virtues (prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice) as something to foster in your daily life. Develop an affirmation and visualization, and practice both in each meditation.

Part 5 – Reflective Writing

Reflect upon your experiences with Parts 1-4. In 500 to 1000 words, summarize your reflections on how these practices are meaningful in one or more of the following areas:

- Understanding of self
- Relationships with others
- Experience and appreciation of Freemasonry
- Relationship with the Divine