

The Rosicrucian Precepts of Learning and Sharing Knowledge  
By Frater James Marples, VII°

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The vast fraternal system which we commonly refer to as "Freemasonry" is essentially one superstructure of various degrees and grades, as well as Orders Rites, and Allied Bodies which try to inculcate honorable lessons by means of different perspectives, different angles of illustration, similar yet different symbolism and veiled allegory. To be honest, to appreciate Masonry fully requires years of deep thought and reflection. Masonic Rosicrucianism is perhaps unique in that it (perhaps more than any other Masonic-related Body) offers a member the chance to grow in knowledge or comprehension at his own pace.

The Grades of Masonic Rosicrucianism are not merely steps of achievement, but are rather phases of progress.

The degree structure is unique in that it has three classes: The First Order composed of Grades I through Grade IV are: Zelator, Theoricus, Practicus, and Philosophus. The Second Order is composed of Grades V through VII: Adeptus Minor, Adeptus Major, and Adeptus Exemptus. The Third Order is composed of Grades VIII and IX: Magister and Magus. Individual States or local groups have Masonic Rosicrucian groups known as "Colleges".....and this is an aptly named designation since the individual member can study as deeply as they wish, compiling useful data and relevant information, and submitting that as they see fit ---sharing their findings with the entire College at-large. Too often some civic and fraternal groups focus merely on getting members on a membership roll for statistical sake. With Masonic Rosicrucianism, we admittedly like having good numbers.....it is also our aim to have quality members with keen minds geared toward active scholarship. Real wisdom is not bestowed on a select few; but each of us has an opportunity to cultivate our mind and our physical senses. Each of us can observe and report about those things we encounter. Ancient wisdom is not just an archaic concept; and modern insight shouldn't be taken for granted. Masonic Rosicrucians can share and pass along tidbits of wisdom and points of perspective to our fellow members. Helpful information is just that....helpful to others.

We may never know when (or if ) a facet of information is utilized. But, sharing past experiences is the key which may help someone else open the door to further understanding. Initially when knowledge is shared or relayed, it may be solely for the member's inner enjoyment, but it may evolve into enriching the mental resources of another person who is searching for 'answers' to a particular topic.

Ever since time immemorial, Masons of all degrees and Rosicrucians of all Grades have been deeply involved in the care and well-being of members and their families. Old age Homes have been established; scholarship programs have been put in place; and we try to form Honor Guards to pay a final tribute to deceased members. Ritualistic renditions allow for routine patterns of expressing expertise in reciting pertinent historical landmarks which allude to overall organizational mission and purpose. However, many dedicated Masons have a yearning to direct their keen minds toward a broader range of interests which transcend a whole host of subject-matter. That is where Masonic Rosicrucians find their outlet. An inquisitive mind; a collaborative effort; and a united purpose transforms a curious oddity into a glimmer of insight. The hoped-for "reward" or "wage" is a nugget or a gem of wisdom.

For centuries, young men have sought to do things their own way. In equal fashion, for centuries, older men have wished to impart valuable lessons so their descendants or posterity following them decades later (or centuries later) wouldn't have to endure similar struggles.

In my opinion, Masonic Rosicrucians are just beginning to open the door into a new phase of exploration into the human mind. We are not Medical Doctors. We are not pharmacists. Nor do we forget the powerful role of prayer. As Masons, we all believe in Almighty God as a Supreme Being...and prayers do work. My feeling is that extensive future research by many people across



the spectrum --- by Masons and non-Masons alike-- may unlock many mysteries of the human brain and its workings. Some are physiological; some are neurological; while some are attitude-centered.

Fraternal life can certainly help with attitude-centered issues. It is universally acknowledged that people who have friends via civic or fraternal groups have a more positive outlook on life. They also have a "routine" which may give them exercise physically as well as mentally. Their cognitive function is enhanced, and if they do fall ill, they have a circle of well-wishers and care-givers who are close by. When good people congregate together, it fosters good virtuous behavior and outcomes. People need companionship. It's good for the mind, body, and soul. Although the body is quite resilient; it can also be quite fragile at times. As I grow older and see my friends and family members afflicted with Cancer, Heart Disease, Parkinson's Disease, and Alzheimer's Disease -- I am reminded of the frailty of the human body. Rosicrucianism doesn't pretend to be a cure-all. I just believe in future years we will gain a deeper wisdom and insight into the functioning of the whole human body including the workings of the human brain.

I believe that human potential is largely untapped. All of us need positive, cheerful encouragement. As we learned in the Grade of Exemptus Adeptus: "Nothing in this world is eternal". But we are also admonished to "never be weary of well-doing". In simple language: that encourages us to do acts of kindness everywhere we can, as much as we can, as often as we can, and however we can. We shouldn't be concerned about getting paid-back or rewarded in this life. Good deeds will be rewarded in Heaven by our Heavenly Father who knows our hearts better than we know ourselves.

Let us, as Masonic Rosicrucians, practice those great honorable tenets of Freemasonry and Masonic Rosicrucianism. Let us make our College a real showplace of learning, and our roll of members a list of fine gentlemen who seek to do good in this world. If we seek, share, and pass on a Legacy of virtue: we will set the standard by which other Colleges will seek to emulate.

A short list of Masons who were active in the medical profession and whose "learning and sharing" helped benefit the lives of others:

Dr. Jonathan J. French, IX<sup>o</sup> an early Illinois Mason helped bring Masonic Rosicrucianism to the United States. Died 1879.

Dr. Albert G. Mackey, M.D. -- Masonic writer, orator, and noted commentator whose Encyclopedia of Freemasonry remains an authoritative source on all subjects pertaining to Masonry and Rosicrucianism.

Dr. Walter M. Fleming, M.D. -- co-founder of the Mystic Shrine. Active in both Masonic Rites.

Sir Alexander Fleming --- Inventor of Penicillin

Edward Jenner --Pioneered the use of smallpox vaccinations.

Dr Charles Mayo, Dr. William Mayo ---Founders Mayo Clinic

Dr. Karl Menninger --- founded Menninger Clinic

Dr Andrew Still -- Pioneer in Osteopathy

--and many, many other physicians, chiropractors, nurses, pharmacists, and medical care-givers who helped make this world a better place by learning and sharing knowledge to enhance the lives of others.

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