

COMPANIONS OF THE STONE
First Degree Curriculum

The following requirements have been established by the Council of the Stone for advancement to the Grade of Earth. They include readings, individual magical practices, participation in lodge work, the making of a working tool, and an examination.

Readings

Butler, W.E., The Magician: His Training and Work
Fortune, Dion, Psychic Self-Defence
Greer, John Michael, Paths Of Wisdom, parts 1 and 3
Plato, The Symposium
Plotinus, The Enneads, selections:
1.4 (On Happiness), 1.6 (On Beauty), 3.5 (On Love), and 5.8
(On the Intellectual Beauty).
Golden Dawn material (from Israel Regardie's The Golden Dawn):
Outer Order knowledge lectures (GD, v. I pp. 99-169)

A written response to each of the readings should be prepared and submitted to the Lecturer of your lodge. This is not a book report, but simply a personal comment about what you learned from the book and how you responded to it; it may be as long as you wish, but a few paragraphs are normally sufficient to meet the requirements of the curriculum. It may be worth noting that you are not expected to agree with all (or any) of these readings; the goal is to introduce certain concepts and spur thought concerning certain issues.

Please check with your lodge's librarian to see if the books on the reading list are available from the lodge library. All books by John Michael Greer can also be obtained from the author at 60% of cover price, plus a small shipping and handling charge.

Magical Practice

Continued personal work with discursive meditation, using the method covered in the introductory pamphlet, is one of the two foundations of the COTS curriculum. The other is the practice of ritual work -- specifically, the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram and Middle Pillar exercise. Both meditation and ritual should be done daily, preferably at the same time each day, and recorded in your magical journal. A set of themes for meditation based on the First Degree ritual and a paper on the Middle Pillar are included in the instructional letters for the First Degree.

The following additional practices, which are also covered in instructional letters and papers, should be learned and practiced regularly at this point in your training:

- the Ritual of the Rose Cross
- introductory Scrying in the Spirit Vision, using Tarot Aces
- the Work of Light (First Degree somatic work)
- basic techniques of natural magic

Any of these practices will be demonstrated to you by senior members of your lodge on request, and personal instruction is readily available. Talk to the Lecturer of your lodge to arrange for this.

Lodge Work

First Degree Companions will be expected to show a basic mastery of the procedures of a lodge open in the Outer, including lodge protocol, the functions of the officers, movement in the lodge, and the role of the Signs, grip and passwords. Regular attendance at lodge meetings is of the highest importance, and may be considered the single most important requirement for advancement in the Order.

Working Tool

The working tool of a First Degree Companion is the Staff. Each Companion will be expected to provide himself or herself with a staff of the appropriate size and pattern before advancing to the Grade of Earth; a pattern will be provided for those who wish to make their own, and several Companions are also willing to make them at cost. The Order is currently developing materials on the use of the staff for self-defense; while work in these directions is not required, it is highly recommended, and information on this project may be obtained from the Lecturer of your lodge.

Examination

A Companion of the First Degree may apply for examination at any time after three months have passed since his or her First Degree initiation. The Examination of the First Degree will comprise:

- demonstration by the candidate of perfect knowledge of the Signs, word and symbols of the First Degree;
- demonstration by the candidate of one or more of the techniques of practical magic taught in the First Degree;
- review of the candidate's reading and practice;
- presentation of a short paper, lecture or project by the candidate to the lodge on any suitable topic.

The Lecturer of your lodge should be contacted for examination. Once this is completed, the candidate may apply to the lodge for advancement to the Grade of Earth.