

The Tiled Lodge of the Mind

A Masonic Reflection on Managing Anxiety in Today's World

Brethren,

We live in an age of unprecedented connection, yet many people feel more anxious, distracted, and overwhelmed than ever before. News travels instantly. Our phones demand our attention at all hours. Work, family responsibilities, and social expectations seem to follow us everywhere we go.

While Freemasonry was not created as a treatment for anxiety, it offers timeless principles and working tools that can help us navigate the pressures of today's life. In many ways, the lessons we learn in the Lodge provide a blueprint for building a calmer and more balanced mind.

The 1st topic I would like to share with you is what I call, "The Anxiety of the Open Door"

One of the greatest challenges of life today is that very few things have boundaries anymore.

The concerns of the world no longer remain outside our homes. Through our phones and computers, they enter our living rooms, our dinner tables, and even our bedrooms. We are constantly connected, constantly informed, and constantly stimulated.

Yet one of the first things we learn in Freemasonry is the importance of a properly Tiled Lodge.

A Lodge is not left open to every influence. It is protected so that important work can be conducted in peace and harmony.

Perhaps there is a lesson in that for each one of us.

Just as a Lodge must be tiled, our minds also require moments of protection. We need times when the endless noise of the world is deliberately kept outside the door. Whether through quiet reflection, prayer, reading, family time, or simply turning off our devices for a

while, we can benefit from creating a mental space where the world's chaos is not permitted to enter.

A well-tiled Lodge creates harmony. A well-tiled mind can do the same.

***The 2nd topic I would ask you to reflect on is,
“The Anatomy of Balance”***

Another source of anxiety is the feeling that there is never enough time.

Many of us feel as though we are constantly chasing the clock. There is always another task to complete, another message to answer, another obligation demanding our attention.

One of our Masonic Working Tools is the Twenty-Four Inch Gauge which offers a remarkably practical lesson.

We are taught to divide our time wisely among our duties, our service to others, and our refreshment.

This simple principle reminds us that life is meant to be balanced.

Work is important. Service is important. Rest is important.

Yet today's culture often glorifies busyness and productivity while treating rest as something to be earned rather than something necessary.

The Gauge teaches a different lesson. It reminds us that refreshment is not laziness. It is part of the design.

When we consciously allocate time for work, family, community, recreation, and sleep, we regain a sense of control over our lives. Instead of becoming servants to the clock, we become stewards of our time.

The 3rd area I would like to discuss is, “Letting Go of What We Cannot Control”

Many anxieties arise from uncertainty.

We worry about events that have not happened. We worry about decisions made by others. We worry about circumstances completely outside our influence.

A 2nd Masonic Working Tool is the Common Gavel. It provides us with an important reminder.

Its purpose is to remove the rough and superfluous parts of our own stone.

It is important to note that it is not intended for shaping anyone else's stone.

Freemasonry continually directs our attention inward. The work begins with ourselves.

When we spend less energy trying to control the actions of others and more energy improving our own thoughts, attitudes, and conduct, life becomes more manageable.

The headlines may remain troubling. The future may still be uncertain. Yet we discover that we possess the ability to improve our own character and govern our own responses.

That is meaningful work, and it is work that lies within our control.

My 4th point I refer to as the, "The Antidote to Isolation"

Perhaps one of the most valuable gifts Freemasonry offers is fellowship.

Despite living in a digitally connected world, many people experience profound loneliness. We may have hundreds of online connections and still feel isolated.

In Lodge, however, we meet upon the Level.

For a few hours, worldly distinctions are set aside. Occupation, income, social status, and political opinions become secondary to our shared commitment to virtue and brotherhood.

There is great comfort in belonging to a community where one is valued not for what he owns or what position he holds, but for the content of his character.

Every Brother knows that there are others willing to listen, encourage, and support him when life's burdens become heavy.

That sense of belonging is not merely pleasant—it is powerful.

It reminds us that we do not walk through life's uncertainties alone.

To conclude I would like to mention, “Building the Internal Temple”

Freemasonry teaches that the construction of the Temple begins within.

We may not be able to calm every storm around us. We cannot eliminate every uncertainty or solve every problem the world presents.

But we can build an inner temple strong enough to withstand those storms.

We can use the **Tiled Door** to protect our peace.

We can use the **Twenty-Four Inch Gauge** to create balance in our lives.

We can use the **Common Gavel** to focus on improving ourselves rather than attempting to control everything around us.

And we can **meet upon the Level**, drawing strength from the fellowship and support of our Brethren.

In doing so, we discover that the true work of Freemasonry is not simply the building of character—it is the cultivation of steadiness, resilience, and peace within ourselves.

And that may be one of the most valuable tools we possess in today’s world of increased anxiety.

Thank you, Brethren.

Brother Shawn Cox