

*Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.*

Better Together

# BETTER TOGETHER

The Lifespark Lodge Handbook

Dr. Bill Thomas

Dr. Bill Thomas



THE SPARK PILLARS





ALSO BY DR. BILL THOMAS

Aging Magnificently: The Pursuit of  
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*What Are Old People For?*

*Tribes of Eden*

*Second Wind*

*Principia*

# **Better Together**

**The Lifespark  
Lodge Handbook**

**Dr. Bill Thomas**

**SANA Publishing**

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Designed by Kyrié Carpenter

Better Together: The Lifespark Lodge Hand-  
book

Non-Fiction  
Aging  
Sociology  
Philosophy

The text for this book is set in veranda  
Manufactured in the United States

This book is dedicated to  
Eve Alexander.  
She showed us the way.



Eve Alexander who helped bring  
the Girls Friendly Society to the  
US.<sup>8</sup>

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# Glossary

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- **Friendly society:** A mutual organization or benefit society composed of a body of people who join together for a common financial or social purpose.
- **Lifespark Lodge:** A friendly society (sometimes known as a mutual aid society) that is located in a community and is devoted to helping the people discover joy, adventure and peace in daily life.
- **National Order of Lifespark Lodges:** The organizing entity to which all Lifespark Lodges belong.
- **Weaver:** A person who creates a fabric of mutual aid, friendship and community engagement.

- **Governor General:** A member in good standing of a Lifespark Lodge who is elected to represent a state's Lifespark Lodges interests at the national level.
- **Leadership Council:** Lodge Members in good standing who are elected to harmonize their state's priorities and objectives with those of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

# Lifespark Lodge Qualities

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- **Motto:** “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.”
- **Invitation:** “We invite you to explore the benefits of Lodge membership and attend Lodge meetings whenever possible.”
- **Vision:** A society in which kindness sparks a better life for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Mission:** Lifespark Lodges exist to promote a deeper, more nuanced understanding of aging and how older people can strengthen and enrich their communities.
- **Values:** Joy, Adventure and Peace
- **Ideals:** Trustworthiness, Fearlessness, and Enthusiasm



# Background

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In 2020, Joel Theisen, BSN, envisioned a “friendly society” (consisting of a national network of local lodges) dedicated to fostering greater health and wellness among older people.

Recognizing that these Lodges would be enriched by their members’ wealth of lived experience, skills, and wisdom, he charged them with two duties:

- Improve the lives of their members, and
- make their local communities better places to live, work and learn.

Joel’s journey toward these insights began in 2004 when he founded Lifespark, a company dedicated to

helping people age magnificently. Every day since its founding, Lifespark has put everything it has — its people, passion, and purpose — into sparking the lives of those it serves.

Over the years, the elders supported by Lifespark illuminated the exquisite value of finding and then living “the good life.” As the years passed, Joel increasingly understood that the best way to “spark lives” was to reorder our priorities.

**Shift the focus away from ~~disease, disability and decline~~ -- and toward a person-centered approach that celebrates and promotes wellness, happiness, and independence.**

Our “healthcare” system has been exceptionally well-funded. Unfortunately, it has also evolved into a fragmented, and expensive,

“sick care” system that does little to prevent illness or improve wellness.

Lifespark’s response to this challenge is based on a simple truth: “Home is where the heart is.”

Lifespark works to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to live where and how they choose, regardless of their age or ability.



## Simple Things Matter

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Lifespark Lodges explore and master seven elements of well-being that can change people's lives for the better. The Seven Elements<sup>1</sup>:

- **Belonging** -- it's more than just not being alone.
- **Health** -- it's more than just not taking medicines.
- **Home** -- it's more than just having a place to sleep.
- **Money** -- it's more than what's in your pocket.
- **Thinking** -- it's more than just memories.
- **Being** -- it's more than just a name and occupation.
- **Purpose** -- it's more than just a wish.

Lifespark Lodges are committed to “sparkling lives.”

The Lodges battle against ageism that robs people of the joys that aging can bring to us. There are more older people on the planet than ever before, but they must contend with ageist prejudice and a damaging myth that holds that every older person’s best years are behind them.

The truth is that when we join together to learn, create, give, and receive we make a better life for ourselves, and for those we care about. When we spark lives in this way, we help people take hold of the best things in life and enjoy them fully.

Fully embracing “the good life” requires trust, communication, and an enduring commitment to discovering what matters most.

## Better Together

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The National Order of Lifes-park Lodges was founded in 2021. The nation was just emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic and there was a widely shared commitment to ensuring that we could, and should, work together to create more effective means of safeguarding the health and well-being of America's elders. Hard times never fail to remind those who live through them that working for the common good helps us share the good times and overcome the bad times that stretch out before us all.

**The National Order of Lifes-park Lodges is founded on the idea that old people can step forward, pick up the mantle of leadership, and show us that we are all -- better together.**

This book describes the structure and function of the National Order and its affiliate Lifespark Lodges and was written to ensure that Lodges, and their members, have direct access to the knowledge and guidance they need to operate as efficiently and effectively as possible. It emphasizes the need for community engagement, member involvement, and strong, strategic connections between Lodges and the National Order.

While much of the material in this handbook is administrative in nature, a great deal of the information can be used as a guide to help Lodges determine the best way to stay focused, relevant, and active.

The story of the Lifespark Lodge begins with the wisdom of those who came before us and made artful use of the “shelter of each other” to make their lives, and their communities, better.



# Friendly Societies

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Human beings, like all living creatures, contend with many dangers as they move across their lifespan.

For millennia, people have formed local mutual aid societies to help them manage the risks associated with illness, injury, or want of work. Evidence of this kind of structured cooperation can be found in the records of ancient Chinese, Roman and Greek civilizations.

During the late medieval period, governments were highly fragmented and, beyond the practice of noblesse oblige, had little capacity to alleviate the suffering of ordinary people.

**Noblesse oblige:**

The term noblesse oblige first appeared in the 1835 novel *The Lily of the Valley*.<sup>2</sup> The author used the term to describe a medieval lord's responsibility for the wellbeing of serfs. Hereditary inheritance of privilege was thought to include an obligation to help others.

Not surprisingly, ordinary people found that tying their fate to the benevolence of the local Squire was a risky strategy. Accordingly, they took matters into their own hands and began sharing risk and spreading burdens among themselves using newly founded "friendly societies."

**Tired: Maybe the nobles will help us!**

**Wired: Let's help each other!**

Many of these medieval societies remain with us today. (The Ancient Order of the Foresters; The Odd-fellows). These organizations have endured for centuries largely because they were carefully organized, well-run, and delivered reliable financial and social benefits to their members.

The number of friendly societies (sometimes called "friendlies") exploded with the arrival of the Industrial Revolution and the new risks to health and well-being that arrived with it.

## **ARTICLE I**

**That a society shall meet at the house of Thomas Finch at the sign of the Tiger in Lindfield town in the county of Sussex, the first Monday in every month, or where the majority shall think fit to keep the common stock. And their hours of meeting shall be from**



**seven to nine in the evening from  
Lady Day to Michaelmas, and from  
six to eight from Michaelmas to  
Lady Day.**

**ARTICLE XI**

**That there shall be two feasts  
every year, and those feasts be  
holden on the first Thursday in  
July and January, and whenever  
the same shall be kept, each  
member shall pay one shilling;  
[that is to say] sixpence for their  
dinner, and sixpence for liquor.**

*1757 Articles of Lindfield Friendly  
Society:<sup>3</sup>*

The Foundation for Economic Education has a good summary of this history. An excerpt...

**“Originally, friendlies insured against ‘disability to work,’ with little distinction between accident or sickness. This also came to mean ‘infirmity,’ i.e., insurance against old age. Most friendlies paid for a doctor’s services, burial expenses, annuities to widows, and educational expenses for orphans. They built old-age homes and sanitariums for members and their families. Even in their early stages, they offered unemployment benefits for those in ‘distressed circumstances’ or ‘on travel in search of employment.’ The most common pay-outs were for maternity leave and retirement pensions.”<sup>4</sup>**

During the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries millions of people benefited from membership in a

profusion of friendly societies. Consider, for example, the Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) founded in England in 1875 and dedicated to aiding the personal and social development of young women moving into English cities.

In 1877, Eve Alexander (her picture graces the introduction of this book) began corresponding with the English GFS in an effort to bring the benefits of this organization to girls in Baltimore.

By 1878, Mrs. Alexander had launched the first GFS Branch in America with four associates and 12 girls present. The motto of the GFS was "Bear one another's burdens" and it valued "purity, dutifulness, faithfulness, and thrift."

The GFS continues to be active today, nearly 150 years after its founding. "Friendly societies" form

an important, and unheralded, part of our shared history because these organizations have proven their ability to help people of all ages and backgrounds create a better life for themselves, and the people they care most about.

In the words of founder Joel Theisen, BSN,

**“Lifespark Lodges exist to spark lives and unlock the full potential of joy, adventure and peace for people of all ages and abilities.”**

The Lifespark Lodge motto, “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.” (sometimes shortened to “Be Kind!”) is used to guide us toward greater compassion for ourselves and for others.

Like most local friendly societies, Lifespark Lodges are organized as affiliates of a national order of Lodges. The National Order of Lifespark Lodges developed and approved the first edition of the Lodge Bylaws in the summer of 2020.

These Bylaws are included in this Handbook. Far from being a legal formality, the Lifespark Lodge Bylaws function as an important tool for unifying this young organization and growing it into a vibrant national “friendly society.” In January, 2021 the National Order approved the application for recognition of the first Lifespark Lodge.

The Lodge Bylaws, which might seem a bit boring to some, are actually designed to help Lodges help their members find joy, adventure, and peace in their lives and communities. It is hoped that each Lodge will be

unique precisely because it is closely connected to its local community and that its members will find that fellowship and sociability is best experienced in the context of shared efforts that matter to us, and to others.

## The Lifespark Lodge

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### **Vision:**

A society in which kindness sparks a better life for people of all ages and abilities.

### **Mission:**

Lifespark Lodges exist to promote a deeper, more nuanced understanding of aging and how older people can strengthen and enrich their communities.

### **Values:**

Joy, Adventure and Peace



# Two are Better than One

---

**“By mutual Aids we may  
increase the Blessings of Life –  
alleviate Misfortunes – and often  
secure Success.”**

**- Ripponden Female Society,  
1826**

Historically, friendly society members paid monthly or quarterly dues into a fund in exchange for insurance against hardship. The societies were usually community-based, with members mostly living within a few miles from the society's premises.

Members being close at hand served to enhance the social functions of the society. Regular meetings were



held throughout the year and there was usually at least one day of celebration, that often included a parade. Historical research suggests that the friendly societies that flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries adhered to three core principles.<sup>5</sup>

## Community

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Friendly societies were embedded in their local communities. Their local nature was essential to their ability to provide help when times were hard.

The society became intertwined with existing community networks and this helped them deliver benefits to members that were both practical (medical care and pensions) and emotional (belonging and ritual).

Being part of the community enhanced members' opportunities for active participation. Older members,

for example, continued to have access to meetings and celebrations, as well as opportunities for participation in the society's decision-making.

The Friendlies approach differed substantially from the modern ethic of "volunteerism." Instead of matching individuals with opportunities to volunteer, the Friendlies focused on getting connected to and then supporting existing community spaces and actions.

Community is a balm for loneliness and we are living in what George Monbiot has dubbed "the age of loneliness."<sup>6</sup> The Friendlies made "we" the focus of their attention and, in doing so, struck a blow against social isolation.

## Democracy

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Friendly societies were also defined by a commitment to self-governance. Members maintained full control over the society and exercised power through carefully articulated administrative structures.

All members could participate in society meetings. All members could air their grievances and participate in the process of making decisions about the future of the society.

The officers charged with running Friendlies often nominated the next slate of officers, although some Friendlies preferred to assign office-holders based on rotation.

Terms of office rarely exceeded a year and each local chapter had many offices that needed to be filled. These

traits worked together to enhance participation in decision-making.

Friendlys empowered people who are often excluded from participation in government and gave them a powerful say in what was happening in their community.

## Solidarity

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**“Two are better than one;  
because they have a good reward  
for their labour. For if they fall,  
the one will lift up his fellow; but  
woe to him that is alone when he  
falleth, for he hath not another to  
help him up.”**

**- East Morton Female Friendly  
Society, 1845**

Instead of "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," Friendlies embraced the cry of the Three Musketeers, "All for one and one for all, united we stand divided we fall!"

It has been observed that Friendlies have an affection for funny looking hats, and outrageous titles. Though these might seem silly to outsiders, the Friendlies' secret handshakes, rituals, and traditions promoted solidarity and solidified the feeling that "we" are joined together in an important cause that can not be accomplished by any person acting alone.

# Lodge Goals and Objectives

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What is a Lifespark Lodge? Put simply it is...

A friendly society (sometimes known as a mutual aid society) located in a community and devoted to helping the people discover joy, adventure and peace in daily life.

A common ageist stereotype holds that old people are a burden and have little, or nothing, to offer others.

Lifespark Lodges offer proof that this belief is false. In fact, elders, and their accumulated life experience, are essential resources for making communities better places to live, work and learn. The Lifespark Lodge is a tool that elders can use to balance the scales of giving and receiving.

The Lodge's mission (Lifespark Lodges exist to spark lives and promote a deeper, more nuanced, understanding of aging and how old people strengthen and enrich their communities) leads Lodge members to investigate and address unmet community needs. Meeting those needs effectively requires Lodges to explore and develop the knowledge, skills, and leadership potential of their members. There is strength in members and healthy Lodges are always eager to add to their membership rolls.

A vibrant active Lodge can easily become an engine of strength, purpose and belonging. People living with purpose find new strength.

Strength enhances our ability to participate fully in life and reap the rewards that come from belonging. The largest and most successful Friendly in the United States was

founded by Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus in 1958. AARP was organized to help retired teachers gain access to health insurance. From the beginning, Dr. Andrus challenged members "to serve, not to be served," and to "create the good" by helping others in their communities. She understood how service can make us stronger and the ability to create impact depends on our ability to serve -- together. Lifespark Lodges will carry this tradition forward.

The structure of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges is designed to harmonize the efforts of Lodge members, officers, and staff as they work together to expand the scope, influence and impact of the organization.

Each participant in this effort strengthens and reinforces the work of the whole. Leadership positions



include local Lodge officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer) as well as positions that may not be familiar to most people:

### **Lodge Weaver:**

The Weaver is responsible for providing leadership and guidance to members and volunteers and communicates their needs directly to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. Each Weaver strives to create a fabric of mutual aid, friendship and community engagement. The Lodge Weaver is appointed by the Lodge Board with the assent of the National Order.

### **Governor General:**

The Governor General represents the Order of Lifespark Lodges at the state level. This role must be filled by a person who has served honorably as a local Lodge president and is well versed in the National organization's vision, mission, and priorities. The

Governor General is elected by all Lodge officers in a given state.

**Leadership Council:**

The Leadership Council is a team of volunteer leaders who bring a wide array of skills, experiences and backgrounds to each state's Good Life leadership team. The Leadership Council works to harmonize their state's priorities and objectives with those of the National Order of Lifes-park Lodges. It advises the national board as it sets policy. Every state has a Leadership Council that includes the state's Governor General and from four to six additional members. Members of each state's Leadership Council are selected by the National Order. The Governor General chairs the Leadership Council.

This Lodge Handbook provides important information and material for use by Lodge leaders in guiding and

growing Lifespark Lodges and includes sections devoted to Lodge operations, bylaws and standing rules. It also reviews the role of the Lodge board, and provides guidelines for officers and committee leaders.

## Our Ideals

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An organization's beliefs crystallize the promise it makes to its members and the communities it serves. Our founder, Joel Theisen, established the National Order of Lifespark Lodges in 2021 as a way to help people live with greater joy, adventure and peace.

One of the National Order's most critical assets in the pursuit of this goal is the trust people choose to place in our mission and work. We believe that people seek to grow, learn and discover, and serve no matter

their age and we want them to know that the National Order of Lifespark Lodges can be relied upon to help them realize that ambition.

Lodges and their members are the National Order's valued local community representatives. Each and every day, their words and actions bring the mission and values of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges to life. The personality of each Lodge, and the stories its members tell about themselves, help us become well-known in the communities we serve.

Learning to speak with a common voice makes everything the National Order of Lifespark Lodges does more powerful and effective. It unifies our organization and motivates and engages our members and their neighbors. Clarity and consistency help ensure that people understand who we are and what we do. Healthy,

trustworthy, organizations flourish when they possess an ability to create warm, enduring relationships with others.

The guidelines presented below are designed to help you express that voice and make the National Order of Lifespark Lodges even stronger in your community. Because our future growth depends almost completely on our ability to create trusting relationships, we must also think carefully about how any project or affiliation might help, or hinder, our mission and vision, and desire to connect with our members and their communities.

## **The Lifespark Lodge Mission, Vision and Values:**

---

### **Vision:**

A society in which kindness sparks a better life for people of all ages and abilities.

**Mission:**

Lifespark Lodges exist to promote a deeper, more nuanced understanding of aging and how older people can strengthen and enrich their communities.

**Values:**

Joy, Adventure and Peace

As a diverse community of Lodges and members, the National Order of Lifespark Lodges creates opportunities and drives social change in ways that help people overcome challenges, achieve goals, pursue a deeply felt life purpose and live their best life.

Our organization's motto is  
**“Be Kind”**

Developing a Lodge with a “kind personality” depends on our ability to place the Lodge's three Ideals into practice.

## The Lifespark Lodge Ideals:

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### **Trustworthiness:**

We explain. We educate. We speak clearly. We back our claims up with facts. We confront difficult truths. We are honest with ourselves and with others. We do what we say.

### **Fearlessness:**

Fear makes people sick; it erodes compassion and blunts kindness. We may not be able to change the world (at least right away) but we can stand up for our beliefs. We know that, throughout human history, those who've been willing to stick to their principles and challenge injustice have been rewarded with respect, influence, and a precious freedom from fear.

### **Enthusiasm:**

Passion, purpose and enthusiasm go together. We create momentum for positive personal and social change

when we help people seize opportunities; when we don't wait for others but rather roll up our sleeves and get things done. Every day offers us fresh new challenges and new opportunities to make life better for others and for ourselves.





# Overview of Lodge Operations

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Local Lodges are chartered under the National Order of Lifespark Lodges and are legally incorporated in the state in which they operate.

As a legal entity, a Lodge has responsibilities it must meet to maintain its incorporation and charter. This section explores duties and functions of a Lifespark Lodge.

## Identity

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All Lifespark Lodges are separately incorporated entities that further the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. Lodges play a vital role as they constitute a large pool of members that support this mission at a grassroots level. Because they are chartered entities of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, Lodges are permitted to use the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Trademark as part of their corporate name as long as they adhere to the following guidelines.

Since 2021, the National Order of Lifespark Lodges has owned and used trademarks and service marks related to some of its most important goods and services. The National Order of Lifespark Lodges registered these marks (including the National Order of Lifespark Lodges name) with the

United States Patent and Trademark Office. We have developed very specific guidelines (presented in Appendix F) that are intended to assist the National Order, its Lodges and members in the appropriate use of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges name, trademarks and service marks. Each Lodge's use of these marks should always comply with all National Order of Lifespark Lodges' policies and brand identity objectives. These policies also promote visual consistency across all Lodges, protect the National Order of Lifespark Lodges name and logo, and ensure appropriate usage that aligns our actions with the National Order of Lifespark Lodges' mission and goals.

Protection of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges brand and identity is a shared responsibility that keeps our voice and actions true for those over the age of 60 as well as our younger, associate, members.

Inconsistent or inaccurate usage of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Trademark by Lodges muddles our identity and endangers the legal protections afforded to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Trademarks. Everyone who belongs to the National Order and its local Lodges plays a vital role in protecting telling our story -- and safeguarding our reputation.

# Defining Success

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**“The purpose of life, is living  
a life of purpose.”  
- Richard Lieder**

It is also said that when we wish to go fast we must travel alone but when we want to go far -- we travel together.

These two insights do much to define what success looks like for a local Lifespark Lodge.

At a minimum, Lodges must comply with the state, local, and National Order reporting requirements.

Those who aim higher should think about success in the following terms.

## Lifespark Lodge Success Terms:

### **Number of Lodge Members.**

How many members? Is membership growing?

### **Satisfaction of Lodge Members.**

Does the Lodge matter to them? Is it making their life better? Do they have a voice in Lodge governance?

### **Lodge reputation.**

Is the Lodge known in the local community? Is its reputation in line with its values?

## The Pursuit of Excellence:

### **Membership**

Discover what members want from the Lodge and use that knowledge in ways that are effective.

Create a culture that welcomes new and potential members.

Schedule meetings at convenient times and in accessible locations.

Recognize members for their contributions to their Lodge and community.

### **Programming**

Feature guest speakers at Lodge meetings on topics related to the National Order's commitment to joy, adventure and peace.

Cooperate with organizations in the community that offer programming on topics that are seen as valuable and useful to Lodge members.

### **Community Service**

Value reciprocity and seek opportunities for Lodges and their members to engage in community in ways that are meaningful, and make skillful use of the membership's unique skills and interests.



Make an enduring commitment to leadership development, proactively identifying skills the Lodge needs in its leaders and recruiting members to who can help the Lodge grow.

Cultivate teamwork within the Lodge board and build committees to ease the workload for board members and help the Lodge be more impactful. Create short- and long-term service opportunities so that more members can get involved.

### **Strategic Thinking and Planning**

Create long-term plans for the Lodge that include annual goals.

Collaborate with the National Order to align resources and co-ordinate the Lodge's goals with National strategies.

# Reporting Requirements

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National Order of Lifespark Lodges Requirements — The National Order's annual Lodge reporting requirements include the annual Lodge Officer Update which provides the National Order with current information about Lodge officers, committee chairpersons, and meeting location/dates. The National Order needs to be updated regularly regarding the Lodge's Community Service Projects which demonstrate the Lodge's annual compliance with a range of IRS requirements for tax-exempt, non-profit organizations. A formal Lodge Treasurer's Report is required in filing the National Order's group tax return and in monitoring whether funds, if any, generated by Lodges, are used in accordance with the rules and regulations established by the IRS for tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations.

*Note: In regard to these compliance issues, under certain circumstances a Lodge's status may be suspended or withdrawn by the National Order. Information on the causes and processes involved in such action is provided in Appendix G of this handbook.*

**State and Federal Requirements**  
—The reporting requirements for non-profit organizations vary from state to state. To determine the state's requirements for your Lodge, check with your Secretary of State's office or the National Order.

**Local Requirements** — County and/or city regulations in some states have reporting requirements that Lodges must follow. Contact your county commissioner or city manager for more information.

## A Note on Political Activity

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The National Order of Lifespark Lodges is a nonpartisan organization and must maintain a nonpartisan stance with respect to candidates, incumbents, political parties, and public events.

Lodges must also be objective and nonpartisan in their volunteer advocacy efforts on behalf of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. Further, Lodge officers, Committee members, and other members, through virtue of their visibility within the community, may be perceived as acting on behalf of the local Lodge or the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, even though they are acting in their own individual capacities. Lodge members must carefully consider the sensitivity of their particular situations when considering their

personal participation in political or partisan activities (of a more visible nature) that the public may construe to be an National Order of Lifespark Lodges endorsement.

In particular this requirement means that members may not advocate for the National Order of Lifespark Lodges when they are actively supporting (on their own time) a candidate for political office.

In addition, members who are very visible in the community as Lodge members or leaders should carefully consider their situation before volunteering for a visible role within a campaign or publicly endorsing a campaign, (e.g., lawn signs, bumper stickers, hosting fundraisers).

Lodge members are strictly forbidden from using, or allowing others to use, Lodge membership lists,

participant lists, the letterhead, the brand (name, mark, logos or taglines), or their signature blocks (names with titles) for any purpose other than the Lodge activities for which they are assigned.



# Documents Governing Lodge Operations

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The policies and procedures governing the operations of Lifespark Lodges are contained in three key documents, samples of which are included in the Appendices of this book.

- **Articles of Incorporation**
- **Lifespark Lodge Bylaws**
- **Standing Rules**

Familiarity with and regular reference to these documents can help each Lodge ensure that it remains in compliance with federal, state, and National Order standards of operation.



## Articles of Incorporation

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Lifespark Lodges operate pursuant to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges' status under the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code as a 501(c)(4) "social welfare" organization. As such, Lodges are exempt from federal income tax.<sup>7</sup> The Articles of Incorporation, created for each Lodge at the time it is chartered, lay out the rules for the Lodge's ongoing operation. Each Articles of Incorporation document is filed with the Secretary of State in the state in which the Lodge operates. Every Lodge should retain a copy of this document and adhere closely to its terms. If a Lodge's Articles of Incorporation document has been lost, the Lodge may request another by writing to the Secretary of State and paying whatever fee may be required.

## Lodge Bylaws

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The Lifespark Lodge Bylaws provide guidance for Lodge operations, describe its functions, and ensure compliance with IRS regulations.

The National Order of Lifespark Lodges requires all Lodges to adopt the current Lifespark Lodge Bylaws by an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the Lodge membership. As part of the Bylaws approval process, each Lodge must:

- **Select the month of its annual meeting;**
- **Set the amount of Lodge dues; and**
- **Define the percentage of members necessary to have a quorum for conducting business.**

These choices must be recorded in the appropriate spaces provided in the Bylaws.

## Standing Rules

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“Standing Rules” are operating procedures supplemental to the Lodge Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. These rules are established by the Lodge to define procedures for operations not specified in the legal documents of the Lodge. For example, depending on its particular need, a Lodge may wish to establish standing rules governing Lodge auditing procedures or the reimbursement of volunteers’ expenses. Generally, standing rules address such topics as:

- **Membership and dues**
- **Meeting schedules**
- **Discretionary officers**
- **Additional committees**
- **Financial procedures**
- **Nominating Committee terms**

A sample list of Standing Rules are included in Appendix A. Lodges are strongly encouraged to develop their own set of standing rules as a written documentation of the decisions made by the Lodge in governing such matters as those listed above. These operating rules enable a smooth administration of Lodge affairs and free Lodge leaders to devote more time to carrying out the Lodge's educational and community service initiatives. Typically, Standing Rules are reviewed annually or biannually by the Board of Directors at its first meeting following election. The Standing Rules may be revised by a simple majority vote of the Lodge members voting with a quorum present, and updated at the annual Lodge meeting. You should contact the National Order of Lifespark Lodges if you need additional guidance regarding Standing Rules.



# Successful Lodge Meetings

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Well run meetings are the foundation of every successful Lifespark Lodge. These meetings offer members a forum for discussions of Lodge and National Order initiatives and provide an interesting and engaging introduction to Lodge life.

Lodge-run programs inform, educate, and motivate members to take actions that will improve their health and well-being and make their community a better place for people of all ages.

Meetings also provide access to fellowship and social connections that are a vital antidote to loneliness.

Member and board meetings help a Lodge create a reputation for community-mindedness and a willingness to turn words into action.

Meetings and related programs should be a source of pride for Lodge members and help potential members see how these opportunities could help them live a healthier life while also developing their leadership skills and abilities.

The identification and development of future leaders is a powerful resource in maintaining the vitality of Lodge life.

# Managing a Meeting

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Orderly and thoughtfully conducted meetings enhance member interest and foster participation. This four-step process has proven its worth over time.

## **1. Prepare in Advance.**

The day, time, place, and agenda for the meeting should be announced well ahead of time.

## **2. Develop an Effective Agenda.**

A well-designed agenda is an excellent tool for a productive meeting. Put the most important items first on the agenda to ensure priority business is covered, and set a time limit for each.

## **3. Use Your Meeting Time Effectively.**

Start on time and stay on track with the agenda. Ask participants to do



some pre-meeting preparation, such as reviewing reports and minutes, to free up as much time as possible to conduct business.

#### **4. Evaluate the Meeting.**

For example, take the time to ask Board members for their input. One simple approach is to end each meeting with two simple questions: What worked well at today's meeting? What could we do to improve our next meeting?

## All-Member Meetings

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All-Member Meetings are distinct from meetings of the board. In particular, there is Lodge business covered in a board meeting that is not appropriate for a general membership meeting. Some issues attended to by the board are too detailed, too uninteresting, or too confidential for inclusion in a general member meeting.

For All-Member meetings it is best to select topics likely to keep members informed and interested in Lodge activities. In many Lodges, a general membership meeting not only addresses Lodge business but also includes speakers who are able to inform or inspire the membership. The board should work collaboratively with other Lodge leaders, such as the program committee, to plan these

activities, rather than trying to do everything itself.

Board members need to remember that they are highly visible. Lodge leaders and their words and actions are noticed and can have a direct impact on the effort to recruit and retain members.

At general membership meetings, board members should strive to set a positive example by warmly welcoming new members, supporting and recognizing other volunteer leaders, and ensuring that conflicts with others remain as private business to be dealt with outside the public eye.

# Opening and Closing a Lodge All-Membership Meeting

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The National Order of Lifespark Lodges is a nonpartisan, nonsectarian organization, and we welcome members of all faiths and beliefs. The National Order does not favor, uphold, or endorse any faith, sect, denomination, or system of beliefs or non-beliefs over another.

It is important that Lodge leaders be aware of and sensitive to the beliefs and feelings of all attendees, and take special care to avoid inadvertently excluding any member of the group.

Experience has shown that an alternative to a traditional invocation or prayer, which can be offered by

the officiating volunteer or by another member of the group, works best.

One alternative is the observance of a moment of silence during which individuals who wish to do so may offer their prayers, good wishes, or thanksgiving in private.

# Conducting Lodge Business

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Using established parliamentary procedures might seem unnecessarily cumbersome but in fact goes a long way toward ensuring that the Lodge's business is conducted in an orderly and fair fashion. Members should understand and be able to follow some basic meeting rules.

In addition to the information provided below, Lodges may refer to *Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)*, which can be downloaded from the internet or borrowed from a local public library.

## General points to remember include:

- For a subject to be taken up for consideration as Lodge business, it must first be introduced. Any unfinished business — those items carried over from a prior meeting — must be addressed before any new business is introduced, however. Having addressed the unfinished business, the presiding officer asks, “Is there any new business?” At this time, any member can make a motion to introduce an item of business. For example, a member may say, “I move that we help teachers at [local elementary school] acquire supplies for their classrooms.” Another meeting member must affirm or second the motion before the subject can be opened for discussion. Once opened, the mover cannot withdraw it without the consent of the meeting members.

To facilitate the discussion, it is recommended that complicated motions be submitted in writing.

- Once a motion has been introduced, it can be amended. This happens when someone moves to change, add, or omit words from the original motion. An amendment is open to discussion and must receive a majority vote of the members present to be valid. Another member may then move to amend the amendment or change the amended version of the original motion. The order in which each amendment would be taken up is:
  - 1) decide whether to support the amended amendment;
  - 2) if the amended amendment is not accepted, decide whether to adopt the original amendment; and
  - 3) if the original amendment is not accepted, decide whether



to adopt the original motion. A motion to amend the amendment cannot itself be further amended.

- Sometimes the discussion of a motion will be delayed because it is too complex or more research is required to establish the facts or more time is needed for discussion than is left on the agenda. In such instances, any member may move that the motion be referred to committee with instructions to further study or redraft the motion, as appropriate. If so instructed by a majority of the members present, the designated committee must report back or otherwise act as agreed upon.
- A final decision on a motion can be postponed or tabled until there is more time or information to act on it. A majority vote of the members present is required to table the motion (or to take the motion from

the table at some future date) for further consideration. Once tabled, a motion can no longer be discussed on the floor until it is taken from the table.

- Discussion that has become too lengthy, repetitious, or expanded beyond the scope of the motion can be brought to a close by a request to move the previous question. This provides the presiding officer with the opportunity to close debate and ask for a vote on the motion to the previous question. If approved by two-thirds of the members present, the motion under discussion is immediately put to a vote.
- A member who feels there has been a breach of procedure may state such by calling out or requesting a "point of order." The presiding officer then asks the member to "state your point of order." After

hearing from the member, the presiding officer determines whether or not the “point is well-taken” (i.e., a legitimate breach of procedure has or has not occurred) and takes such action as may be necessary.

- Members can vote in several ways. On routine matters, the simplest way is for the presiding officer to ask whether there is any objection to the motion being made among the voting members present. If there is no objection, the presiding officer declares the motion has passed. When a majority vote is called for, the presiding officer may ask for a voice vote (“aye” or “no”). If the voice vote is close, or in cases where a two-thirds majority is required, a show of hands will do. Balloting should be reserved for elections, special or irresolvable issues, or where required by the Lodge’s Bylaws or Standing Rules.





# The Lodge Board of Directors

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This section provides information for use by officers and other members of the board of directors in managing the affairs of the Lodge.

Additional information on the roles and responsibilities of Lodge officers is provided in the next chapter.

## Board Members

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Each Lodge's Board of Directors is charged with managing the operations, property (records and miscellaneous materials), and interests of the Lodge. The board works to ensure

that all Lodge affairs are conducted in a manner consistent with the National Order's standards and the Lodge's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Standing Rules.

Members of the Lodge board of directors are elected by the Lodge membership at the annual all-member meeting.

There must be at least four, and no more than twelve, members of the board of directors. The required four are the Lodge President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The remaining members of the board, if any, are elected by the membership.

Board members are elected and serve terms of office as provided for in the Lodge Bylaws and Standing Rules.

## **Each member of the board of directors must:**

- Understand and support the goals of the Lodge and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.
- Maintain familiarity with the concerns of Lodge members and non-members living in the community.
- Know the resources available within the Lodge, the community at large, and the National Order.
- Work to maintain the Lodge's compliance with the provisions of its Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Standing Rules, and the *Lifespark Lodge Handbook*.
- Support board members and board activity by being available to participate in regular and annual Lodge board meetings.
- Identify and develop future Lodge leaders.



# Board Responsibilities

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As the Lodge's leadership team, its board of directors is accountable to the membership across three areas of responsibility: planning, policy and administration.

## **As the planning body for the Lodge, the board:**

- Establishes the Lodge's annual goals, which meet member needs and support priorities established by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.
- Evaluates — on a continuing basis — the needs of Lodge members and of the community.
- Assesses the Lodge's progress toward achievement of its stated goals and develops plans for the future.

## **As the policy body for the Lodge, the board:**

- Establishes the Lodge's Standing Rules.
- Approves all Lodge policy positions to ensure the Lodge's positions are consistent with those of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.
- Resolves policy issues within the Lodge using the Lodge Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Articles of Incorporation.

## **The Board also controls all Lodge administration functions and activities, including:**

- Submission of the annual report and other state/local compliance-related materials, including the Lodge's annual Treasurer's, Activities' and Officer Update's reports to the National Order.

- Establishing a budget and maintaining accurate financial records and reports.
- Approving committee plans and Lodge community engagement and educational projects.
- Approving Lodge participation in other community programs and recreational activities, including special events and tours.
- Approving travel requests for Lodge members on behalf of the Lodge.

## Board Meetings

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The board participates in two types of meetings: regular board meetings (including its initial or “organization” meeting) and the annual Board meeting.

## Monthly Meetings

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The board meets on a regular basis, usually monthly (but at least six times a year), to address ongoing Lodge business and prepare for the business portion of the next Lodge membership meeting.

- The Lodge President presides at all board meetings.
- Board meetings follow a prepared agenda.
- Board meetings are conducted according to standard parliamentary procedure outlined in

*Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised).*

- Committee chairpersons may be invited to attend to share information or discuss proposed plans.

## The Annual Board Meeting

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The *Lifespark Lodge Bylaws* requires that an annual Board meeting be held just prior to and in preparation for the annual Lodge membership meeting.

The annual Lodge membership meeting is for purposes of electing officers, directors, and a Nominating Committee, as well as the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the membership.

## **At its annual meeting, the board of directors:**

- Receives final written committee reports.
- Receives and acts upon the outgoing treasurer's closing financial report.
- Ensures that all reports required by the National Order and the federal and state governments have been properly submitted.
- Reviews and disposes of all old business.
- Hears new business that requires attention.
- Ensures an orderly transition of records and responsibilities to the incoming board of directors.

# The “Organization” Meeting

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The first meeting of the board after its election at the annual Lodge membership meeting is known as its “organization” meeting. At this meeting, the new board of directors convenes to:

- Set the calendar for the Lodge year.
- Establish and publish the meeting schedule.
- Examine any old business or tabled item.
- Begin planning and goal-setting for the new Lodge year.

Additional information on organizing and conducting effective meetings is provided in the Successful Lodge Meetings Section of this handbook, and a typical meeting agenda for Lodge board and Lodge member meetings is provided in Appendix B: Sample Meeting Agenda.





# Lodge Leadership

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This section provides information on the critical role Lodge officers play in leading a successful Lodge.

The success or failure of each and every Lodge in the National Order of Lifespark Lodges can be traced to the quality of its leadership. Effective Lodge leaders plan, promote, and conduct events and sessions that meet the needs of members and also uphold the National Lifespark Lodge traditions of service and education.

Lodge officers and other board members have both the opportunity and the responsibility to guide the Lodge forward using sound yet dynamic leadership to the membership

and the community as a whole. To achieve success in this regard, the Lodge and, in particular, its Nominating Committee, should devote considerable attention to identifying officers and future candidates who offer the following.

### **Desired traits for officers:**

- The ability to organize the work of the Lodge, delegate assignments, and involve the full leadership team as appropriate, and evaluate the Lodge's progress.
- The dedication to devote the time and energy to the duties and functions required of the position to which they are elected or appointed.
- The willingness to learn the National Order of Lifespark Lodges' philosophy, policies, and practices.

Lodge officers set the tone for the Lodge, engage with the many levels of Lodge activity, and demonstrate understanding and a willingness to unite the diversity of individuals that make up the Lodge's membership.

### **Lodge officers should also possess:**

- A positive attitude towards others
- Tact
- Listening skills
- Sound judgment
- Respect for others
- A consensus-oriented approach to leadership

# President

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The President is the chief executive of the Lodge and, subject to the direction of the board of directors.

## **The president is charged with:**

- Supervising the business affairs and property of the Lodge.
- Presiding at all board of directors and Lodge meetings.
- Carrying out the decisions, actions, and resolutions of the board.
- Appointing chairpersons for the Lodge's standing committees (except the Nominating Committee).
- Serving as a member ex officio of all committees (except the Nominating Committee and the board of directors).

- Identifying and developing future Lodge leaders.

The new President becomes the steward of the Lodge's official documents and any supporting files and receives as well an inventory of Lodge assets and property.

### **These documents include:**

- Lifespark Lodge Lodge Handbook
- Current *Lodge Bylaws*
- Articles of Incorporation
- Lodge Charter
- Current Standing Rules

### **The Lodge President must also:**

- Become familiar with the content and intent of the Lodge's governance documents and understand the purpose of the Lifespark Lodge in wellness, education, and

community engagement.

- Learn the functions and goals within the Lodge volunteer leadership structure and the state office operating structure, which serves to assist the Lodge and provide a liaison between the Lodge and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.
- Use the *Lifespark Lodge Handbook* as a primary source of information about Lodge operations.
- Promote the Lodge's development of educational and community engagement programs and projects, using the resources of the National Order when appropriate.
- Submit official Lodge reports as required by the National Order and relevant state and local governments.
- Be familiar with the publications and resources available to Lodge officers and committee chairpersons.

- Guide the orientation and training of officers and committee chairpersons.

In establishing working relationships with the board of directors, other Lodge officers, and committee members to implement the yearly schedule of meetings, programs and events...

### **It is important that the President:**

- Involve the entire membership in the activities of the Lodge.
- Select committee chairpersons with care, seeking individuals best qualified to fulfill the various assignments.
- Appoint committees that are large enough to function adequately and creatively.
- Distribute the Lifespark Lodge Lodge Handbook and other ap-



propriate information to officers, board members, and committee chairpersons.

- Delegate authority to officers and committee chairpersons rather than do every job yourself.
- Create ad hoc committees to deal with new projects and emerging community needs.
- Encourage your committee chairpersons to work with and share information with other committees.
- Maintain an inventory of the Lodge's official documents and property to help ensure complete transfer of records to the succeeding President.
- Encourage committee chairpersons to maintain accurate records of their deliberations and arrange for these records to be transferred to their successors at the installation ceremony for new Lodge officers.

- Be generous and sincere with compliments for jobs well done by officers, committees, and members.

## **Guidelines for preparing a meeting agenda include:**

- Get started well before the meeting.
- Include the length of time to be allotted for each item and provide a copy for the Secretary.
- Allow adequate time for discussion, particularly when longer reports may be necessary on timely topics such as issues directly impacting the Lodge and its community.
- Confer with the program committee chairperson. Have a clear understanding of the time needed for the guest speaker or for the special program presentation. Be ready to adjust the agenda if the

program would be better presented earlier or later than customary.

- Hold to the agenda, avoiding extended discussions. Close topics diplomatically to proceed with the scheduled agenda. Invite members to remain after the meeting is adjourned to continue their discussion.
- Review parliamentary procedure in *Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)*. Basic information on meetings and procedure is also provided in Section 1 of this handbook.
- Preside with ease and demonstrate interest and concern.
- Remain impartial in all proceedings.

Studying a sample agenda can be useful in planning and conducting both Board and all-member meetings. A sample Board Meeting Agenda is presented in Appendix B.

## Vice President

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Learning and preparing to serve as a future Lodge President (see above) is the primary goal of the Vice President.

The Vice President also assists the President and in that role is often assigned leadership of important Lodge functions or committee work.

The Vice President must be prepared to step in and perform the duties of the President in his or her absence.

A Lodge may have more than one Vice President.

# Secretary

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The Lodge Secretary is charged with recording the business and history of the Lodge in the Lodge minutes.

The Secretary also prepares and receives Lodge correspondence on behalf of the board of directors and the Lodge officers.

In large Lodges where the expectation and workload of the Secretary is substantial, the Lodge may consider having both a "Recording Secretary" and a "Correspondence Secretary."

On taking office, the Secretary receives and is entrusted with safeguarding the Lodge minutes and correspondence files.

**Ability, dedication, and knowledge are all essential attributes of the Lodge Secretary, including:**

- The ability to organize the records of the Lodge, to record assignments, and to provide information that may be used to evaluate the Lodge's progress.
- Dedication to the office of Secretary and to the membership in documenting the meetings and other actions of the Lodge.
- Willingness to learn the National Order of Lifespark Lodges' philosophy, policies, and practices in serving the President, board of directors, and membership at large.

All Lodge correspondence should be prepared on official Lodge stationery using established business correspondence techniques. Appendix C contains a sample of meeting minutes that can serve as a model for the Lodge Secretary. Further information on the responsibilities of an organization's Secretary is available at most libraries.

## Treasurer

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The Treasurer is an office of trust with many responsibilities in protecting the interests of the Lodge in compliance with the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, government regulations and National Order of Lifespark Lodges policies that must be observed. The duties are exacting, but they need not be tedious. Section 6 of this handbook provides accounting guidelines for use by the Lodge

Treasurer in maintaining the financial records needed to prepare the required reports.

Each incorporated Lifespark Lodge is granted federal income tax exemption under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Service Code by a group exemption ruling issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to the national Association, exempting from federal income tax those Lodges that comply with the guidelines established by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges which has been ruled exempt from federal income tax under the same section of the IRS Code. It is imperative that these rulings are not jeopardized.

Accounting procedures and financial records need not be complex to ensure continuance of the Lodge exemption, but the IRS reporting requirements must be satisfied.



## **Therefore, it is essential that:**

- The accounting year begins on January 1 and ends on December 31.
- All Lodge accounts are accurate and complete.
- All accounts are maintained in a uniform manner to meet annual audit requirements and provide the information needed for reports.

The National Order will also handle any IRS correspondence the Lodge may receive concerning the annual return, but the IRS correspondence must be immediately forwarded to: The National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

Occasionally, some Lodges may be individually notified of additional procedures not discussed in this

handbook that must be implemented to comply with IRS requirements and/or participate in the annual group returns. However, such notices can be prevented in many instances if the forms and procedures described in this handbook are consistently used to maintain complete, accurate financial records and to prepare the annual National Order of Lifespark Lodges Lodge Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer holds an office of trust with many responsibilities to protect the interests of the Lodge and comply with the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, government regulations, and National Order policies that must be observed. The duties are exacting, but they need not be tedious. This section suggests simple procedures to minimize the time entailed in maintaining the financial records needed to prepare the required reports.

Treasurer's Reports are sent to each Lodge in November. They must be completed and returned to the National Order office within the time specified in the Lodge Treasurer's Report instructions. All reports must be submitted only on the form provided. The entries required for each section of the report include but are not limited to the full name and number of the Lodge. Record cash on hand that was not deposited or accounted for as petty cash on January 1 of the reporting year. Include January 1 checking and savings account balances along with an accurate record of receipts and disbursements.

The benefits that accrue by use of uniform accounting and reporting methods are important to ensuring the healthy growth of the Lifespark Lodges. It is recognized that operations vary widely and that factors unique to some Lodges may not

be included in the Lifespark Lodge Handbook. Requests for further clarification of the accounting and reporting procedures should be directed to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

Please retain this guide and ensure that it is included with the records that the Lodge maintains and passes on to the next elected treasurer.



# Committees and Their Functions

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Committees play a vital role in moving the work of the Lodge and the National Order of Lodges. This section provides an introduction to the Lodge's key committee functions and to the roles and responsibilities of committee chairpersons and members.

While every Lodge must have a Nominating Committee, they also have the option of establishing standing committees such as:

- Membership
- Public Relations
- Educational Programs
- Community Engagement

Other committees may be established as determined by the President or the board of directors. Committees should have a minimum of three members, who need not be Lodge officers or board members.

Chairpersons for the standing committees are appointed by the Lodge President, with the exception of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee chairperson is elected by the full Lodge membership; or by the members of the Nominating Committee itself; or by board approval, as determined by the Lodge.

Committee officers (the chairperson or co-chairperson, for example) shall hold office for a term of one year. Each officer shall hold office until a successor is elected and has been qualified. A committee officer may serve only two consecutive years in the same office.

## General Responsibilities of Committee Chairpersons:

- Organize the work of the committee.
- Establish a committee meeting schedule.
- Preside at committee meetings and coordinate members' tasks and schedules.
- Report to the entire Lodge from time to time, either through Lodge newsletters or presentations at meetings.
- Share the committee plans and project reports with the Lodge President and board of directors for their consideration and approval.
- Collaborate with other committee chairpersons.
- Identify and develop future leaders for the committee and the Lodge as a whole.



## **General Responsibilities for Committee Members**

- Assist the chairperson in developing a plan for the committee.
- Take on tasks and projects as assigned.
- Maintain minutes of committee meetings for the committee's permanent record.
- Represent the goals and work of the committee to the membership with energy and enthusiasm.

# Membership Committee

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The purpose of the Membership Committee is to build the membership of the Lodge and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges by pointing out the advantages and benefits available to members.

The committee also receives and approves applications from individuals wishing to become members of the Lodge. The Membership Committee has a broad involvement and a considerable impact on Lodge vitality.

The Membership Committee shall receive and approve applications from individuals wishing to become members of the Lodge and shall be alert to build the membership of The National Order of Lifespark Lodges and their local Lodge.

## The Membership Committee also:

- Determines, with the board of directors, a percentage increase as an annual membership recruitment goal.
- Collaborates with the Public Relations, Program, and Community Services committee chairpersons in developing comprehensive membership promotion plans and activities involving the Lodge's full resources.
- Supervises the expenditure of funds, if any are allocated by the Lodge's board of directors, for membership promotion.
- Maintains the record of members and guests at each meeting. A Lodge may specify requirements for meeting attendance in its Standing Rules. However, the Lodge should remember that many who value their Lodge

membership cannot attend regularly due to unforeseen circumstances.

- Maintains the Lodge membership list and collects annual Lodge dues.
- The Lodge's membership year should be concurrent with the calendar year. The amount of dues to be collected must be as stated in the Lodge Bylaws. Dues may be collected on an annual or semi-annual basis. The method of collection is at the discretion of the Lodge and may be mailed or collected at Lodge meetings. All dues must be turned over to the Lodge treasurer, entered into the Lodge records and books of accounts, and accurately and fully accounted for by the Lodge treasurer.
- Verifies membership eligibility in accordance with the Lodge Bylaws, Standing Rules, and

the information provided below. Membership eligibility includes being a member in good standing of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. Verification is accomplished by having new Lodge members show their national membership emblem. The membership number must be recorded along with the applicant's name, address, and telephone number.

- A member's spouse can also join but must pay separate dues as an individual member of the Lodge. Regardless of age, the spouse enjoys full Lodge member rights, including the right to vote, hold office, and serve as a committee chairperson.
- Each Lodge must protect membership lists and records from release or distribution. Except as needed to facilitate Lodge operations — by Lodge officers, committee chairpersons, appoint-

ed volunteer leaders or National Order staff — the lists may not be released or published. In no instance may they be used for commercial purposes.

- Each Lodge must decide whether to establish a Lodge associate membership category for National associate members who want to join the local Lodge. Associate members are those persons under 50 years of age who are associate members in good standing of the National Order.
- Membership in more than one Lodge is discouraged. This practice overcrowds some Lodges, thereby excluding potential members. The size of the Lodge should be adequate for it to function with a full complement of officers, directors, committee members, and chairpersons. When the membership exceeds a reasonable size, the Lodge may

seek assistance in the organization of additional Lodges.

- Diversity is the ongoing pursuit of adapting to organizational change through accepting, including, and valuing the skills that all people bring to helping achieve a vision, mission, and related goals, without bias toward any individual or group difference. All National Order members will receive equal opportunity and treatment throughout recruitment, appointment, training, and service. There will be no discrimination based on age, economic status, gender, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental abilities, race, sexual orientation, or religion.

## Wellness Committee

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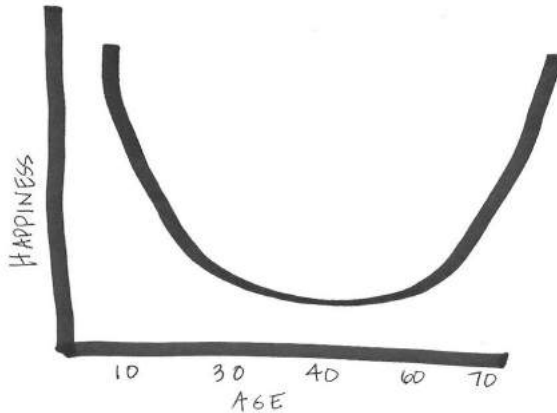
The Wellness Committee, working with the Program and Community Service committees, shall be alert to relevant information and identify appropriate opportunities for improving member and community awareness of, and engagement in, wellness-oriented practices and activities. In particular, the Wellness Committee makes use of the Life Experience model developed by Joel Theisen and Lifespark. This model helps people improve their health, happiness, and independence through the process of creating and refining a Life Plan. Living the good life takes more than good intentions -- it requires a plan for getting there.

*The Good Life*, by Dr. Bill Thomas, presents this approach to wellness in detail. The excerpts below review the Seven Elements of Well-Being and the



Life Experience method for creating a useful Life Plan.

We are taught from a young age to treasure youth's virtues. Most people also learn to love, and support, their older relatives. Rarely, if ever, are we encouraged to admire older people, and wish to be like them. Growing old in a society that despises aging can be difficult. This is unfortunate because research on happiness shows that, around the world, growing older brings us closer to the life we want to live, and the person we want to be.



The limitations and difficulties associated with aging can also be accompanied by a dawning awareness of one's own mortality. Paradoxically, this insight can also lead to newfound reservoirs of resilience, joy, and satisfaction. Life can certainly get harder as we get older, but it can also get better.

This second coming of age and new lease on happiness is far from automatic. Many older people struggle, especially those who remain attached to the person they used to be and lose sight of the person they can still become. The wife of a world-class athlete relates the story of her husband complaining he can't run as fast or jump as high as he used to. She responded, "It's true you can't but you know what? You're a much nicer person than you used to be." Aging enabled him to be less competitive and more compassionate.

Throughout human history, people have tried to describe the most important elements of a good life. None of these lists have included being able to run fast or jump high, because athletic ability is not among the things that matter most. Love matters. Friendship matters. A giving spirit matters. An understanding of one's own failings and frailty matters. When viewed from the vantage point of age we can see how important the simple things are.

What matters most? Different people will offer different answers but the seven elements listed below offer a good place to start when searching for the good life -- no matter how young or old we may be.

- Belonging
- Health
- Home
- Money

- Thinking
- Being
- Purpose

## Discovery

From our first day to our last we are connected to others. Our family teaches us how to live and how to love. For a small number of us, those lessons are all we need to thrive. Most of us, however, also need our friends, our teachers, and our mentors to help us find our way. It's about finding our way forward. Making a plan for our life is just another step forward on this journey. The process always begins with a conversation with someone we trust. Conversation leads us to the less visited corners of our lifelong hopes and dreams.

The lives we live are journeys of discovery.

We make plans because we sense a gap between the way things are and the way we want them to be. Something's not right and we feel a need to fix it. But what exactly is it that needs fixing? Only you know. Only you can decide where the next chapter of your life will take you, and how you will get there.

## Prioritize

It's been said that "to live is to choose" But, choosing is difficult. Every time we say "yes" to one possibility we must say "no" to another. When we are traveling in a car we choose the route to our destination but we have access to electronic maps, street signs, and friendly locals who can assure us, "it's straight through three lights and then take the left." As we get older, we find there are fewer maps, fewer signs, and fewer people who can help us find our way.

It is easy to get sidetracked, confused and discouraged if we don't take time to slow down, and get clear. Fortunately, there is a method for examining and ranking the kinds of goals that make Life Plans work. The goals best suited to helping us move forward in our lives are SMART. In other words, they are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Actionable
- Realistic, and have a
- Timeline

As your priorities become clear, it gets easier to say "yes" and "no" to new possibilities.

## Empower

Who's got the power? You've got the power! This is a great slogan for a bumper sticker but, when it gets down to it, many times we feel like we

don't have any power at all. We all get discouraged. We all have moments of doubt when we ask ourselves "What can I really do?" These feelings are an open invitation to worry and anxiety and there is already far too much worry and anxiety in the world.

To have power, and to be powerful, is to be connected, at a very deep level, to the knowledge and tools we need to live in the place and manner of our own choosing. Among the most disempowered people in America are people without housing who must struggle every day to find food and shelter. If you are fortunate enough to have food and shelter, it's time to empower yourself by gaining access to what you need to live the life you want. This is not a selfish act. Power, used wisely, is good. People you love need your power and people less fortunate than you can benefit from your power.

## Ignite

When we accept the challenge of working toward a SMART goal, something changes inside of us. Putting ourselves “on the record” that we are going to make a change is a very big deal and leads us to stop wishing and start acting. Picking a goal, and working toward it, has been shown to reduce negative emotions and foster positive feelings about ourselves, and others. Experts in the field of human psychology have found that people who continue to focus on achieving specific goals also get better at sustaining those changes. These sparks can, and often do, ignite significant and unexpected personal growth.

Growth and change arrive together and the farther we progress on our journey toward the life we want to live, the more we need to learn. Personal growth requires con-



tinuous access to new and different knowledge and tools. When the poet Robert Browning wrote, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" he was reminding us it is noble to strive for a goal that isn't easily attainable. But this is not a summons to foolhardy behavior. Instead, Browning is giving us permission to practice perseverance in pursuit of success and accept defeat with grace and humility.

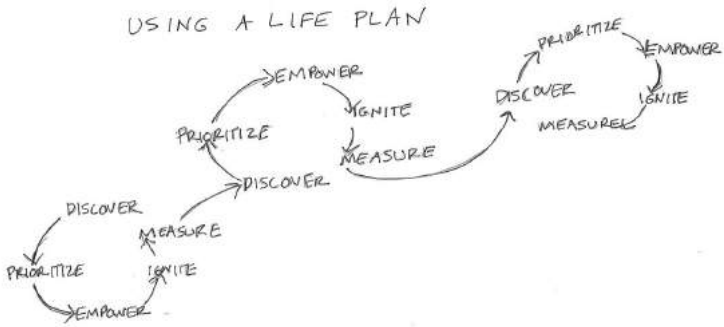
## Measure

We begin making measurements at a very early age and don't stop until we take our last breath. The human eye can distinguish between 10 million colors. We can also detect minute differences in size and weight. Humans gather and use measurements all day, every day -- except when it comes to changing how we are living. It too often seems that satisfaction with life,

or the lack thereof, is an entirely subjective thing. It isn't.

When we accept the challenge of creating a Life Plan, and have the conversations we need to have to discover what matters most to us, new possibilities begin to emerge. General feelings resolve into specific goals which can then be weighed, one against the other. When we know what we want, the things we need to be successful also come into focus. Every journey has its own, specific, requirements for knowledge, and tools.

Then comes the greatest question of all: "Am I moving closer to, or farther away from, my chosen destination?" This question cannot be answered without reliable measurements and every single measurement is a discovery in itself. This is how the great wheel of the Life Plan turns:



This is how we make a life worth living for ourselves, and for others. The Wellness Committee is dedicated to helping people use these insights to create greater well-being for themselves and for others.

# Nominating Committee

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The Nominating Committee lies at the heart of the Lodge's ongoing responsibility to identify and recruit qualified people as candidates for elective Lodge offices. The Nominating Committee consists of at least three members elected by the membership at the annual meeting. To properly perform its duties, it is recommended that the Nominating Committee hold at least three (3) meetings. The first meeting should be used to establish the general rules of procedure to be followed by this committee. The committee should interview all members desiring to be nominated prior to deciding who will be nominated. All actions of the Nominating Committee shall be by majority vote.

The Nominating Committee's primary responsibility is to select at

least one (1) member for each of the elective offices to be filled. Any nomination must be based upon the member's qualifications, their desire to run for office and their availability to serve. The committee may nominate more than one (1) member for a particular office for the membership's consideration. The committee may also on its own consider and recommend qualified candidates. To provide for open and candid discussions regarding the qualifications of members desiring to be nominated for office, comments made by committee members during meetings of the Nominating Committee should be held in the strictest of confidence.

Staggered terms are recommended and should be reflected in the Lodge's Standing Rules. Vacancies that may occur should be filled by holding a special election. In addition, the Nominating Committee:

- Receives from the board a list of the positions to be filled at the next Lodge election.
- Develops a list of at least two prospective candidates for each vacancy.
- Talks informally with the prospective candidates to get to know them.
- Meets to review and discuss potential nominees.
- Conducts recruitment interviews with each nominee in person.
- Makes the final selection of persons to be included on the slate of officers.
- Prepares the slate of nominations to be presented.
- Presents the slate of nominations to the President, Board of Directors, and the Lodge membership at least one month before the election. Nominees for Lodge office must be a

member of both the National Order and the local Lodge, and must agree to serve in the position.

## Program Committee

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The Program Committee develops and organizes all of the Lodge's programs, whether the programs take place during Lodge meetings or as special events in the community. The Program Committee shall arrange for stimulating and educational Lodge program presentations related to a variety of subjects and special interests. The Committee should coordinate its activities closely with the President, other officers and committee chairpersons. Members of this committee are recruited by the Program Committee chairperson. Committee members serve one-year terms, coinciding with the President's term of office. Ideally, there would be one member per program or activity, but this is not a requirement.



## **Lodges provide three types of programs:**

- Lodge Meeting Programs are brief, 15-20 minute presentations included as a part of the regular Lodge meeting. These programs are designed to inform Lodge members about a wide variety of topics. The presentation may be by a guest speaker or a Lodge member with knowledge of the topic.
- Member Education Programs include workshops or seminars scheduled either in conjunction with the Lodge meeting or at another convenient time. They require 60-90 minutes or more to provide in-depth education on topics of importance to members.
- Community Programs are workshops, seminars, or other events sponsored by the Lodge for the public. These programs have

the added element of providing opportunities to work with the Membership, Public Relations, and Community Services committees to create interest in becoming members of the Lodge.

Possibilities for programs are as various and interesting as the interests of the members themselves. The Program Committee is limited only by its imagination and the possibilities are endless. Resources available to assist the committee in identifying subjects and program opportunities include: local non-profits, professional directories, and community events calendars.

## **The Program Committee:**

- Organizes and schedules speakers and program topics for the year.
- Follows the guidelines included in

the Lifespark *Lodge Bylaws* when planning these programs. These Bylaws state that:

- The Lodge "...shall not independently arrange for, or offer to Lodge members, any commodities or benefits already offered by the National Order to its members..."
- "Neither the Lodge nor any committee, subdivision, director, officer, agency, representative, or employee of the Lodge shall permit or suffer to hold himself or herself out as an agent or solicitor of any service offered by the National Order to its members."
- Presentations by outside organizations must be educational and general in nature. They cannot involve specific product or service recommendations, marketing, or other commercial efforts by one or more vendors, or campaigning by political candidates or individ-

uals personally running for public office of any kind.

## **In support of these efforts the Program Committee will:**

- Survey the membership and work with other committees to identify and stay in touch with their needs and interests.
- Maintain a resource list containing items helpful to planning Lodge programs.
- Determine the appropriate length of each program and time of presentation.
- Work with the Lodge treasurer to develop a budget for the year's programs.
- Ensure that programs are held in accessible locations.

# Community Engagement Committee

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The Community Engagement Committee leads the Lodge's effort to identify and respond to important social needs in the community. The focus of the committee has a two-point charge:

- address community needs;
- cultivate meaningful and rewarding opportunities for members to build relationships and improve the lives of others.

The Community Services Committee identifies essential social needs or projects in the community and then stimulates appropriate Lodge involvement and the provision of resources needed to successfully complete these projects.

By promoting active community engagement, the Lodge achieves visibility in the local community and embodies the National Order motto, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." The Community Services Committee develops and submits for approval to the Lodge's board of directors a proposed plan for programs and projects the Lodge will conduct throughout the year. Part of the Lodge's service work will include responding to the community outreach efforts of other organizations. While Lodges select from a wide range of possibilities,

**Community engagement projects usually fall into one of three broad, overlapping categories:**

- Programs that foster reciprocity.
- Helping hands programs that provide aid to assist individuals in

maintaining their independence. These include transportation programs and friendly visits, as well as taking on shopping or household chores.

- Educational Programs which offer up-to-date information on topics of interest to older people and to the community at large.

### **Some important notes about development fundraising. When engaging with the community, remember:**

- It must be legal. Every fundraising project must be approved by the Lodge's board of directors and must conform to local and state laws.
- It may be taxed. Generally, Lodges are not exempt from state sales taxes. Lodges must submit required payments to their state revenue office.

- It is not tax-deductible. Monetary and non-monetary donations to the Lodges by individuals are not tax-deductible to the donor. However, corporations making donations should be notified that since donations may be deductible as business expenses, they should check with their tax advisors.
- An important note on grant-seeking: Lodges may not qualify for certain opportunities. Lifespark Lodges are organized as a social welfare organization Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. Such organizations are not eligible to apply for grants reserved for “charitable organizations” created under Section 501(c)(3). Prior to pursuing or applying for a grant, Lodges must seek guidance from the National Order.



# Public Relations Committee

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The Public Relations Committee can provide valuable support for the work of the Lodge and its committees by assisting in the development and implementation of activities designed to:

- Function as a liaison between the various committees of the Lodge and the news media, and it shall publicize in the community the purposes, goals, role, activities, and projects of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.
- Keep the members informed and involved in the Lodge's activities.
- Publicize and promote in the community the programs and projects of the Lodge and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

Professional experience in the area of communications is helpful, though not required. Commitment and creativity are important, however.

Public Relations Committee members, particularly the chairperson, should be thoroughly familiar with Lodge activities and the wealth of talent among the membership (including but not limited to artists, writers and speakers).

All participating members should be willing to learn to work with media people and information outlets and seek guidance from the National Order when needed.

## The Public Relations Committee is charged with:

- Knowing and building relationships with the media outlets in the Lodge's area.
- Identifying public relations opportunities for the Lodge.
- Providing accurate and timely information on the Lodge and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.
- Answering questions posed by editors and reporters, such as "What does the Lifespark Lodge do?"
- Answering questions posed by the audience being addressed, such as "What's in it for me?"
- Coordinating the publication of the Lodge newsletter.
- Coordinating Lodge displays at community events.
- Maintaining Lodge displays in community facilities such as

libraries, senior centers, shopping malls, etc.

- Coordinating the Lodge's speakers' bureau, if there is one.
- Maintaining the Lodge's media scrapbook, which serves as a record of the public history of the Lodge and provides background information for future news releases.



# The Lifespark Lodge Bylaws

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## ARTICLE I: OFFICES

The principal office of the Lifespark Lodge #0000 (hereinafter referred to as "Lodge") is located at [Address]. The official address of the Lodge is [Address]

## ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The Lodge is a friendly society whose purpose is to promote fellowship, service, health and wellness among its members and in the surrounding community. Lodges exist to maximize member engagement with a broad menu of community service

opportunities, educational activities and shared experiences. The Lodge strives to add value for members by maximizing opportunities for self-realization, personal growth and life-enriching fellowship and support. It seeks to demonstrate the full value of the contributions and human potential of older people and encourages participation in contemporary life and engagement with issues of public concern.

# ARTICLE III: MEMBERS

## Section 1: Classes and Dues

There shall be three classes of members of the Lodge: individual, national organization and associate.

- Individual members shall be persons:
  - who are members in good standing of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, their spouse/partner; and
  - who pay in advance the annual Lodge membership dues as prescribed by the Board of Directors. Failure of any individual member to maintain membership in good standing in the National Order of Lifespark Lodges shall automatically result in the termination of such individual's membership in the Lodge and such



individual's spouse/partner membership, when based on such individual's membership.

- The national organization member shall be the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.
- Associate members of the Lodge shall be any associate members (persons who are less than 60 years of age) in good standing of National Order of Lifespark Lodges who care to join. Associate members of the Lodge shall have the same rights as individual members, including the right to vote and hold elective office, and shall be subject to the payment of dues. The term "individual member" as used in these Bylaws shall be deemed to include associate members.

## Section 2: Voting Rights

- Each individual member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members.
- Except as otherwise provided in Article IX of these Bylaws, the national organization member, The National Order of Lifespark Lodges, shall have the right to vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members relating to:
  - the amendment of the Articles of Incorporation of the Lodge;
  - a liquidation, dissolution, merger or consolidation involving the Lodge; and
  - the sale, exchange, mortgage, pledge, or other disposition of all, or substantially all, the assets and property of the Lodge.
  - The affirmative vote of the

national organization member shall be necessary to decide any matter upon which the national organization member is entitled to vote.

# ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

## Section 1: Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Lodge shall be held on such dates as shall be determined by the Board of Directors of the Lodge and announced to the individual members at a Lodge meeting.

## Section 2: Annual Meetings

The annual meeting of the members of the Lodge shall be held in the month of November on a date and at a time and place determined by the Board of Directors, for the purpose of electing officers and directors and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

### **Section 3: Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the members may be called at any time by the President and shall be called by the President or the Secretary at the written request of a majority of the Board of Directors or Officers or at the request in writing of a majority of the individual members.

### **Section 4: Place of Meetings**

Meetings of the members are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the [Senior Living Community location] OR at such other place as the Board of Directors may select and designate in the notice of such meeting.

## **Section 5: Notice of Meetings**

Notice of the annual and special meetings of members, stating the purpose for which the meeting is called and the time and place it is to be held, shall be delivered normally by regular distribution of the monthly Lodge newsletter not less than 10 days before any special meeting and not less than 30 nor more than 50 days before any annual meeting, in accordance with Article III, Section 2, of these Bylaws, and for any meeting called after recognition of the Lodge has been withdrawn or suspended in accordance with Article IX of these Bylaws.

## **Section 6: Quorum**

A quorum shall be considered to be the number of voting members present at any meeting of the Lodge.

# ARTICLE V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Section 1: Number, Election, and Term of Office

- The number of directors of the Lodge, including the officers listed in (B) below, shall be in proportion to the overall size and needs of the Lodge and shall consist of not less than four as shall be determined by the Board of Directors prior to the Lodge meeting that receives the report of the Nominating Committee.
- The following officers of the Lodge shall be directors for a term coterminous with their respective terms of office: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- The remaining members of the

Board of the Lodge shall be elected from among the individual members in good standing of the Lodge by the vote of a majority of the members present in person and entitled to vote at the annual meeting of the members, or as hereinafter provided. Each director shall hold office for a three-year term.

- Any board member may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Lodge members present whenever, in its judgment, the best interests of the Lodge or the National Order of Lifespark Lodges would be served thereby.

## **Section 2: Duties and Powers**

The Board shall be responsible for the control and management of the affairs, property and interests of the Lodge; for keeping the national



organization member informed of all activities of the Lodge; for complying with all reporting requirements of the national organization member; for guiding the Lodge so that the various provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, including the purposes for which the Lodge was organized set forth therein, are complied with; and for making recommendations and suggesting programs.

### **Section 3: Meetings of the Board**

Meetings of the Board shall be held at least six times each year as scheduled or when called by the President or by one third of the number of directors, at such time and place as may be specified in the notice thereof. Normally, the Board of Directors meets on the first Tuesday of each month.

## **Section 4: Notice**

Notice of any meeting of the Board of Directors normally shall be given at least five days in advance.

## **Section 5: Quorum and Voting**

A majority of the directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the act of a majority of the directors present at any meetings at which there is a quorum present shall be the act of the Board of Directors, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by these Bylaws.

Committee Chairs shall be allowed full parliamentary privileges including voting unless there is an objection by any elected Board member.

## **Section 6: Vacancies**

Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors shall be filled, for the unexpired portion of the term, by a majority vote of the remaining directors though less than a quorum.

## **Section 7: Absence from Meetings**

Any member of the Board who shall be absent from three consecutive meetings without adequate excuse acceptable to the Board shall be deemed to have resigned from the Board.

# ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

## Section 1: Officers

The officers of the Lodge shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers as the Board may from time to time deem advisable. Only Lodge members whose dues are paid and in good standing may be considered for elective office. To be an elected officer of a Lodge, the officer must be a member of that Lodge.

## Section 2: Election, Term, Vacancies, and Removal

The officers of the Lodge shall be elected by the members at the annual meeting of members. The officers shall hold office for a term of one year. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in any one (1) office unless a dispensation

is obtained from the state's Governor General. A dispensation will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and for compelling reasons. Any member desiring to run for an elective office shall submit his name to the Nominating Committee at least one (1) week prior to the date the Nominating Committee is required to make its report at a regular/general membership meeting. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the Board, subject to approval of the members. Any officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Lodge members present whenever, in its judgment, the best interests of the Lodge or the National Order of Lifespark Lodges would be served thereby.

### **Section 3: President**

The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Lodge and, subject to the direction of the Board of

Directors, shall supervise and control all of the business, affairs, and property of the Lodge and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Board are carried into effect. The President shall preside at all meetings of the members and of the Board and shall appoint all chairpersons of committees, except the chairperson of the Nominating Committee. The President shall by virtue of the office be a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

### **Section 4: Vice President**

In the absence of the President or in the event of an inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. The Vice President shall perform such other duties and have such other powers as the Board may from time to time prescribe.

## Section 5: Secretary

The Secretary shall record all the proceedings of the meetings of the Board and of the members in an electronic form suitable for publishing in the Lodge newsletter, on the Lodge website, and for long-term storage and retrieval. The Secretary shall give or cause to be given notice of all meetings for which notice is required by these Bylaws and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board or President, under whose supervision the Secretary shall be. If required by the law of the state of incorporation, a corporate seal for the Lodge shall be obtained. The Secretary shall have custody of such seal, and the Secretary shall have authority to affix the same to any instrument requiring it, and when so affixed it may be attested by the signature of the Secretary. The Board may give general authority to any other officer to affix the seal of the Lodge and to attest the fixing by that officer's signature.

## Section 6: Treasurer

The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of all funds and securities of the Lodge and all funds or securities in any way generated, collected or obtained in connection with Lodge activities, and the Treasurer shall be responsible for such funds and securities and the receipt and disbursement thereof. The Treasurer shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the Lodge and shall deposit all moneys and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the Lodge in such depositories as may be designated by the Board. The Treasurer shall disburse funds of the Lodge as may be ordered by the Board, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and shall render to the President and the Board at its monthly meeting, or when the Board or the President so requires, an accounting of all the Treasurer's trans-



actions and of the financial condition of the Lodge, and a full financial report, based on the books and the accounts audited annually by a certified or other public accountant or an auditing committee.

## **Section 7: Checks and Bond**

The President, Vice President, Treasurer or any other officer designated by the Board shall be authorized to sign checks and drafts. When the average amount of Lodge funds on hand at month's end exceeds \$1,000, the Lodge's Board of Directors should determine whether having a fidelity bond is a necessary component of the Lodge's procedures for accountability and safeguarding of Lodge funds.

# ARTICLE VII- COMMITTEES

## Section 1: Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee might be the most important committee of the Lodge. The long-term success of the Lodge depends to a great extent on this committee nominating good officer candidates to the membership. Members of the Nominating Committee should not consider this duty lightly and careful evaluation should be given to individual qualifications (with particular emphasis on leadership ability), and the willingness of each individual to contribute his time and effort to the best interests of the Lodge. The Nominating Committee shall consist of directors of the Board currently serving the third year of

their three-year term. The committee shall select a chairperson from its three members. The Committee shall prepare a slate of officers and directors and submit the list for consideration by the Lodge members one month prior to the election.

## **Section 2: Wellness Committee**

The Wellness Committee, working with the Program and Community Service committees, shall be alert to relevant information and identify appropriate opportunities for improving member and community awareness of, and engagement in, wellness-oriented practices and activities. In particular, the Wellness Committee makes use of the Life Experience model developed by Joel Theisen and Lifespark. This model helps people improve their health, happiness, and independence through the process of creating and refining a Life Plan. Each Lodge's

Weaver will be a member of the Wellness Committee.

### **Section 3: Committees of Directors**

The Board may appoint such other committees of directors as may be required. Such committees should consist of three or more directors, shall have such powers of the Board as shall be set forth in the resolution establishing such committees and shall make recommendations to the Board and perform such other services as the Board may require, but they shall not have authority to modify any action taken by the Board.

### **Section 4: Standing and Other Committees**

The Board of Directors may create standing committees as deemed important to the work of the

Lodge. The President shall appoint a chairperson for each standing committee to serve a 1-year term and may appoint other members of standing committees as appropriate to the functions of the committee. Standing committees shall be designated in a public manner such as on the Lodge website and shall abide by duties and responsibilities as published annually in the Lodge Program of Activities.

## ARTICLE VIII: LODGE RESTRICTIONS

The National Order of Lifespark Lodges and the Lodge are, and are intended to remain, independent organizations devoted to furthering the goal of fostering health and wellness and to carrying out the purposes set forth in Article II of these *Lodge Bylaws*. The Lodge's activities shall be conducted with the utmost observance of ethical standards and propriety of conduct. The Lodge shall not independently arrange for or offer to Lodge members any commodities or services already offered by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges to its members. Such activities, if carried on by the Lodge, would diminish the strength of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, whose responsibility to the total membership the Lodge

must support. Neither the Lodge nor any committee, subdivision, director, officer, agent, representative or employee of the Lodge shall permit or suffer or hold himself or herself out as an agent or solicitor of any service offered by the National Order of Lifes-park Lodges to its members, including but not limited to, travel, or any other service or commodity.

## ARTICLE IX: WITHDRAWAL OF LODGE RECOGNITION AND DISSOLUTION

The Lodge shall be organized and operated in conformity with the purposes set forth in Article II of these Lifespark Lodge *Lodge Bylaws* and the policies and standards formulated by the Board of Directors of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. The Board of Directors of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges may withdraw or suspend recognition of the Lodge as a local lodge belonging to the National Order for:

- recurrent failure to conform to the policies and standards of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges; or
- a failure of the Lodge to comply with any of the provi-



sions contained in the Articles of Incorporation of the Lodge or these Bylaws.

Such recognition shall be withdrawn or suspended only after investigation of the situation by the Board of Directors of the Lifespark Lodge. Withdrawal or suspension of recognition shall become effective immediately upon the decision by the Board of Directors. In the event recognition is withdrawn or suspended, the Lodge shall have an opportunity to be heard by a committee of the Board of Directors. In the event recognition is withdrawn or suspended, all funds and other property held by the Lodge shall be paid over to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges to be distributed to the Good Life Foundation, or for other charitable purposes at the discretion of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

## ARTICLE X: ORGANIZATIONS OR ASSOCIATIONS

Holding office or being a director in another organization or association whose objectives and purposes are similar or related to those of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges may lead to conflict with the responsibilities to the Lodge and to the National Order of a Lodge officer or director. To avoid such conflict, a Lodge officer or director shall first obtain consent of the Lodge and of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges (expressly or through written policy) to such service in another organization or association. Failure to comply with the provisions of this article shall be deemed the equivalent of, and shall constitute, the resignation of such person as an officer or director of the Lodge.

## ARTICLE XI: RULES OF ORDER

All proceedings of the Lodge shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised)* except when in conflict with these Bylaws.

## ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Bylaws shall be approved by the Board of Directors.  
Adopted the 5th day of January, 2021

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lodge President





# Some Frequently Asked Questions

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We want to make sure all Lifes-park Lodges have all the information they need to help strengthen their communities and deliver real value for Lodge members.

Sometimes questions arise that may not be addressed in the materials the National Order provides to its Lodges.

Following are some answers to some frequently asked questions. We hope they help.

## Discounts

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*Is it OK for us to arrange discounts directly with companies and other organizations?*

We understand many Lodges use group discounts to stretch the value of their dollars. These arrangements are fine as long as:

- It is clear that this is a one-time or occasional event made possible by your Lodge and does not appear to be a National Order of Lifespark Lodges-endorsed discount.
- Any materials you use to promote the event or opportunity do not showcase the commercial entity or appear to be endorsing or promoting that entity. It's the event you're promoting, not the company.

# Politics

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*Can Lodges get involved in local politics and mobilize people in our community to support a candidate?*

No. The National Order of Lifespark Lodges is a nonpartisan organization and as long as you align yourself with the National Order your Lodge is not permitted to support or endorse a specific candidate. However, your Lodge members can make a big difference by mobilizing people to get educated on the issues and vote.



# Fundraising

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*We want to do a drawing as a sweepstakes to raise money for our community engagement fund. Is there anything special we need to know or do? Are there special rules we need to be aware of?*

There are many ways to put the “fun” into “fundraising.” But we need to remember that there are several applicable laws and they vary from state to state. Be sure to check with your state before conducting a sweepstakes or contest to be sure you are complying with all state laws.

## Partnerships

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*We get approached by a lot of other organizations in our community to partner on activities or events. Is it OK for us to partner with these groups and is it OK for the National Order of Lifespark Lodges logo to appear right next to another organization's logo?*

The National Order of Lifespark Lodges creates relationships with a variety of commercial and non-profit organizations, so it needs to be clear that it is your Lodge involved in the community alliance, not the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. The National Order of Lifespark Lodges logo can never appear next to another organization's logo to make sure there is no confusion about the alliance.

## Trademark Quality

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*The Lodge Handbook says the National Order will need to send them samples of materials as part of Trademark Quality Control. What exactly do you need to see and how often do we need to send these materials to you?*

The National Order is always interested in what you are doing in your community and how you are delivering value for your members. The materials you send help us understand you better and it also helps us ensure that Lodges are following the brand guidelines. You are NOT required to submit materials for approval. While we will not be reviewing and approving materials on a regular basis, we may contact you if we see something that needs to be corrected or executed differently in the future.





# Appendix A: Sample Standing Rules

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- 1) The name of this Lodge is "Lifespark Lodge #0001."
- 2) The permanent address is [Senior Living Property Address]
- 3) Members and Dues: As per the Bylaws, annual dues are \$10. Renewals are due no later than the February meeting. Dues paid during the last quarter of any year shall guarantee membership for the remainder of that year and for all of the following year.
- 4) The maximum number of Lifespark Lodge #0001 members is unlimited.
- 5) All Lifespark Lodge #0001 members are entitled to attend

all Lodge and board meetings, participate in all Lodge activities, vote in all Lodge elections, and serve as board or committee members.

- 6) Lifespark Lodge #0001 membership lists are to be used only for official Lodge business and shall never be used for any solicitation purposes.
- 7) Lodge Meetings: Lodge meetings will be held monthly at a time and place to be determined by the Board. The November Lodge meeting is the Annual Lodge meeting per the Bylaws.
- 8) Of the members present at a meeting, a 51% affirmative vote is required to pass a motion or elect board members as per the Bylaws.
- 9) Board of Directors: The Lifespark Lodge #0001 Board of Directors (aka Board) shall consist of an elected President, VicePresident,

Secretary, Treasurer, and five (5) at-large Directors.

- 10) The Lodge President serves as the chairperson of the board. Board members, including the Officers, shall be elected at the Annual meeting and serve two (2) years in staggered terms, with the terms to run January 1 through December 31.
- 11) At the 2021 Annual meeting, five (5) of the Board seats shall be elected for two year terms (see 12b), and the remainder (the positions of President and Treasurer, plus two (2) other board members) shall be elected for one (1) year terms.
- 12) In subsequent years, all seats will be for two (2) year terms.
  - a) The positions of President and Treasurer, plus two (2) other board members shall be elected in November of odd numbered years to serve two year terms



(i.e. elected November 2021 to serve 2022-2023).

b) The positions of Vice President and Secretary, plus three (3) other board members shall be elected in November of odd numbered years to serve two year terms (i.e. elected November 2021 to serve 2022-2023).

- 13) Board members shall serve as officers or at-large Directors.
- 14) Board members may serve for no more than two consecutive terms, as per the Bylaws. After one year off the board, they may again be elected to serve on the board.
- 15) The Board shall have its annual meeting in November and meet at least once in the first quarter and once in the second quarter. Additional Board meetings may be called by the President or three or more board members at any time.

- 16) Members of the Board of Directors shall be notified of any meeting of the Board of Directors by electronic means, phone, or USPS.
- 17) As per Bylaws, all members of the Board of Directors are required to attend all meetings of the Board of Directors except as excused by the President. If a Director is absent without permission for two or more meetings, s/he may be removed by the Board.
- 18) The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Lodge and shall supervise and control all of the business, affairs, and property of the Lodge; additionally, s/he is authorized to sign checks. The president shall have a mailbox key. The President, with approval of the Board, shall appoint chairpersons for all standing and special committees as soon as

possible after the election, and will work with the respective committee chairpersons to identify and recruit suitable members for each committee.

- 19) In the absence or inability of the President to fulfill the duties of his office, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President; additionally, s/he is authorized to sign checks.
- 20) The Secretary shall record all the proceedings of the meetings of the Board of Directors and the Lodge Members. S/he shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or President. The Secretary shall have a mailbox key.
- 21) Treasurer:
  - a) The Treasurer is authorized to sign checks.
  - b) The Treasurer will present a report to the Board of Directors and the membership at

- each meeting.
- c) The Treasurer will prepare and submit an annual financial report in accordance with the Lodge Treasurer's Report instructions provided by the national Lifespark Lodge Order. The report should be audited by a public accountant or audit committee. The annual financial report will be presented to the President and board at its annual meeting or when the board or the President so requires.
  - d) The Treasurer shall annually submit the application and pay for liability insurance as required by the National Lifespark Lodge Order and shall assist the board in determining whether fidelity insurance is also appropriate.

- e) The Treasurer may not also serve as the Travel Committee treasurer but will oversee the Travel Committee treasurer. The Travel Committee funds must be managed separately from the general funds.
- 22) Committees: The Lodge shall have the following Committees:
- a) The Travel Committee: The chair is responsible for managing the travel process and may serve as, or separately appoint, a
    - i) Travel Committee treasurer. The Travel Committee treasurer shall have a mailbox key and is responsible for tracking all funds specific to travel. S/he will write checks on the account only for travel-related expenses,

but those checks will require a second signature from either the President, Vice-President or Treasurer.

- b) The Community Service Committee: The chair organizes membership participation in volunteer activities throughout the community.
- c) The Nominating Committee: Each October the Lifespark Lodge #0001 President shall appoint a nominations committee to generate a slate of candidates for upcoming Board positions. This slate, supplemented by any open nominations from the floor during the regular November Lodge meeting, shall be presented to the membership for election at the annual November meeting,

with formal announcement of results and presentation of new Board members to occur at the regular December meeting.

- d) The Audit Committee: Each November the Lifespark Lodge #0001 President shall appoint an Audit Committee of three people to examine the Lodge's financial record by January 15th and report to the membership at the following general meeting. No member of the Audit Committee shall be related by blood or marriage or live in the same household as anyone having authority to sign checks.
- 23) Checks and Money: All checks require 2 signatures.
- 24) Standing Rules: These Standing Rules will be reviewed annually by the board of directors at its

first meeting following election. The Standing Rules may be revised by a simple majority vote of the Lodge members voting with a quorum present. This version of the Standing Rules was adopted by the Lodge membership on January 3, 2021.





# Appendix B: Sample Meeting Agenda

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Lifespark Lodge #0001 MEETING  
[Address] [Time] [Date]

## **1:00 p.m. Call to Order**

(Begin the meeting on time. Options for opening the meeting include an interfaith invocation, the Pledge of Allegiance, salute to the flag, or a moment of silence.)

## **1:05 p.m. Welcome and Announcements**

(Introduce new members, welcome visitors and invited guests.)

**1:10 p.m. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

(Distribute the Minutes ahead of time. Accept the Minutes as read or provided or with amendments, if necessary.)

**1:15 p.m. Lodge Reports**

(Allow sufficient time for officer and committee chairpersons' reports. A copy of all reports should be filed with the Lodge secretary.)

**1:30 p.m. Old Business**

(Discuss any unfinished business from previous meetings.)

**1:45 p.m. New Business**

(Introduce new business requiring Lodge approval.)

**2:00 p.m. Special Program**

(Schedule the program earlier or later if more suitable for the program leader or the overall length of the program.)

**2:25 p.m. Summary**

(Review key decisions and action items from the meeting. Thank the speakers and attendees for their participation.)

**2:30 p.m. Adjourn**

(In closing, announce the date, time, and place of the next meeting.)



# Appendix C: Sample Meeting Minutes

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## *MEETING MINUTES*

*Lifespark Lodge #0001 MEETING*

*[Address] [Time] [Date]*

The (*board of directors or members*) of (*Lodge name and number*) met in (*regular or special*) session on (*date*) at (*meeting location*). (*Name of presiding officer*) presided. There (*was/was not*) a quorum present. Other officers and directors present were (*list names and titles*).

(*Name of presiding officer*) called the meeting to order at (*time*).

The Secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were approved by a majority of the members present and entered into the record. (*If corrections were made to the minutes, record those also.*)

The Treasurer reported the following: (*indicate a brief summary of the treasurer's report, usually beginning balance, receipts, expenditures, and ending balance*).

The President (*or other presiding officer*) reported on the board of directors meeting (*provide a brief summary or name of topic reported*).

The following committee reports were given. (*Record brief statements only. If a detailed*

*report is submitted, note "See attached report" and attach the complete report to the minutes.)*

The President (or other presiding officer) took up the following unfinished business. (Give the exact wording of each motion taken up and record what action was taken on it. Do not report the discussion of the motion.)

The following new business was introduced. (Give the exact wording of each motion taken up and record what action was taken on it. Do not report the discussion of the motion.)

The meeting program consisted of (name the guest speaker or presenter), who spoke/gave a presentation on the topic of (name of topic or activity).



The President (*or other presiding officer*) summarized the key points and actions of the meeting and announced that the next meeting was scheduled for (*date, time and location*).

The meeting adjourned at (*time*).





# Appendix D: Notes on Lodge Officer Installation

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The following is a suggested Installation Ceremony for Lifespark Lodge officers. It includes a charge to all Lodge members as well as the official “swearing in” of the officers themselves. Please adapt this installation as you see fit.

“I am honored and pleased to meet with you today. This is a great day for Lodge [*Name and Number*] and marks a new beginning for this Lodge and for each and every member. This is especially true for these leaders whom you have selected

to serve you as officers, directors, and committee chairpersons for the coming year. As we install them into office, let us use this occasion to assess what we have accomplished for ourselves and for others, and what we have yet to accomplish. Let not only these chosen leaders but each and every member renew his or her resolve and dedication to carry out and further the goals and purposes of this Lodge and of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. Each of you who assume office has a significant responsibility, and we are deeply impressed by your dedication and loyalty. We are proud of each of you. We realize that you will be called upon to make many decisions. With your abilities, and with the support of your fellow Lodge members, you can proceed with confidence and pride.

You will also be called upon to give your time, your talents, and a

part of yourselves to this new position. As you assume this important role, keep the National Order of Lifespark Lodges motto in mind: 'Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.' The greatest gift to one's self is service to others. May you find the patience, wisdom, and the charity to do so. And may you find strength in the knowledge that those you serve support you and wish you well.

On this important occasion in the history of this Lodge, I will offer a few words of thanks for a job well done to your outgoing officers. Please stand and state your name and position. You have spent the past year or more in unselfish dedication to this Lodge and to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. You have volunteered many hours conducting meetings, filing reports, keeping records, and performing the many tasks, large and small, that have resulted in the growth and

success this Lodge enjoys today. From your Lodge members, and the National Association, many, many thanks, indeed. (*Lead Applause*)

At this time it is my pleasure to install the officers and directors you have chosen to guide you. They have generously accepted the responsibility you have placed upon them. But you too, have a responsibility. Each of you must cooperate with your officers. When called upon to assist, respond willingly. In so doing, you will be helping your leadership in its demanding tasks. Will all new officers, directors, and committee chairpersons, and members of the nominating committee please come forward?

Please state your name and position.

Raise your right hand.

I will read your oath and at the end I will ask that if you accept

the conditions of the oath that you respond by saying, 'I will.'

*(Official Installation)* I sincerely declare that I am willing to accept the place of service for which I have been selected. I further declare that I will, to the best of my ability, perform the duties pertaining thereto. I will comply with the bylaws, rules, and regulations of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges and this Lodge. I will at all times, and on all occasions, earnestly endeavor to promote with dignity all worthy causes being promoted by this Lodge and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, and I will never use my office for personal promotion or material gain. I shall give myself in unselfish service to the Lodge and its members as the need becomes evident, and as my ability and opportunity permit. If you accept this post — please respond by saying, 'I will.'



In my capacity as *(use installer's title here)* an appointed representative of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, it is my privilege to declare that each of you is here and now duly installed in your office. For your willingness to accept your important assignments and to be of service, I am sure that all here join me in saying congratulations.

Thank you." *(Lead applause.)*





# Appendix E: National Lifespark Lodge Trademark Policy

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Lifespark Lodges are vitally important to the overall mission of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges social mission. They vitalize member engagement and cultivate a volunteer base in support of the National Order's efforts to improve the health and well-being for all as we age. Lodges are separately incorporated, affiliated non-profit organizations that bring the National Order's mission to life in local communities. The National Order

of Lifespark Lodges uses a variety of trademarks and service marks in connection with its many social welfare efforts. In order to maintain ownership of these marks, the National Order of Lifespark Lodges must ensure that they are used properly. Therefore the National Order grants each National Order-recognized and formally affiliated Lifespark Lodge a license to use its marks as provided.

## Trademark Use

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All Lifespark Lodge materials must be in compliance with the National Order of Lifespark Lodges' mission, nonprofit tax-exempt status, National Order policies and requirements provided in the Lodge Logo Use Guidelines which are incorporated by reference within this Policy. Use of the National Order of Lifespark Lodge marks on Lodge websites, emails,

newsletters, domain names and Lodge giveaways (such as t-shirts, key chains, and bags) is permissible if such use adheres to the Lodge Logo Use Guidelines.

Lodges should not engage in activity or create materials that would tarnish, disparage, or damage the goodwill of the Lifespark Lodge Trademark. In addition, Lodges should not use the Lifespark Lodge Trademark in connection with the following materials:

- **Commercial Activity.** Lodges should not use the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Trademark in support, promotion, or endorsement of any commercial activity including, but not limited to, for-profit companies and/or their products or services.
- **Political Activity.** Because of the importance of Lifespark Lodges' nonpartisan reputation, Lodges

should not use Lifespark Lodge marks in connection with political messages or any political activity including, but not limited to, participating in events or activities in support or opposition of any candidate or legislation.

- **Obscenity.** Lodges should not use Lifespark Lodge marks in association with obscene or lewd materials including, but not limited to, materials with sexual content.
- **Illegal Activity.** Lodges should not use Lifespark Lodge marks in connection with illegal activities and must abide by all applicable laws.
- **Broadcast & Mass Media.** Lodges should not use Lifespark Lodge marks in broadcast and mass media formats including, but not limited to, TV, radio, and blogs.
- **Sublicensing.** Lodges are not authorized to grant permission

to other organizations to use the Lifespark Lodge marks in any manner. If any organization requests permission to use the Lifespark Lodge marks, Lodges should direct them to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

- Co-branding. Lodges may not use the Lifespark Lodge marks in conjunction with another organization's logo in close proximity or in a manner that would suggest an alliance, partnership, or imply an endorsement of the other organization by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

Lodges must include the following descriptor clearly on all written materials (i.e. letterhead, newsletters, websites and flyers) where the Lifespark Lodge Trademark is used: "Lifespark Lodges are separately incorporated affiliates of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges."



## Information Sharing and Quality Control

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The National Order of Lifespark Lodges is deeply interested in learning about and understanding local Lodge activities. It must also maintain quality control over its trademarks; for this reason the National Order works with local Lodges to ensure that branding standards are followed.

As part of this effort the National Order requires Lodges to provide samples of materials made using the Lifespark Lodge marks throughout the calendar year.

These samples should include newsletters, email headers and footers, and websites (See FAQs in the Lifespark Lodge logo Use Guidelines). Each Lodge's use of National Order of Lifespark Lodge marks should be

uniform and samples should be an accurate representation of that uniform use.

Lodges should include their samples in the Lifespark Lodge activity log. Responsibility for protecting the National Order of Lifespark Lodges' marks, and its reputation, is a responsibility shared by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges and its licensees, including all local Lifespark Lodges. If you become aware of improper or unauthorized use of a Lifespark Lodge mark by an individual or another entity, please send that information to the National Order for review and action as appropriate.

The National Order relies on its Lodges using its marks in the manner provided in this Policy. By working together toward this endeavor the National Order and its Lodges can minimize confusion of the general

public and sustain trust in the organization and its mission and vision.

Only officers of an official National Order-recognized Lodge may use the Lifespark Lodge marks and the National Order reserves the right to revoke all Lifespark Lodge Trademark licenses granted to each individual Lodge or to Lodges as an entire group at any time and for any reason including violations of this Policy.

Inaction regarding any violation of this Policy shall not be deemed approval of those violations, or a waiver of any enforcement right of the National Order. All material amendments to this Policy shall be made with written notice. All use of the Lifespark Lodge marks must be in compliance with this Policy. If there are any material changes to this Policy, each Lodge shall be notified in writing. Upon receipt of that notification, all

changes announced in that communication shall take effect immediately. If you would like to use Lifespark Lodge marks in a way that is described in this Policy and would like a review for your desired use or you have general questions regarding proper trademark use, please contact the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. Every effort will be made to respond to all inquiries within five (5) days.



# Appendix F: Treasurer's Guidelines

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Thank you for your attention to, and use of, this guide. If additional information is desired, please contact the National Order office directly. The following provides information useful for completing the Lodge Treasurer's report form.

## Balance on Hand at Beginning of Year

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- A. Cash on hand includes money that had not been deposited in any of the Lodge's accounts as of January 1 of the reporting period.
- B. Enter the total of all bank balances taken from your checkbook (not bank statement) as of January 1 of the reporting period.
- C. Enter the total balances of all savings and investment accounts (including, for example, such things as money market accounts, certificates of deposit, etc.) as of January 1 of the reporting period.
- D. Add lines A + B + C above and enter total.

## Classification of Receipts

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Receipts must include all money received by the Lodge and the fair market value of all goods and services provided to the Lodge in lieu of money. Only the classifications listed in Section III of the Lifespark Lodge Treasurer's Report may be used to report receipts. They are:

- Lodge Dues Received
- Gifts of Donations Received
- Payments Received for Travel
- Amounts Received for Educational Events
- Amounts Received from Items Sold
- Interest/Dividend Income Received
- Program Income Received
- Advertising Income Received
- Other (Specify).



*Following are some instructions on what to report—and what not to report—in each category.*

## **Lodge Dues Received**

Report only money received for Lodge dues. Do not include payments for national membership dues.

## **Gifts or Donations Received**

All receipts in the form of gifts, donations, endowments, trust funds or contributions to special funds (other than social events) are to be reported in this classification.

## **Payments Received for Travel**

All receipts for Lodge-sponsored trips, tours, or excursions (either paid into the Lodge treasury or into a travel account maintained by the Lodge) are

to be reported in this classification.

Include all funds collected for trip insurance and refunds received for such activities.

Lodge Bylaws require that the Treasurer has responsibility for the accounting and reporting of all Lodge funds. Separate bank accounts for travel, tours or other special activities that are not under the direct control of the Treasurer are not encouraged. If such separate accounts are maintained, the responsible person should be an assistant Treasurer, who must report all receipts and expenditures to the Lodge Treasurer.

Do not include money for Lodge-sponsored trips or tours if the tour or trip is arranged for the Lodge by another entity and the individuals who participate pay their money directly to that entity.

*[Note: Check with your secretary of state or attorney general to determine if these monies may be handled by the Lodge Treasurer or go directly to the vendor.]*

## **Amounts Received for Social Events**

All money received for social events is to be reported in this classification.

Such events might include:

- Sales for fundraising
- Coffee funds
- Lodge Dinners & Lunches
- Free will donations
- Educational programs

## **Interests/Dividends Received**

All interest and dividends accruing during the reporting year that are paid from or credited to any Lodge checking, savings or other type of interest-producing accounts must be reported in this classification.

## **Program Income Received**

Report in this classification all receipts from any sources relating to National Order-sponsored programs

## **Advertising Income Received**

This classification should be used only to report money that is received for advertisements published in Lodge newsletters, bulletins, or other publications. Net advertising income may be taxable. Therefore, if ads are sold, the payments received must be reported in this classification. Income from advertising should be limited so that it will not exceed the actual cost of printing and mailing.

## **Other (Specify)**

There should be few reasons to use this classification. It is to be used

only when money or property is received that cannot be included in any of the preceding classifications. When any receipts are reported as "other," the source must be specified.

*[Note: Funds transferred to the Lodge's checking account from its savings account, or vice versa, should not be reported as income. Lodges collecting national membership dues are encouraged to have checks or money orders made payable directly to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges by the member. In the event that any national membership dues are handled through Lodge bank accounts, the money collected is to be entered on this line. Also include the total amount of all grant money received from other organizations/agencies.]*

# Classification of Expenditures

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All Lodge expenditures must be reported. Include all money paid out of Lodge funds for any purpose. Only the classification listed in Section IV of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Lodge Treasurer's Report may be used to report expenditures. They are:

## Amounts paid for meeting expenses

Expenses reported in this classification include:

- Door prizes
- Speakers' fees
- Payment to set up room
- Janitorial services
- Refreshments
- Rent and equipment for meeting room

- Rental of halls and other related items

## **Amounts paid for salaries**

This covers the salary paid to the Lodge's Weaver as well as any other positions filled by salaried employees of the local Lodge.

## **Gifts or donations made**

All money spent for gifts, donations, and related items must be reported in this classification. Expenditures that would be included are Lodge gifts or donations to:

- Good Life Foundation
- Special funds or projects
- Scholarships
- Charitable or religious organizations
- Memorial funds

## **Amounts paid for travel**

Report all money with Lodge funds for Lodge-sponsored trips, tours, or excursions in this classification (including funds received from members and set aside for this purpose). Also include payments for insurance, refunds for deposits due to cancellations, and related expenses.

*[Note: Remember to check with your secretary of state or attorney general to determine how nonprofits in your state are required to handle monies received for tours and bus trips.]*

## **Amounts paid for social events**

Report all money paid to conduct social events such as lunches, dinners, celebrations, refreshments at meetings, coffee funds, educational



programs, Pot-Luck Dinners, or similar events.

## **Amounts paid to buy items for resale**

In this classification, report all money spent to purchase items for resale such as Lodge branded clothing, greeting cards, stationery, raffles, etc.

## **Amounts paid for administrative costs**

All money spent for administrative expenses should be reported in this classification. Include:

- Printing
- Annual report fees
- Bank checks and service charges
- Office supplies
- State fees
- Postage stamps
- Flags and banners

- Liability insurance fees
- Dues refunds
- Telephone
- Office equipment
- Petty cash
- Travel costs of Lodge officials that are related to National Order events
- Payments to individuals who set up the meeting room (janitors), or who deliver equipment should be included on Line U.

## **Program costs paid**

Program costs for materials or for the transportation of materials required for any of the National Order-sponsored programs should be reported in this classification.

## Amounts paid to print and mail newsletters

In this classification, report all costs to print and mail Lodge newsletters, bulletins, or other publications, including expenses for paper, reproduction, postage, postal permits, etc.

### Other (specify)

This classification should be used only if money was spent that cannot be included in any of the preceding classifications.

*[Note: Funds transferred to the Lodge's savings account from its checking account, or vice versa, should not be reported as an expense. In the event that any national membership dues are handled through Lodge accounts, report the money sent to the National Order. Also include the total amount of all grant money received from other organizations/agencies.]*

# Monthly Expenditures Journal

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Journals for recording expenses (money spent) and the posting procedures are similar to those for recording receipts. Generally, you should begin each month with a new Monthly Expenditures sheet. As with the receipts, use as many forms as necessary to record all money spent each month. Column headings correspond to all the classifications in Section IV of the Lifespark Lodge Treasurer's Annual Report.

## **Summary Page**

1. Lodge name and number
2. Year

## **Monthly Pages**

1. Lodge name and number
2. Month and year.

**Five entries are usually made on each line:**

1. Date of expenditure
2. Identification of payee
3. Check number
4. Amount of check
5. A second entry of the amount spent (in the correct classification column).





# Appendix G: Dissolution, Withdrawal of Recognition, and Suspension

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The National Order of Lifespark Lodges makes every effort to nurture its Lodges. In rare instances, however, a Lodge may not be able to attract enough new members and leaders to sustain its existence, or it may decide that the level of interest among existing Lodge members has waned. In such situations, the National Order of Lifespark Lodges will provide assistance and guidance to the Lodge as it attempts to overcome the obstacles



to its continuation. If these efforts fail, and it is determined by a majority vote of the Lodge membership that the Lodge does not have the member support and participation necessary to continue, the next step is dissolution of the Lodge.

The Lodge must inform the National Order of Lifespark Lodges of its decision to dissolve voluntarily. The National Order of Lifespark Lodges President may be asked to formally recommend that the Lodge be dissolved. With the approval of the National board, the National Order may obtain the records and files of the Lodge. After receiving a recommendation for dissolution, the National Order provides the Lodge with further procedural instructions for completing the process. The dissolving Lodge is responsible for contacting the office of the Secretary of State in the state in which it operates to ascertain what

fees and forms are required to formally dissolve the corporation within the state. The Lodge should request copies of the appropriate documents and forward them with a check payable to the Secretary of State in the specified amount. A copy should be provided to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges (See also Article IX of the Lodge Bylaws.).

## **Withdrawal of Lodge Recognition or Suspension**

Article IX of the Good Life Lodge Bylaws provides that the National Order may withdraw or suspend recognition of a Lodge for:

1. Recurrent failure to conform to the policies and standards of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

2. Failure of the Lodge to comply with any of the provisions contained in the Lodge's Articles of Incorporation or the Lifespark Lodge Bylaws; or

3. Failure of the Lodge to remain in compliance with the laws or regulations of the state in which the Lodge is incorporated.

Such recognition shall be withdrawn or suspended only after careful consideration by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. Consideration of such a situation would normally follow a period of time during which the National Order of Lifespark Lodges would make every effort to remedy the situation and assist the Lodge in conforming and complying fully with all policies, standards, Lodge Articles of Incorporation, and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Bylaws. When necessary, withdrawal or suspension of recognition shall become effective immediately upon the deci-

sion by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges and notification of the Lodge. In the event recognition is withdrawn and suspended, the Lodge shall have an opportunity to be heard by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. In addition, notwithstanding any other provisions of the Lodge's Articles of Incorporation or the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Lodge Bylaws to the contrary, after withdrawal or suspension of recognition, all voting rights shall thereafter be vested solely in the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, the national organization member of the Lodge. The voting rights that would otherwise be vested in the individual Lodge members shall cease, and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges shall have the right to remove any officer or director, with or without cause, at any time.

Upon withdrawal or suspension of recognition, the Lodge shall not,

without express written consent of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, conduct its affairs or otherwise identify or hold itself out to the public as a local Lodge or other affiliate of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges. The Lodge's charter shall be turned over to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, along with all funds and any other property held by the Lodge. Where the law of the state of incorporation of the Lodge permits, the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, which is the national organization Lodge member, may, at its discretion, legally dissolve a Lodge after its recognition has been withdrawn.

The process for withdrawal of Lodge recognition or suspension is as follows.

1. The Lodge board of directors is responsible for the control and management of the affairs,

property, and interests of the Lodge, including enforcement of compliance with the Lodge Bylaws and the Lodge Articles of Incorporation.

2. If the Lodge does not regulate its own conduct or the conduct of its members in accordance with the required procedures and the National Order of Lifespark Lodges' guidance, then the National Order of Lifespark Lodges may recommend that the Lodge's recognition be suspended or withdrawn.
3. Such a recommendation may be prepared after consultation with the National Lifespark Lodge Board of Directors. The recommendation for suspension or withdrawal of recognition must contain documentation that substantiates that the Lodge:
  - a. Has evidenced recurrent failure to conform to the

policies and standards of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

- b. Has evidenced a failure to comply with any of the provisions contained in the Articles of Incorporation of the Lodge or the National Order of Lifespark Lodges Bylaws.
- c. Has failed to comply with the laws or regulations of the state in which it is incorporated.
- d. Has been provided with sufficient oral and written warning of the situation and of the consequences of failure to accept recommendations for remedying the situation.
- e. Has been apprised of the situation in writing or by a meeting of their state's Governor General or with

the National Order's board of directors.

- f. Has advised its membership of the situation and acceptable recommendations to remedy it.
- g. Has been advised and assured that every effort has been made by the volunteer leadership as well as the National Order of Lifespark Lodges to assist the Lodge in resolving the situation.

Upon receipt of the recommendation by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, the local Lodge President will be notified the recommendation has been received and that the National Board will review the recommendation. The National Order of Lifespark Lodges may request additional information or may direct that further investigation be carried out. If the National Order of



Lifespark Lodges decides to suspend or withdraw recognition, the Lodge will be notified the National Order will immediately take steps to accept all funds and other property held by the Lodge. If the recognition of a Lodge is withdrawn or suspended, all funds and other property held by the Lodge shall be paid over to the National Order of Lifespark Lodges to be distributed to the Good Life Foundation, charitable foundations sponsored by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges, or for other charitable purposes at the discretion of the National Order of Lifespark Lodges.

The Lodge will be notified by the National Order of Lifespark Lodges of its right to have an opportunity to appeal, and it will be requested to advise the National Order of Lifespark Lodges within 30 days of its receipt of notification of suspension or withdrawal whether or not it wishes to have

such an opportunity. If the National Order of Lifespark Lodges receives such a request within the specified time deadline, it will handle arrangements for the hearing. The Lodge will be required to notify the National Order of Lifespark Lodges of:

1. The name(s) of the Lodge members who will represent the Lodge at such hearing.
2. A statement by the Lodge's board of directors that such representatives were duly selected and authorized by the board to represent the Lodge at such hearing.
3. Requesting the opportunity to be heard and specifying the reasons why the Lodge feels that suspension or withdrawal or recognition is not warranted.

If the recognition of the Lodge is

suspended, rather than withdrawn, the National Order of Lifespark Lodges will notify the Lodge of the conditions of the suspension and the time deadlines for complying with those conditions. Successful completion of suspension conditions may result in the suspension being lifted. Failure to comply with suspension conditions would result in withdrawal of recognition. If, within 30 days of notification of withdrawal of recognition, the Lodge does not request an appeal, or if the Lodge requests an opportunity to be heard, and is heard, and the Board sustains its withdrawal action, the National Order of Lifespark Lodges will initiate appropriate action to dissolve or disaffiliate the Lodge.



## Endnotes

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- 1 Dr. Bill Thomas, *The Good Life* (Sana, 2020)
- 2 McGoey, 2018; Nelson, 2017
- 3 [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/England\\_Friendly\\_Societies\\_\(National\\_Institute\)](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/England_Friendly_Societies_(National_Institute))
- 4 <https://fee.org/articles/friendly-societies-voluntary-social-security-and-more/>
- 5 <https://omelas.co.uk/2019/08/16/the-forgotten-history-of-friendly-societies/>
- 6 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/oct/14/age-of-loneliness-killing-us>
- 7 This tax exemption does not relieve the Lodge of the requirement to pay other taxes as may be required

by law, such as state sales tax, use fees, etc. In addition, due to the Lodge's 501(c) (4) status, individuals cannot take a charitable deduction for any contributions made to the Lodge.

8 <https://marylandepiscopalian.org/2019/04/02/girls-friendly-society/>