



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

June 28, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

We are very pleased and fortunate that both Grand Master Rod Metoyer and Deputy Grand Master Rick Boyles are members of DMC. Below is a joint article written by Brother Rod and Brother Rick, that carries an important message for all members of this great Order to consider.

F - L - T

### Loose Lips Sink Ships

---

Our order is older than the proverbial hills. This wonderful state of California is literally laced together with the history of Odd Fellowship. A study of Western Americana would show that many of the historical figures in our state were members of the Odd Fellows. Peter Sellars has written 2 tremendous early histories of our order in this state, and it shows what an investigation into our early order might emphasize which is that Odd Fellowship served a purpose in those early desperate times. It was a security blanket to those who were hard-pressed to wear much else. If you were a gold-miner or a merchant in those times, you were often cold and hungry. In such hard times, a lodge must have seemed like a palace to those cold and hungry early settlers. The idea of a warm meal, a welcoming handshake, and a smile from a fellow member must have appeared almost alluring in that otherwise barren time.

Now, it is a different world. Odd Fellowship has regressed into the recesses of local society. All of us are filled with responsibilities and jobs beyond the scope of a lodge hall. Many of us attend almost as an afterthought, leaving our families and our ball games to sit through a meeting which sometimes seems too long or becomes rancorous, too often complete with divisions and angry members, voting on decisions or subjects which may cause dismay on one level or another. In today's world, one can see a lodge meeting as a burden to endure, a discussion about a lodge issue can appear frightening when illuminated by someone packed with personal agenda.

An onlooker tasked to look into our order might compare us with other orders which are on the downswing. The following traits accompany a downswing: turmoil, short-sightedness, loss of caring, fear of the public and of ourselves and mean-spirited rumors. If we are not careful, we will soon epitomize these very traits.



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

Rumors in particular serve no purpose except to besmirch another person or persons. They have no place in an order professing to admire the precepts of Friendship, Love and Truth. Conduct unbecoming an Odd Fellow is a charge we level if we feel an Odd Fellow has wronged another member, but we are all somewhat guilty. We must lose our hatred in order to grow. We must see that most if not all members mean well, and that it is not our implied duty to discern who the bad members are. Lately, rumors seem more rampant than ever, and we should all do our best to dispel them. If a member does something against our code or wrongs another member, it is certainly appropriate to call attention to it, but it is not appropriate to spread rumors about that individual. Rumors serve no purpose beyond blowing off steam. No member should feel compelled to insult another member. If a member does something contrary to code, there are remedies, but rumors are not the remedy. No one gets a pass on hatred. In order to grow, this is the first step we must all take – the purging of hatred.

If we want to grow and survive into the future, we need to band together as a unit. Many members talk about change, and many members idolize our heritage. It bears repeating that these ideas need not be in conflict. The future is something none of us may foresee. If we possess the inner strength to love each other as we profess to within our rituals and codebooks then we can't fail. If we refuse to get along, if we only spread vicious rumors about each other, and yell at one another in lodge halls, it will certainly only result in a mass exodus from the order in general. When we see our members, let's remember first that they have love for the order just like us, and realize that together we win.

In Friendship, Love and Truth, Rod Metoyer and Rick Boyles