



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

September 17, 2013

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Once again, it's my pleasure to attach an article - just written - by our own Grand Master Rick Boyles. And once again, Rick has hit the nail squarely on the head.

If we wish to grow as an Order - and we have to grow to survive - we will have to be a LOT more tolerant of our younger members and a LOT more supportive of their ideas and suggestions.

F - L - T

Dave Rosenberg, GW

Life in the Slow Lane...

Someday, we need to wake up. If we want to appeal merely to those over 80, we are making all the right moves. Many lodges and centralized events pick the Star Spangled Banner as their favorite song, which while admirable, seems ludicrous, since it is our national song, and should be everyone's favorite. The only motions our lodges go through are at dinner, with knife and fork motions. Like the Star Spangled Banner, everyone also eats, so neither act really attracts anyone new. We need to look at things that will help us move forward.

Here are some suggestions –

- 1) Rather than dread the public, try to attract them. Some lodges have success with low price events or excursions. Rather than meal events, try something in addition. San Francisco has great success with their “Day at the Races” events, sponsored by Peter Sellars. I believe they now attract 400 people to this event. While lunch is involved, it is not the main event.
- 2) Learn to live with your fellow members. Some lodges are in disarray due to disruptive members or some who feel that they are the last word in Odd Fellowship. No one is better than anyone else. All of us are worthwhile members. The only members we should not want are those who want to yell and scream at others. This is an order based upon friendship, love and truth. Nowhere in our basic tenets reside the terms hatred, lies,



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

and fear. Let's stop greeting each other out of anger or bitterness. Do we really expect to gain members while we carry on inane arguments, and unending disputes?

- 3) Let's care for all who are within our charge. If an elderly person needs a hand, let's give them a hand just as we would hope for in their shoes. If we care for a child, let's make sure the child is cared for, without spending time worried about our own self interests. We often are guilty of protecting our own self interests, but what is more important than the well being of all of us? The elderly and the young are often less capable of fending for themselves; let's help them out of the goodness of our own hearts, and not due to guilt or legal restraints.
- 4) Attract the public by seeing the world through their eyes. Many of us are not young, but that does not mean that we should only listen to Lawrence Welk and Ethel Merman. Try to at least attract someone...not close your eyes to reality. Rap and hip-hop is not my cup of tea, but put yourself in young people's shoes and ask yourselves why you would not join an order that only listens to music from the 40's? (The 40's were 70 years ago!). Time to act like you want someone to join.
- 5) Dress like the world in general. Someone asked me why my officers and I don't wear tuxedos to every lodge function. Give me a break. Nobody wears tuxedos anymore and by doing so; we only alienate ourselves more and more. Conversely, I don't wear t-shirts and shorts, but dressing like those who might like to join the order might let them know that hey, we think like them and not like someone out of a 1920's musical.
- 6) Computers, telephones, email, voice mail, cable, etc. Things have changed out there in the real world, and yet many lodges still don't answer their phone, has an email address, or even regular posted hours. Gee, and you claim you want new members! How do you expect to get them? By pony express? Ask yourselves, how do prospective members get in touch with us?
- 7) Open up your doors and hearts! By acting like you hate every other person other than the 4 other members who give your lodge a quorum you only succeed in shuttering your lodge. Do you really want to be a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows? Or, do you simply want to be a member of a clique? Outside our doors is diversity, religious freedom, people from all walks of life. Yet, there are still those among us who practice sexism, racism, religious prejudice, and various bullying behavior. Time to cast those aside. If we want to grow, we need to embrace each and every person from all walks of life and not fear them for their beliefs. If we try to get to know people, we might be surprised to find that many are just like us and have hearts and minds and hopes and fears as we all do. If we just try to shut the world out, we might be rewarded by the world doing so in return.

In Friendship, Love, and Truth, Rick Boyles, Grand Master



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change