



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

February 9, 2014

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

It's my pleasure to forward to you an article just written by our able Grand Master Rick Boyles. Rick displays a keen and insightful eye toward observation, an easy-to-read writing style, and a subtle sense of humor.

Enjoy!

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Dave Rosenberg  
Grand Warden

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Friendship, Love & Truth for Dummies

Being your Grand Master has its ups and downs. I have had some great and some not so great days. The days which are great are similar in their traits as much as the not so great days are dissimilar. Specifically, when members remember their inner motivations towards Friendship, Love and Truth those days become great. When members forget our core principles those days become ugly with division and bad vibes. In order to survive, we have to look at each other as imperfect just as each of us is imperfect as well. Love is not seeing the perfection in others but learning to love the imperfection in others. Since becoming Grand Master, and appearing in many places, my own imperfection, at least to me, is painfully evident, but hopefully you can see, just like all of us, I want our order to survive and grow. We will survive only as a group effort. No one among us has all the answers, and there is no divine path by which we all should march in unison. If my travels have shown me anything, it is that there are a great many good people out there, and in order to grow, we must exhibit the goodness in all of us. That is how we grow - by exhibiting the good.

We have to revisit our beginnings for our base principles to come out of hiding. Just as the old saying goes, charity begins at home, I feel, charity begins within our individual lodges. The lodges which exhibit the most heart, both internally and externally, can more easily effect growth. The lodges which have forgotten their core principles slowly wither and die. In order to grow we must address all of our fellow members and ask them, brother or sister, what is that you most need, and how can we help you satisfy that need? Our core principles should shine like a beacon before us, ever bright, ever radiant, and ever true. If it is not then we go into the shadows of our depressed ideals, turmoil and the inevitable decay of our lodges.

Turmoil always seems the most interesting. The world seems to revolve around turmoil. Every morning when I get up, I fire up my computer and sit and review the news, which is primarily turmoil based. The news is generally bad news, and every sport is a war based upon honoring



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winners while vanquishing losers. But the one thing that sports teach you is that the loser today can become the winner tomorrow. This should teach us all a valuable lesson, but we generally miss the point of the lesson, which is that winning and losing are impermanent and both, however hard that is to accept, should be enjoyed. That's right. We even need to accept the virtue of losing in order to accept the virtue of life itself. Just as that old rock song goes, life is change - how it differs from the rocks. Life is the willingness to accept all of us, warts, imperfections, bad words, and all and realize that in unison we survive, divided we fail. It should be an obvious concept because we are shown examples of this principle constantly, but we seem to think that one of us is superior to the other. This is not the case - just as one man in sports does not make a team, one man in Odd Fellows does not make a lodge. The way we grow is to love one and all, help our fellow members, smile without derision and go forward without malice.

I always announce that I support every idea within the order. One member said to me, how can this be when some things seem to be contrary to the other? A belief is not a person is the way I look at it. I support any and all ideas towards growth. I believe it is counter-productive to demean anyone. There is no real point to this, except to show some sort of superiority, and in my mind, no one is superior. In order for us to grow, we must absolve ourselves of hatred, shed the cloak of deceit and learn to accept each other's imperfections as their emblems of beauty. To me, brothers and sisters, you are the most radiant when you show your love to your fellow member. Love to you all.

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