



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

April 8, 2014

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Grand Master Rick Boyle has been an active and progressive Grand Master. As his GM term ends this May, he has certainly seen and heard and learned a lot moving around the Lodges of this Order. Here are some more thoughts from Rick.

From my perspective, virtually all problems and issues are solved if every single one of us practiced Friendship, Love and Truth in our daily lives and in our relationships with other Odd Fellows.

F - L - T

Dave Rosenberg
Grand Warden

Vindictiveness or, the End of Our Order, or Love for Each Other Unconditionally

Our order is bounded and guided by our underlining precepts "Friendship, Love & Truth" however some don't exhibit this behavior externally. Some view the order as a pitched battle for some weird version of superiority. This is almost ludicrous and really presents only a myopic view of a finite area. In my year as Grand Master, I have attempted to remove any political colorings from my judgment. It is not beneficial to our order to act vindictively, and it clearly is not helpful to solidifying our future. A friend of mine says that I have a bit of Pollyanna within me, and I agree, but if we don't all start to take that attitude, we will cease to exist very quickly. There are many ways in which our order can improve, but first we must admit that other views exist, and that other answers besides our own may have some validity. We should not pass judgment on another member or another lodge without realizing that hatred is in itself self-defeating and by itself affects our good judgment. As Grand Master, sometimes I get negative reports on this lodge or that, but to me that alone is not the defining factor. The first rule of thumb on a lodge or a person is whether or not that person or lodge is a good example of a caring individual or lodge. We must remember our heritage.



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

A good member should greet every other member with a smile on his face and a smile in his heart. All of us have differing views. All of us no matter how similar also have our own idiosyncrasies. We really can't all just walk in lockstep, and we should stop attempting to do so. Our order is failing quickly and if we don't begin to celebrate our diversity, we are in danger of collapsing within the cocoons we are creating for ourselves. Remember that what makes us unique gives us flavor as human beings. Remember that what makes us happy also drives us forward. As long as we don't hurt anyone else, our happiness and the happiness of those around us should be our main concern.

Because many if not most of us are elderly many of us have had sad experiences in dealing with the deaths of loved ones or longtime companions. Just like many of us, I have had to talk to someone at or near the end of life, and often their last words are filled with regret with either bad decisions or bad words that they have been party to. We need to realize that when we send messages of hate or displeasure we not only harm the recipient, we harm ourselves. If we were to examine the other person's heart, I believe that we would find that in most cases they are just like us. We need to realize that love for each other is paramount to the growth of our order, and stop acting as if a view on attracting membership or running a lodge is an ironclad truth. None of us have the inside track on truth or morality or honor, and to taunt the code or codes as some type of defense only turns our order against ourselves. Code books are tools, not weapons. Just as laws in the outside world have been refined and changed over years, so will codes. An old philosopher said that "Common sense is not necessarily all that common" and that certainly is appropriate here. Let's remember that first we are guided by our love for one another, and we should see that the codes pale beneath the blanket of our own love.

At our various receptions, I like when we emphasize a person we are honoring favorite things because that gives that person flavor. All of us have favorite things, loves, hobbies, pleasant diversions, and other things that make us happy. Let's continue that great thing. At this year's Grand Lodge, first, I am hoping to have about a one minute fun event every morning, such as a song or quick game, also since my mascot is Sherlock Holmes, my appointive officers will all be named "Watson" because that was Sherlock Holmes sidekick (they often traded barbs, and Watson often seems more ingenious than Sherlock Holmes, which is clearly the case here). In short, I want us all to have a good time and remember that through it all, we don't grow if we don't learn to enjoy and tolerate each other. All of us have good value, all of us are friends, and all of us should go forward together or we surely will fail beneath a shower of distrust.

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