



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

November 26, 2013

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

First, let me mention that Louie Sarmiento has asked that I pass along an Odd Fellowship satisfaction survey that has been developed with the request that you take a few minutes to take the survey. Here is the link to the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/97XZ3QY>

Second, I receive e-mails from members of our great fraternal Order from throughout the nation and the world. They are all interesting. Some are quite revealing. I share, below, a recent e-mail I received from an Odd Fellow. I have deleted the Odd Fellow's name, Lodge and any other information which might reveal his/her identity.

I publish this member's e-mail because it makes an important statement. If you recognize YOUR Lodge in this description, please make a note. Long-time members of a Lodge are not all-knowing and all-seeing, nor are they always right. New members of a Lodge must be given a chance to bring new ideas into the mix. If long-time members always say "no", or "that's not going to work", or "that's a dumb idea", or words to that effect - the result is that new members get turned-off and tune out.

If you want to recruit and retain new blood into your Lodge, then welcome them, let them develop new ideas and projects, and let them spread their wings.

If you want to become an "Old Man's Retirement Lodge" or a "Last Man Club", then just keep saying "no".

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Dave Rosenberg, Grand Warden

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Hello Dave,

I was cc'ed on a recent email exchange between you and another member of my lodge. At this time I don't really want to confront anyone on this subject, but I feel that the focus is in the wrong place. However, I feel that my story and perspective might give you a window into what, in my opinion, is a major problem with our recruitment and retention strategy.

When I joined just a few years ago I was the youngest member by at least a generation,, and since I've helped to draw in over 10 people around my age (late thirties) and younger. Last term I became an elected officer of my lodge, a proud moment, but the feeling didn't last. I haven't



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been to a meeting in many months. I wish I could say I'm the only younger person feeling this way, but I was one of the only hold outs.

Young people feel that they don't have a voice. This goes for the world at large as well as in our lodges. It was rather disheartening to watch friends drop away. Their desires for the lodge's direction seemed irrelevant, and their proposed social events were looked upon with suspicion. adherence to Robert's Rules of Order were rarely observed, so one comment from the Noble Grand such as "No. I don't think that's a good idea." was enough to sidetrack a legitimate motion away from debate and voting. the rules stood for nothing, and they were ignored. No one wants to be where they're not wanted, so they left.

On ritual, some things can and should be streamlined or evolved, but this often leads to complete disregard for inclusion of dissident voices. The Odd Fellow goes right back to being the Old Fellows, and that, in my opinion, will lead to NO FELLOWS.

One can only hope things become more inclusive in the future.

In Friendship, Love, and Truth,

(Member's Name Deleted)