



Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
Dedicated Members for Change

February 28, 2014

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Here's a provocative article written by our Grand Master Rick Boyles. If you know Rick, you know he is a gentle man, with a subtle and self-deprecating sense of humor, and with a heart as big as Alaska. But Rick also is a man with some steel in his backbone - who does not hesitate to speak the truth, even when that truth may be painful.

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Dave Rosenberg  
Grand Warden

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Et Tu, Brute?

There is a point at which reality becomes caricature. We as an order must someday come to the realization that all people are not one size fits all. In order for us to survive and grow, we need to get along and we need to be accepting. Too many times our order sinks into factions. Too many times I am receiving phone calls, emails or letters involving racist, sexist, religious phobias and other deranged communications. We have to realize that this is the modern world. The premise that this is 1840 Elizabethan England is ludicrous. It's time to wind your watch. I am on the downside of my year as Grand Master, however, if anyone seems to think racism, sexism, religious bias is acceptable, there is no time limit on stupidity. I will seek you out, and so will the rest of the moral world. We have to see the truth. Just as the founders of our country stated that all men are created equal, all modern men and women are worthy of friendship, love and truth, not just over 50 years of age white men.

Occasionally, I hear the idiotic statement that things are going fine, and there is nothing new that should be done. Give me a break. I have made at least a dozen official visits this year to lodges that are at or near the end of the line. Think about that for a moment. These are lodges that have existed 100 - 150 years, and now they are at the brink of extinction. Nothing whatsoever is right there. Anyone who thinks things are perfect really needs to get their clock fixed. It's time to wake up!

Daily, now, I receive religious, racist, sexist diatribes from various members. I accept them because I am curious who likes racism, who likes sexism, who thinks their religion is the only "true" religion. All these people are fools and fools are mainly a danger to themselves. It will be a curiosity to our future to see if we are able to stamp out racism, sexism, religious bigotry or if we few who are left chose to embrace it. Hopefully, the former will prove to be true.



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Then there are the bullies; a few self-absorbed mean-spirited individuals who seem to like to go around the entire order threatening others. I said something publicly flattering about a friend of mine and one such bully threatened me. Not only is this contrary to our basic tenets I also find it offensive for anyone to personally threaten the Grand Master. This person likes to think that they have the corner on reason. They mainly like to hear themselves talk. They run for office to do damage to someone else. They have nothing but the corner on cruelty and obvious stupidity. They like to use their length of membership as a bludgeon, and a roadblock in every discussion. But luckily, we do have rational individuals. Luckily, we do have people that see racism, sexism, religious bigotry as nothing but repackaged fear. That's all it is. The bullies are those who fear reality so much so that they segment it to make it more controllable.

If you are a bully, a racist, a person who likes to demean others or threaten them, you should not be in this order. What part of friendship, love and truth don't you understand? It's high time we all realize that hatred in all its manifestations is one of the ways in which we are killing our order. The next time someone threatens me personally, I will file charges against them. The next time I hear or read a racist diatribe under the masthead of Friendship Love and Truth, I will publish their article under their name to the world. It's time to stop acting like little children, and behave like mature adults; it's time to respect others and love your neighbor, and not besmirch them in any way. The idiots who spread hatred who think they are part of a master race do nothing but prove their own stupidity. They like to hide between the lines of the code but really only use the parts that they like. In reality, even SGL bans prejudice, hatred, vehement acts. No one should think any code anywhere empowers hatred.

In closing, if you disagree with this article, tell me where I am wrong? Are bullies, racists, sexists, religious bigotry, all okay? I am sure I will hear the bully say that they are entitled to their opinion. .but is the one you bullied also entitled? It's time to see the world as one, and not just assume that one man controls the world.

BIt really should not matter what title you possess: or how long you have been a member - what matters is the depth of your heart. If you have been a member too long to remember that what's important is friendship, love & truth, then perhaps it's time to seek another venue to vent your anger.

I believe and practice Friendship, Love, and Truth, Rick Boyles, Grand Master.