

I googled "whistleblower" this morning. Look what I got:

A whistleblower is a person, usually an employee, who exposes information or activity within a private, public, or government organization that is deemed illegal, illicit, unsafe, or a waste, fraud, or abuse of taxpayer funds.

That sure makes it sound like we could use a whole lot more whistleblowers to make the world a better place. They certainly sound like the ultimate hero.

But on the very same page the **synonyms for the term whistleblower** were listed. Here is a taste:

betrayal, traitor, Judas, agent, spy, infiltrator, plant, turncoat, tattletale, rat, squealer, stool pigeon, snake in the grass, snitch

Why in the world would those with such heroic actions be called something with such a negative connotation?

We have a famous whistleblower in our community. She doesn't hide the fact she is a whistleblower. She is proud that she uncovered a deadly practice ignored by the pharmaceutical company where she worked.

The pharmaceutical company fired Cheryl Meads for uncovering their wrongdoing. They paid dearly. But they learned. They reorganized the company and under new leadership Cheryl was honored and applauded as a true hero... not a traitor, an infiltrator, a tattletale or a snitch.

We can learn from Cheryl Meads: speak up when something is wrong; something we deem illegal, illicit, unsafe, or a waste, fraud, or abuse of taxpayer funds. Or **just** something unethical.

I will never associate Cheryl with the word whistleblower. In Islamorada we can associate a more proper synonym for the word whistleblower: HERO!

Let's all be heroes when we know that something just isn't right! Speak up loud and clear.