

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

In This Issue

[Goal Setting](#)
[Meaning of the 2012 Election](#)
[Shameless Plug Ara's Journal](#)
[World of Words](#)

Quick Links

[Ara's Web Site](#)
[Facebook Page](#)

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Issue: # 039

November 16, 2012

Greetings!

If you are one of my newer subscribers, I welcome you! I intend to bring you fresh perspectives in each issue of *Uncommon Sense* that are meant to give you much food for thought.

And if you are one of my long-time subscribers, welcome back. This has been a hard issue to write. I admit it, I'm still reeling by the outcome of the Presidential Election, an issue I comment on in this issue. But I can't afford to sink into a pool of despair and neither can you. Thus, I try to light a fire under you (and me) with the article immediately below. There is some other content you may find instructive and valuable, so sink your teeth into this one.

OK, let's get started.

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood



Goal Setting: The Kick

On December 26th, 2011, I published issue #18 of *Uncommon Sense*. In that issue I devoted this column to a discussion around goal setting. A lot of people sent some positive feedback my way, as that article struck a chord in many. I hope readers of that article ended up setting some lofty goals for 2012.

And here we are, more than 11 months into the current year.

If you set some goals for 2012, how are you doing at this point? Have you achieved any of your goals? Are you close to achieving others? Or have you gotten side-tracked?

If you have not achieved your goals, this column is for you.

Think about long-distance runners (athletes who run, say, one mile, or perhaps two miles.) They run most of the race at a certain pace. But when they get to the last 100 or 200 yards, they throw caution to the wind and turn on the burners. You see them literally sprinting towards the finish line at the time in the race when they are most fatigued. They do this because they have nothing left to lose, so they muster all of their remaining energy and spend it with reckless abandon. This last burst of energy is known as a "kick", and having a strong kick can often win the race and set records.



The same is true with professional football teams. If a team is losing by a touchdown, and there is only six minutes left on the game clock, that team may engage in what is known as a "no-huddle offense." Rather than lose time in the huddle, they forgo the huddle altogether as they have a pre-planned set of plays they will run and all of the players have memorized the sequence of those plays. That enables them to save time and step up the pace of the game. Many teams come from behind to win the game using the "no-huddle offense."

The principles in play with both the long-distance runner and the football team can be applied to goal setting. If you are behind in the accomplishment of your goals, recalibrate your priorities. You've got just over six weeks to explode to greatness. Review your calendar and competing priorities and ask yourself what you have to shift in order to accomplish as many of your 2012 goals as possible. Then pick up the pace and attack those remaining goals. Even if you don't accomplish all of them, you should be able to accomplish some of them and end the year on a positive note.

Put your efforts in high gear. Go for broke. Recommit yourself to greatness. Make something happen. The clock is ticking. You can do it.

Now do it!

What the Election of 2012 Means

The election is behind us. One party is thrilled; another party is depressed and demoralized. And that is the way our system works. All of us should pray that our President will be inspired from on High to exercise sound judgment in the execution of his duties.

It's hard to put into words what I sense America has done with the outcome of the election of 2012. The closest comparison I can come up with is this: imagine if, in 1980, the United States had voted to reelect Jimmy Carter and reject Ronald Regan. Something of that magnitude has

happened in 2012. America squandered a great opportunity to put a first-rate leader into the Executive Office, and I fear the



consequences of our having done so could be quite profound for generations. We may not see another presidential candidate of the stature of Mitt Romney in my lifetime.

One thing I do not agree with is the pundits who believe conservatives need to modify their overall philosophy to sound more like liberals in order to attract more voters. This is patently foolish thinking. I belong to a Church that prohibits the drinking of coffee and the smoking of cigarettes. Should my Church drop those standards in order to attract more members? Of course not.

My recommendation is really simple: conservatives need to do a much better job of articulating their positions with confidence and persuasion. We need to get better acquainted with the U.S. Constitution and other founding documents, know what the Founders believed, and be adept at articulating how conservative (i.e., American)

values contrast with Leftist, socialist, or liberal (i.e., European secular) values.

If we do that, we will persuade thoughtful, intelligent, sensible citizens to embrace American values (and forsake Leftist ideology).

If we fail to do that Leftism will continue to permeate the body politic and will transform America into a failed state.

Those are our two options.

And I am determined to do the former.

Shameless Plug

I have been asked to teach a 16-week course in Entrepreneurship at College of the Canyons in Valencia. The course will be held from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM on Tuesday evenings beginning on February 5th and concluding on May



28th. If you'd like more information, send me an email (ara@aranorwood.com) or go to the College of the Canyons website (www.canyons.edu).

From Ara's Journal

Breach. A break in relations. A failure to observe a code of conduct. A violation of the social order.

Unfortunately it's something we all experience. And it's something all of us are guilty of at one time or another.



Sometimes the breach is relatively small, like failing to show up on time for an appointment, or interrupting another person when they are speaking. Other times the breach is massive - like being unfaithful to one's marriage vows, or finding sadistic pleasure in publicly and needlessly humiliating another human being. Many breaches fall between these two extremes.

The antidote to most breaches is the sincere offering of an

apology.

Apologizing is very difficult for some people. Apologizing requires humility of the highest order - a paradox, inasmuch as the higher the order of humility, the more prostrate the person stands in relation to others. Apologizing essentially translates into "I am wrong, and I am so very sorry." How many of us can be so candid and forthcoming in our moment of shame?

Apologizing does some rather remarkable things. First, it enables us to be humane in that it enables us to be honest about our woeful inadequacies. We have to come to embrace the fact that we are not so high and mighty as we thought.

But apologizing also has the potential - though not the guarantee - to bring about reconciliation. And in those instances where reconciliation is possible, the bond between the two parties - forgiver and forgiven - is incalculably sweeter and more sublime.

Apologies must be sincere and truthful. Thus, the worst scenario is the insincere apology. No apology is preferred to an insincere or forced apology. The very nature of an apology presupposes earnest candor and an openness void of excuses; thus, the insincere apology is as counterfeit to human healing as prostitution is to the sacred intimacy of human sexuality within marriage. The phony apology adds insult to injury.

Whenever I am certain I am owed an apology by someone, my greater concern should be about who I owe an apology to. That is where my energies must remain, and not on who may have wronged me in some way.

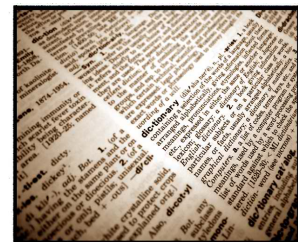
The World of Words

Building Your Power of Expression

Enskonce, v

Pronunciation: en'skän

Meaning: Something (or someone) that is ensconced is established or settled in a comfortable, safe, or secret place. Most of the time the term is used in the past tense.



Usage:

- *I finally located him at the far end of the show room, ensconced behind the wheel of a red 1969 Stingray convertible.*
- *You will need to ensconce yourself in the closet in order to eavesdrop.*
- *She was fairly comfortably ensconced in a suite of rooms.*

Subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" is now complete and has been sent out. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

For more information on my work, follow me on Twitter ("Ara Norwood"), or on Facebook (keyword "Leadership Development Systems") or via my website: www.aranorwood.com

Sincerely,

Ara Norwood
Leadership Development Systems