

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 040

November 26, 2012

Greetings!

I hope you all had a lovely Thanksgiving holiday! And thank you to all for the great feedback I received on the goal setting article in the last issue of *Uncommon Sense* -- it seems it hit a nice chord for many of you.

And please keep the comments coming. If *Uncommon Sense* has helped you in any way, please feel free to send an email and tell me about it. I always love hearing from you.

Thanks also to those of you who forward *Uncommon Sense* to others whom you feel might benefit from it. I encourage all of you to forward this issue to those in your contact list whom you feel would find value in the content I bring you with this issue. You can also click on any of the social sharing links just above the masthead (to repost on Facebook Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.)

OK, let's get started.

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood



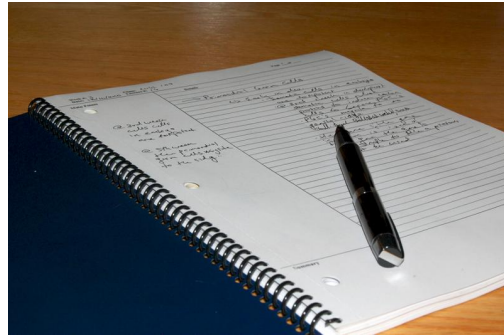
Capture and Expand

Whether you are a student attending college, or a working professional, chances are high that you will be on the receiving end of some verbal message that needs to be captured and acted on. If you are a student, it will probably be a lecture by a professor. If you are a working professional, some manager or administrator or perhaps a

subject matter expert will convey information to you that you'll need to retain. Most of us do that through note-taking.

Strange though it may seem, note-taking is an activity like any other activity: it can be done poorly, moderately well, or done with excellence. Most of us don't think in terms of elevating the manner in which we take notes, and thus, most note-taking is done poorly.

The biggest flaw in most note-taking is its tendency to capture inputs but no more. We take notes by capturing information, data, formulas, theorems, etc., but fail to ask ourselves how this is relevant and what we are going to do about it. Capturing inputs (i.e., what the other party is saying) is only half the battle. If I had two bits of advice to impart that would help you to excel at note-taking, here is what they would be:



- Recognize that not all inputs are of equal value. Therefore, try not to fall into the rut of becoming a court reporter - don't capture every single thing being said. Instead, capture the broad contours of what is being conveyed. Capture the essence, the essentials.
- Where appropriate, take notes on what, when, and how you will implement what you have learned. There should be action items resulting from your note-taking. What will you read? What will you research? What will you go out and acquire? What website will you explore? Who will you talk to? What actions will you take? What will you do differently?

If you not only capture, but expand on what you captured with specific action items, your note-taking will be meaningful, and you will be in a class by yourself where execution is concerned.

President Barack Obama was reelected, winning about 4 million more popular votes than his challenger, Governor Mitt Romney. That's about 3% more popular votes. These numbers hardly spell out a "mandate".

But the liberal Left apparently thinks otherwise, as they seem to be spreading their poison with reckless abandon. Here is just a sampling of some of the recent news stories that caught my eye.

- The latest manifestation Leftist narcissism concerns the [successful destruction by atheists](#) of a Christmas tradition. In the past, Christians have set up a series of Nativity Scenes at Palisades Park in Santa Monica. Atheists groups decided to flood the city with applications to put up "atheist scenes" and caused such a disruption, that a federal judge, Audrey B. Collins, (a Clinton appointee) was called upon to rule on the contention. Being a liberal judge she simply decided to side with the atheist agenda and put a stop to having any and all displays in the park during the Christmas season. Christians are heartbroken and outraged; atheists, who never really wanted to put up their so-called display in the first place, chalked up another victory for secularism as they have once again banished religion from the public square. For sixty years, Palisades Park was home to lovely, beautiful Nativity Scenes that charmed visitors and enhanced the Christmas spirit. Now there is nothing. Since Christmas isn't the holiday of choice by the small number of atheists who roam our streets, they decided they would ruin it for the 95% of the population who wished to honor one of our most important national holidays.
- Palestinians have been firing off rockets into Israel by the hundreds. Israel, after showing incomprehensible restraint, finally started defending itself. It is interesting to assess how Americans of various political persuasions view Israel's defense of its country and people. According to a [CNN poll](#), 74% of Republicans believe what Israel is doing is justified. Among Democrats, only 40% believe Israel's actions are justified. . . . Let that sink in a moment - 60% of Democrats (a clear majority)

believe that Israel is not justified in defending itself from terrorists. That's Leftist thinking at its finest.

- The 2012 Election also produced some troubling outcomes for our country - apart from the presidential election. Two of our fifty states [legalized the use](#) of a traditionally illegal drug - marijuana. Somehow, voters in Colorado and Washington decided that the more people high on pot the better. It will be fascinating to watch the drop in productivity and college prep test scores in these two states over the next decade. It's a given that these two states will be followed by additional states in the coming years. Another Leftist win.
- In what has to be the all-time winner of Leftist absurdity, [San Francisco voted](#) 6-5 to ban public nudity. Don't get me wrong, I'm glad the ban is in place. What I'm surprised at - or, not surprised at given we're talking about San Francisco - is that five city officials still believe it is perfectly normal and "progressive" for people - mostly gay men - to walk around in public completely undressed.

It's getting harder and harder to think we will be bequeathing a better more virtuous America to our children than the one we inherited.

Shameless Plug

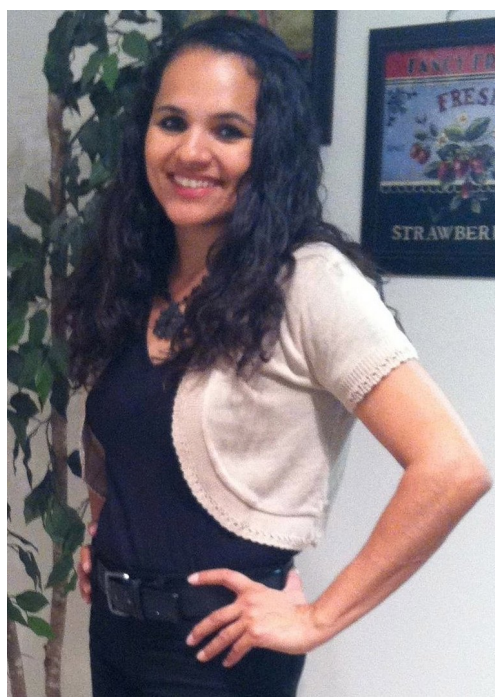
After all that extra eating you did during Thanksgiving, you may be coming to grips with the reality that your health is not what it once was. Perhaps you've got a problem with diabetes. Perhaps you simply need to lose a few pounds. Perhaps you just feel run down all the time.

Perhaps it's time to invest in a health coach.

Let me introduce you to Clarissa. She is first rate as a health coach and she has a growing list of satisfied clients all over the United States. Her methods of helping people get back on track to sound health are impeccable. I recommend her 100%. Reach out to me if you think you might be interested and I'll get the two of you in touch with each other. (You can send me an email: ara@aranorwood.com)

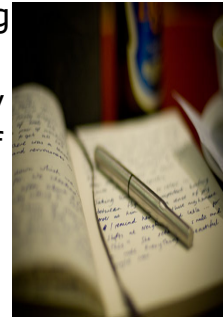
Remember, as Winston Churchill once said, "Healthy

citizens are the greatest asset any country can have."



From Ara's Journal

Watching the latest news reports concerning Black Friday, I was reminded again how selfish and materialistic many in our society have become. From camping out in front of stores for days, to numerous examples of cut-throat, every-man-for-himself behavior, to actual physical violence, I am aware of the ever-increasing proclivity to want to acquire more and more "stuff" among large segments of the population.



It seemed to me that many of the Black Friday shoppers are counting on this "stuff" to bring them happiness. And it probably does for a short duration.

I have come to believe that true happiness doesn't come from the acquisition of "stuff" but rather from having a grateful heart. A grateful heart comes from deep within; it's a quiet awareness that everything we have and everything we are is a blessing, and that we are privileged to be the recipients of such blessings. A grateful heart is mindful of the transitory nature of the blessings that come to us - we have certain blessings today, but we know they may be gone tomorrow, and so we are truly appreciative for the season in which we enjoy such gifts. And we seek to share them, where possible, with others, as a way of spreading light and warmth around to those who may not have been as fortunate as we.

The grateful heart. . . It has a nice ring to it. And it's a

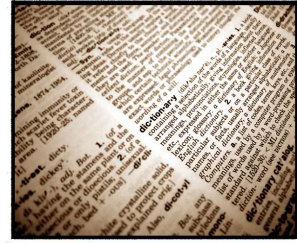
pleasant path to follow.

The World of Words

Building Your Power of Expression

Rubric, n

Pronunciation: 'rōōbrik



Meaning: Although this word has several meanings, I use it in the sense of an overarching category, that governs various subcategories.

Usage:

- *Sara is in charge of all party policies that fall under the rubric of research and development.*
- *Qualified referees use and help to develop a standard rubric for analysis.*
- *This mission is sometimes discussed under the rubric of "horizontal escalation" -- from conventional to nuclear war.*

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