

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 042

December 30, 2012

Greetings!

The year is basically over in another day. And a new year looms. If you have made it through this year, whether with flying colors or if you barely hobbled across the finish line, I salute you.

2013 is here in a matter of hours. It is good that we take some time to celebrate the start of a new year as well as celebrate the accomplishments of the year that is going into the history books. I know I have accomplished much, and I've had my share of setbacks and moments of pain - as have all of us. But we're growing and we're learning and hopefully we'll have a better year in 2013. I'm certainly expecting great things from myself for the coming year as I raise the bar just a bit higher.

Read this issue of *Uncommon Sense* - every bit of it - to help catapult you to a year of great things. Better yet, repost it to your favorite social networking site, or forward on to the people you know could benefit from it.

OK, let's get started.

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood



How to Stay Up Regardless of What's Coming Down. . . .

Your days are fraught with pluses and minuses. Wins and losses litter the history of all of us. It is unusual, in fact, it

is rare, that a given 24 hours finds us on the winning side of all interactions - or the losing side of all. That reality opens up a question: How do successful people make the most of their success and nullify the ill-effects of their misfortune? In other words, how do successful people avoid being derailed by the unfortunate conditions of life while capitalizing on (and replicating) their moments of victory?

In a word, they *compartmentalize*.

Here is how it works. Imagine your mind is comprised of a complex of boxes stacked in columns and rows. To make it easy, imagine you've got a total of 16 boxes in your mind, four boxes tall and four boxes deep and four boxes across - a perfect cube of boxes.

Each box represents either good news or bad news, solutions or problems, wins or losses - and there is an uneven, random mixture of both comprising your boxes at any given moment. Sometimes, there are more "bad" than "good" boxes; other times, it is the "winners" that outweigh the "losers". Those of us who allow ourselves to be preoccupied with the "bad news boxes" end up coming across as sullen, nervous, or insecure, not exactly the stuff of great leadership.

Therefore, when you have a "bad news box" or two (or three or four) simply acknowledge them as such, equally acknowledge the other boxes that are far more positive, and decide to dwell more on them. You can allocate precise times that you will face the bad news boxes and deal with them. But in the main, your general outlook will be of a sunny, buoyant disposition.

If you need a role model, consider the late Ronald Reagan, our 40th U.S. President. Reagan always came off as positive, spirited, and optimistic, even though he had kids that would have driven any parent crazy, he got shot by a deranged assassin, he faced a number of national

tragedies (Iran-Contra, the shooting down of Korean Air Flight #007 by the Soviets, the Beirut Barracks bombing which killed over 240 American servicemen, and the explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger which killed 7 astronauts), and he had to deal with a press corps that continuously tried to paint him as a dunce. Yet Reagan, more often than not,



dealt decisively with the crises at times of his choosing, and maintained an ebullient persona the vast majority of the time. This positivity fostered confidence in the American people, and made the 1980s a time of possibilities. The economy thrived, as did entrepreneurship, and people tended to have a can-do attitude.

There is no reason why you and I cannot follow Reagan's example. I am not advocating a denial of your problems. I am advocating that you keep your spirits up, and that you do not allow life's problems and tragedies to overtake you. Be positive. Be strong. Be sure. Face your heartaches at specific times of your choosing, and deal with them decisively and wisely. But let the lion's share of your energies be focused on the things that drive success and happiness. Do this and you'll prosper in a multitude of ways.

The ACLU and its Values

You can often get a sense of the soul of an organization when you get a read on what that organization loves and what it hates. Organizations, like individuals, have their good sides and their bad sides. That is obvious. What is important to be aware of is when the organization (or person) in question has flaws that far outweigh their virtues.

One of the most Left-leaning organizations in America is the ACLU. Admittedly, there are some within the ranks of the ACLU that do good and noble work. However, I believe the overall soul of the ACLU is deeply troubling.

Have you ever stopped to think about the values of this organization? Do you know what they seek to destroy and what they seek to protect? Allow me to treat you to a quick, off-the-cuff survey of this group of liberal, progressive lawyers.

What does the ACLU hate?

- The ACLU hates - literally hates - any public displays of the Christian cross. To cite [just one](#) from a legion of examples, the ACLU has spent the better part of the last two decades attempting to remove the 40-foot cross located at Mount Soledad National Veterans Memorial located near San Diego, California. A cross has been a part of the heritage of this memorial park since 1913. But the ACLU simply cannot tolerate any symbols suggestive of Christianity to be seen in public under any circumstances if they are connected in any way to government property.

- In Pittsburgh, the [ACLU went ballistic](#) when they discovered that the Allegheny County Courthouse had a nativity scene located on the grand staircase, and a Jewish menorah on display during Hanukkah at a government building located a block away. The outraged

ACLU attorneys fought tooth and nail to have these holiday



displays removed on the grounds that the government would be guilty of endorsing religion - in their minds the government can only endorse secular atheism (the religion of choice of the ACLU.)

- The ACLU cannot stand the Ten Commandments either. They [launched a lawsuit](#) to have a display of the Ten Commandments torn down from the front lawn of the Bloomfield City Hall in New Mexico.
- [The ACLU is against](#) any student reading their own personal copy of the Bible during recess at a public school; they are against Christmas trees; they are against even the mere mention of "God" at a high school graduation ceremony (unless the word is uttered in a blasphemous manner); the ACLU will bring a lawsuit against any school or student found

completing a writing assignment with a religious theme; they are against school prayer (even silent prayer) if it is Christian in nature; however, they are not against the formalizing of a 15-minute prayer time for Muslim students in a public elementary school, nor is the ACLU concerned at all of an American school forcing all students (Muslims as well as non-Muslims) to recite passages from the Koran, choose a Muslim name, and periodically give up various comforts as "forms of fasting" corresponding to Ramadan.

What does the ACLU seek to protect?

- The ACLU [defends the KKK](#).
- The ACLU [defends Nazis](#).
- The ACLU [defends obscenity](#) and the grossest of sacrilege.
- The ACLU [defends late-term abortions](#) even when it is scientifically proven to cause the unborn to feel excruciating pain before being torn to shreds.
- The ACLU [defends pornography](#) to be available out in the open in public libraries where children can see adult perverts amuse themselves.
- The ACLU [defends the distribution of child pornography](#) and in fact, at least one senior executive from within the ACLU has actually [been caught](#) being entertained by child porn.
- The ACLU even goes so far as to [defend the right of perverts to rape children](#), hence the legal aid they provided to the North American Man-Boy Love Association. (The ACLU would vehemently deny this, of course. But simply consider: who are they protecting: the victims of child rape, or the perpetrators of child rape?)

To summarize: the ACLU seeks to actively destroy any sort of public reference involving religion from the Judeo-Christian tradition, but does not have any problems of any kind with Islam. The ACLU has no interest in protecting our children from monsters who prey upon them. Further, the ACLU regularly defends anything and everything that is sordid, perverted, corrupt, destructive, and vile.

Just thought you'd like to know.

(Note: in a future article, I will engage the ACLU legal argument concerning the separation of Church and State.)

Shameless Plug

Norwood to offer a Course In Management

In addition to offering a 16-week course in Entrepreneurship on Tuesday evenings, College of the Canyons has asked me to offer an additional course in Management. This course will begin on February 4th and will feature 14 sessions on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 PM, ending on May 20th.

Being a former student of the late Peter Drucker the elder statesman of management as a formal discipline (shown with me to the right), I have a lot in my arsenal to share with the students, along with a great group of guest speakers who will share their secrets of effective management.



If you are interested in enrolling and want more information, drop me a line (ara@aranorwood.com) or go to the College of the Canyons website (www.canyons.edu).

From Ara's Journal

God has given us remarkable gifts to enable us to perceive the world around us. We call them senses. The sense of sight, of hearing, of touch, of smell, and of taste. We sometimes hear of a "sixth sense" which refers to an unusual gift to perceive things that cannot be perceived by any of the other five senses.



Our senses enable us to make judgments which are very important to our safety and our well-being. These senses also enable us to enjoy the blessings of life. Our sense of sight enables us to view the most remarkable of sunrises.

Our sense of touch enables us to enjoy the sensation of satin sheets against our skin. Our sense of taste enables us to savor the delights of Tiramisu or Crème Brûlée. Our sense of hearing enables us to be moved by the sound of a harp, or the voice of a soprano, or the glee of children's laughter.

One of the most powerful senses we have been given concerns the sense of smell. I suspect that the impact our olfactory nerves have on our consciousness is quite profound. The wide range of experiences these nerves give us can be quite stark. On the one hand, we sometimes encounter a noxious odor coming from some Camembert cheese, or the body odor of a Frenchman in a Paris subway who hasn't bathed in weeks, or the *titan arum* plant found in the Balkins (which smells like a decomposing mammal), or that peculiar smell of a skunk, or burning tires, or the typical Andy Gump porta-potty. These sorts of smells are repugnant and repellent and cause us to want to run in the opposite direction.

Then there are the fragrances at the opposite end of the spectrum, such as the "new car" smell, or the fragrance of freshly baked cookies, or the scent of an alluring perfume, or freshly laundered clothes, or freshly baked bread, or the scent of a baby, or vanilla, or mint, or lavender, or coffee beans (I admit I love the smell of coffee beans, even though I abstain from drinking coffee), or the scent of fresh flowers such as Jasmine or Roses or Plumeria. All of these aromas are inviting and alluring and pleasant.

The sense of smell is really a two-edged sword. It cuts both ways, from the horrendously noxious to the intoxicatingly beautiful. I guess the sense of smell is a microcosm of our lives here on this earth: we can encounter both filth and splendor in this strange world of ours, and the contrasts are stark indeed.

The World of Words

Building Your Power of Expression

Nocturnal, adj

Pronunciation: näk'tərnl



Meaning: Anything that is done at night is nocturnal. Certain birds (owls, for example) tend to be active at night, rather than the day. They are nocturnal.

Usage:

- *Certain animals, born in the wild, quickly become nocturnal to avoid being shot at by hunters.*
- *She seems to function during the day without incident; her seizures are virtually always nocturnal.*
- *The place selected for the nocturnal meeting was a familiar one to her.*

New subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" should have been sent out to you already. 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