

Unc ommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 045

February 15, 2013

Greetings!

Hello! I hope you are well.

I hope you have a splendid 3-day weekend as you remember the great president's of this republic (Washington and Lincoln, especially.)

OK, let's get started.

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

On Questions

Questions are our most important intellectual tool. All of the knowledge that we now have is the result of someone asking (and acting upon) questions.

It dawns on the reflective person that not all questions are created equal. For instance, if I were to ask you the question, *What is*

the sum of $2 + 2$? chances are extremely high that you would know the answer without having to do any sort of calculations. In fact, if I asked you a somewhat more challenging math question, such as *What is the square root*



of 25? you would probably readily supply the answer. We could call these "knowns." In fact, we could call them "Known knowns." You not only know the answer, you know you know the answer.

But what if I asked you *What is the square root of 290.3003?* Unless you are an idiot-savant (with more *savant* than *idiot* in the mix) chances are pretty much zero that you would blurt out 17.038201, which happens to be the correct answer. However, you still could produce the correct answer to such a question, provided you had a good calculator. These are questions that allow for precise answers. Similar questions of this nature would involve asking what the capital city of Columbia is, or what the population of San Francisco is, or what the average summer temperature is in Toronto. Perhaps we could call these "Unknown knowns" in that you may not readily have the answer, but the answer is obtainable if you know where to look.

A really important classification of questions concerns matters that we need to know, but we do not know at the present time, and do not yet see a quick avenue to finding the answers. *Will the marketplace support the new product? Will John succeed in his new role as Vice President? What's the best way to solve a thorny customer service problem?* These questions may best be thought of as "Unknown knowns."

Some questions are even difficult to talk about by their very nature. These are the things we do not know, and we do not know that we do not know. They are the "[Unknown unknowns](#)." A man who has a deadly tumor growing in his liver but doesn't know it would be an example. The American people had no idea that Muslim radicals would fly planes into buildings on September 11, 2001, killing several thousand innocent people -- it was a matter that lurked in our collective blind-spot.

The only possible ways to respond to such hard-to-track questions is to be a student of history, and to use one's imagination to try to contemplate scenarios that are usually unthinkable. And being able to react swiftly when surprises happen is not a bad skill to have.

Attacking the Irrelevant

Google search the terms "Marco Rubio Water Bottle" and you'll find more than 6,000,000 hits.

Marco Rubio is two things: a rising star in the Republican Party, and a target by Democrats who wish the Republican party to not have any rising stars.

How else can one explain the intoxicating fixation Democrat apologists have had with what normal people barely noticed - the taking a swig from a water bottle while giving the Republican response to the State of the Union address?



Reaching new levels of interest in the uninteresting, the Democrats have demonstrated that Rubio is a perceived threat. We can all count on Rubio receiving unrelenting vitriol from the Left from now until he is no longer in public life.

Remember, the liberal Left is not interested in engaging conservatives on ideas, for if they do, they lose. Instead, the liberal Left is obsessed with the pedestrian, the unimportant, and the inconsequential. Mark my words, in the coming months and years, Rubio will be viciously attacked and lampooned by the Left for his choice of clothing, his haircut, the sound of his laugh, the expression on his face at any given moment, or something his next door neighbor did 45 years ago - before Mr. Rubio was even born.

That's where liberal politics has gone.

Correction

Updating Presidential Score Card

In our previous issue (#44) I had produced a Presidential Score Card, showing various figures from President

Obama's first inauguration in 2009 and his more recent inauguration in 2013. I made one statistical error, pointed out to me by two different astute readers, BC and LW.

I had claimed the Highest Federal Income Tax Rate was 35% for both **THEN** and **NOW**.

Actually, while the rate was 35% when Mr. Obama took office, it has since jumped to 39.6%. Sorry for the error.

From Ara's Journal

Reviewing My Day

It's important to keep perspective. It's important to both count one's blessings and also to face up to the more regrettable moments of the day.



I do this each evening. When I retire for the night, I reflect on the day's events and begin by running through, in my mind, all the things that didn't go well. I try to contemplate why they happened as they did. I try to see where my own short-sightedness contributed to the episode. And I try to imagine how I might handle a similar scenario in the future, should I be given that opportunity.

Then, because I wish to end on a positive note, I reflect on the day's more pleasant moments. I replay them and relish their memory. I express thanks (to God) for those experiences. And I hope I will be privileged to face more of the same in my remaining days.

That is how I end each day. That is how I maintain perspective.

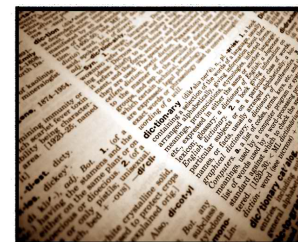
The World of Words

Singular

Building Your Power of Expression

Singular, adj

Pronunciation: 'siNGgyələr



Meaning: I often employ this word to describe someone or something that is unique, a standout, or remarkable in some way.

Usage:

- *Every person is important, every person has their own unique gifts, every person is so singular.*
- *Your style of oratory is so singular and distinctive, that I can't think of anyone to compare it with.*
- *I would suggest our approach to satisfying customers be something that is seen as singular, as one-of-a-kind, and as memorable.*

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