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Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 060

September 30, 2013

Greetings!

I hope this finds you well.

A lot of things are happening and at an ever-quickening velocity! Lots to read, lots to research, and lots to learn. It seems that life in our age moves at a frenetic pace. Do you agree?

I've got some really important content in this, my 60th issue of *Uncommon Sense*. I am grateful to the hundreds of subscribers who continue to find value in this publication. Please do share it on your favorite social network (using the buttons above) or forward it to any of your contacts whom you believe would benefit from any of the articles you find in this issue.

And, as always, please continue to send me an email response any time you have a comment or a question about anything I write. I am always pleased to hear from you.

OK, let's get started.

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Being a Polished Speaker

Giving speeches that captivate and inspire are curiously rare.

I say *curiously rare* because it's not that difficult to do a first-rate job as a public speaker, yet most speeches are awful. Yet they need not be. Follow these tips if you want to dazzle your next audience.

First, make sure you have adequate time to prepare. Extemporaneous, spur-of-the-moment speeches are a tough gig, and unless you have a silver tongue and enormous

conversational fluency, I wouldn't recommend it. So make sure there is enough lead time from the time you agree to deliver a speech until the time of the event itself. Then carve out the necessary time and rehearse. Don't cut corners here or your audience will know.



Second, you've got to select a topic that is both appropriate to the occasion and also one you are passionate about. You have to authentically care deeply about the subject, and the subject must be a fit for the particular audience you are speaking to. I remember once hearing a speech by a woman who's profession was that of an elementary school teacher. She taught second graders. That was what she was used to. And guess what she did when she was speaking to an audience of adults I was a part of? She treated us like we were second-graders. Bad form. She failed to adjust her style to the audience she was now facing.

Third, you've got to craft the speech itself. One way to do that is to take a note pad (I used a yellow 8½" x 11" note pad) and capture every single possible idea that comes to you. What you are doing is throwing into the pot the raw ingredients which you will draw upon as you shape the speech. Just as the art known as music is comprised of some combination of rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, and timbre, to name a few, a great speech also has its elements, such as ideas, analogies, stories, humor, quotes, provocative questions, how-to steps, and data.

You won't necessarily use every single idea you capture on your note pad. But you want to use your note pad as a sort of brain-storming chamber to park your ideas as they come to you, because in the early stages of speech writing, you never know how you will combine the various elements you come up with for the final product.

But at some point, the creative magic does tend to kick in and you start to see the possibilities come together for a strong and memorable speech. You start to see where you might tell a story (and which story), where you might raise a hypothetical question, where you might use humor, where you might involve an audience member, where you might do a demo, etc. At this point, it's all about rehearsing, rehearsing, rehearsing. Take small segments and drill it. You don't have to memorize your speech, but you should memorize the general outline. If you rehearse enough, and know your content, and how one segment transitions to the next, you don't need to memorize much of anything (though there are two exceptions to this which I will explain in a moment.) You will sound conversational, which is what you want.

I would strongly urge you to memorize both the opening words of your speech, as well as your closing words. There cannot be any sort of uncertainty, hesitancy, or confusion about those two critically-important segments. Your opening is what will capture the interest of your audience, set them on the right path to want to listen to your message, and will firmly establish your credibility. It's a truism that you do not get a second chance to make a first impression, so you've got to begin strong and sure. Likewise, your "close" must be potent and memorable. You cannot leave your audience hanging, or do anything that is anti-climactic. Whether your close is humorous, profound, philosophical, or a strongly worded repeat of your theme, or whether it's a call to action, your close should be your strongest moment.

Closing advice: watch lots of speakers. Whether they are good or bad, you can learn from them. And remember, it's the speakers who are the leaders, so speak often if a leader you would be.

The Elephant in the Room With Leftism, Nothing is Sacred

The Holocaust was the apex of evil in a very bloody 20th Century. It was worse than the Soviet Gulags, than Mao's

murderous rampage in China, than Pol Pot's killing fields in Cambodia. It's not that the Holocaust killed more people. It's that the nature of how they were killed, the systematic organization behind it, and the ability of Hitler to persuade so many of his fellow Germans to be transformed from normal citizens to savage murderers of the innocent is staggering in its implications.

We usually look at deniers of the Holocaust as out-of-touch kooks. Likewise, we denigrate those who entertain Neo-Nazi ideas wherein they glorify the Holocaust. So one would think that people in mainstream society would tend to shelter the victims of the Holocaust from persecution and other types of hassles. But when you are on the Left, your Leftist agenda trumps common sense and everything else - including the honoring of those who were brutalized during the Holocaust.

Enter the ACLU, arguably the most Leftist entity in America, and certainly one of the most destructive to American values, so much so that they should change their name to the LCLU. (Think about it.)

The ACLU recently decided to target a Holocaust memorial because it was located on the grounds of the Ohio statehouse, and it also included a Star of David. In the minds of the Leftist lunatics who sequester themselves in the ACLU, this proves that the Ohio statehouse is promoting Judaism and is trying to convert Ohio's residents to that particular faith community. Never mind that most of the people who are behind the memorial are not practitioners of Judaism, the ACLU possesses such bizarre hatred for anything resembling the Judeo-Christian tradition, that they will denigrate even Holocaust victims in their effort to carry forth their desires for a godless society. You can read more about this story by [clicking here](#).



And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

Shameless Plug

Norwood to Speak in DC

I am pleased and excited to have secured a speaking engagement in our nation's capital. I will be heading out to Washington DC in early November to deliver a very important two-day seminar to about 100 sales executives who are flying in from various parts of the east coast.



This will be one of my most significant programs to date and I will be spending the better part of October preparing for this event. While there, I hope to be able to carve out some time to visit some of the great sites and landmarks that pertain to our Founding Fathers.

From Ara's Journal

Sadness

Sadness.

It's something ubiquitous to the human condition. The most buoyant and cheerful among us feel this emotion, even while masking it with a ready smile.



We tend to want to alleviate those we care about from any feelings of sadness. Since happiness is the preferred emotional state, it seems natural to want to protect the people that are closest to us from this singular feeling.

The sensations one feels when they are experiencing sadness are very unique. The human spirit seems so heavy as to be pulled downward, in what appears to be a never-ending spiral that descends for eternity. One's breathing is shallow, one's posture is slumped. This sinking feeling causes one to lose all hope of recovery. At least, that is how it seems at the time. It is understandable that despair would set in, and make life

seem bleak.

I have lived long enough to observe something about sadness. Sadness is rarely ever the final word. Sadness very rarely lasts indefinitely. Life is a dynamic, ever-changing drama, with lots of various inputs hitting us from all sides. Granted, many of those inputs have the very real potential to release to the surface of our lives that emotion we call sadness. Fortunately, there are other inputs that have the tendency to arouse any number of other sentiments: joy, comfort, awe, enlightenment, amusement, perplexity, tranquility.

Another thing about sadness that needs to be considered: while sadness is not something that healthy people would seek, experiencing sadness does have some laudatory consequences. It is difficult to be arrogant or haughty while experiencing sadness. Thus, people who are sad have the noble tendency to be meek, at least for a time. Sadness also tends to enable one to experience empathy. Thus, when Person A who is sad encounters Person B who is also suffering in some way, Person A tends to be a bit more aware and a bit more sensitive to the suffering of Person B.

One last point on sadness. At times our sadness is of a magnitude so as to produce tears, whether we lapse into near-convulsive sobs, or whether we, stoic-like, simply release a single tear from an otherwise placid countenance. There is something cleansing about tears. They come from a place of deep grief most of the time, however they have a tendency to cleanse the human spirit. I don't know how else to describe their singular quality. They seem to bring relief and repose.

That can't be all that bad.

The World of Words

Squalor

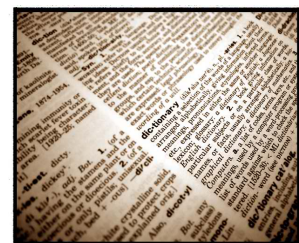
Building Your Power of Expression

Squalor, n

Pronunciation: 'skwälər

Meaning:

Squalor refers to a condition of extreme filthiness due to



neglect. Any time you find people who live in a trashy, contaminated, polluted environment of slime and ooze and mire and refuse, you could rightfully say they live in squalor. It's a very picturesque word.

Usage:

- *This place is horrid! We haven't cleaned in months! We are living in squalor!*
- *In this way, what could be urban squalor is rendered almost regal.*
- *We are polar opposites in that I am a tidy-freak by nature and she prefers to live in utter squalor.*

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