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Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 086

November 30, 2014

Greetings!

While the days are getting shorter, there is no shortage of hot topics. This issue features my best thinking on goal-setting, rioters, and the fall of an icon.

I am banging this out on the last day of the month in an attempt to keep up with my self-imposed publishing schedule of two issues each month. Yet the topics I have selected for this issue are ones that involve very important themes. I hope you gain some wisdom and perspective in reading them.



OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

Self-Development Primer on Goal Setting

The year is winding down. 11 months are behind us with one remaining. You have almost certainly accomplished some things this year, and likely, some intended objectives have not yet been completed.

My advice: be relentless in your efforts for the remainder of the year in accomplishing all of the goals you have set for yourself. In addition, begin now to map out your goals for 2015.

Think of your goals as projects - projects that answer the questions:



- What do I want to happen this next year?
- What do I wish to accomplish?

You should think very carefully about what matters to you. Consider what would be sound accomplishments that would make you proud or cause you to find deep fulfillment. Consider also the built-in restraints that could prevent you from accomplishing certain things. You need to make sure that your goals are not mere dreams, but realistic given your present circumstances. The goals you set should be achievable, but only with some effort and focus.

Spend an adequate amount of time in December to consider possible goals for 2015. And the goals you consider could come from any dimension of your life. Here are some random possible areas of your life to consider along with some examples:

Physical: Run a mile in 8 minutes. Begin taking private lessons in Ju-Jitsu. Begin taking a certain vitamin regiment and follow it religiously for the year. Commit to getting an average of 8 hours of sleep each night.

Business: Take a class in Entrepreneurship at the local college. Launch an online business. Become a regular reader of the Harvard Business Review.

Financial: Earn 10% more in 2015 than you did in 2014. Bank 10% of your net income for the entire year. Begin investing in the stock market. Payoff a credit card.

Social: Go out with one or more friends once each month. Identify your 30 most-important-relationships and acknowledge their birthday in 2015. Start a monthly Bunko Club and host the game at your place 3 times during the year.

Spiritual: Attend church services each Sunday. Spend some time each week reading The Holy Bible or other sacred literature. Do one act of anonymous service each month, helping someone in need without them knowing you are the source of that help. Make prayer a daily activity. Fast once a month.

Mental: Learn French. Add 365 new words to your vocabulary. Take a class in a subject you are unfamiliar with, simply to broaden your horizons. Attend a debate. Schedule time each week for deep thinking. Write and submit 2 papers to be published in peer-reviewed, scholarly journals.

Aesthetic: Take a class in Painting. Begin learning how to play a musical instrument. Perform on a musical instrument in public. Study poetry and write a certain number of poems. Visit six museums in your town.

Do these things and your life will be meaningful and fulfilling. You may not accomplish all of your goals before the end of the year, but you will almost certain accomplish a certain number. And you will grow and be productive and a contributing member of society in the process.

The Elephant in the Room The Imperial Culture of the Slums

*From the wild Irish slums of the 19th century Eastern seaboard to the riot-torn suburbs of Los Angeles, there is one unmistakable lesson in American history: a community that allows a large number of young men (and women) to grow up in broken families, dominated by women, never acquiring any stable relationship to male authority, never acquiring any set of rational expectations about the future. .
. that community asks for, and gets, chaos.*

Daniel Patrick Moynihan

The culture of the black underclass is wrongly thought to have some racial component. For some nonblacks, the behavior of blacks in the slums have seemed to tarnish the reputation of all blacks. And some blacks themselves have appeared to believe that their self-pride is at risk unless they defend the virtues of a "black culture," which to a large extent turns out to be a culture of the slums. But culture has no genetic or racial component. The many millions of blacks who succeed in the larger society do so by adopting the values and habits conducive to success. They are in no sense abandoning "black culture" because there is no such thing. Culture is not racial but circumstantial.

James Dale Davidson

One of the thought-leaders I most admire is Dennis Prager. The extent to which he has influenced my paradigm of the world around me is inestimable. I was deeply impacted in particular by his most recent book, [*Still The Best Hope*](#) which hypothesizes that there are two forces vying for world dominance - Radical Islam and Secular Leftism, both of which are (thus far) prevented such dominance by a third force - Conservative American ideology. Yet I recall when he was early in the process of writing the book, he mentioned on his radio show a fourth force which, for some reason, was dropped from his hypothesis. This fourth force he identified as anarchy.

It is my considered judgment that Dennis Prager made a mistake when he opted not to discuss the force of anarchy in his book. His walking that back left an unfortunate void in an otherwise profound and consequential work.

As we have seen in recent days, a white police officer was involved in a confrontation with a young black man who was a thug. If we are to believe the account of the police officer, this black criminal committed a crime, then disobeyed instructions from the officer, then verbally and physically assaulted the officer, then attempted to seize the officer's service weapon and use it on the officer. The officer, fearing for his life, shot the unarmed black man dead. To ensure that justice was served and that the shooting was not an example of racial profiling, a grand jury examined all of the evidence and deemed the police

officer not guilty.

And then the predictable thing happened. All hell broke loose. Thugs who are steeped in the vapid but imperial cultural of the slums decided to burn down their own community.



I offer no prescriptive to turn around such thinking, if it can be called such. The individuals involved in such criminal activity are not limited to the Missouri community involved in the original incident. They span the country, as their numbers have attempted to make their influence felt in New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, and elsewhere. I am not speaking here of legitimate and peaceful protest. I am speaking of those who capitalize on such incidents to loot, vandalize, and destroy.

Such criminals would claim they are outraged that a white police officer shot a black criminal. They are not outraged that a fellow black committed crimes. They are not outraged in the least that black men and boys are shot dead by other blacks in the slums of our major cities routinely. Facts do not phase such people. And when their emotions are stirred by race-hustlers such as Al Sharpton, their jaundiced but flawed views of America simply calcify into orthodoxies.

Further, Leftist media outlets do not honestly and explicitly state the obvious: that most black homicides are committed by blacks. The Huffington Post, a Left-leaning organ, [ran a story](#) expressing shock and outrage at the disproportionate numbers of black males being murdered in this country, and never once had the courage to explicitly state that such murders are predominantly committed by other blacks. Thankfully, one liberal and honest media figure, Juan Williams, did have the courage to [call it like it is](#).

Fact: the number one cause of death for black males ages 15-34 is murder.

Another way to parse the data is this: 40% of black males

ages 15-34 who died were murdered.

And again, this bears repeating - the lions share of those who murdered those black males were black themselves.

But on this there will be no outrage by the anarchists who wish to focus all of their attention on the occasional shooting of a black criminal by a white law enforcement officer. Anarchy is about anarchy, not about justice, truth, or public virtue.

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

Shameless Plug Norwood to Deliver Management Courses

This coming February it will be my privilege to deliver two separate 16-week courses on the discipline of Management at College of the Canyons. These courses will be presented on Monday evenings at the Valencia Campus and on Thursday evenings at the Canyon Country Campus.

Both classes are expected to reach their capacity of available seating.

Having had the good fortune of studying management in graduate school with Peter Drucker, the elder statesman of management as a formal discipline, I have much of value to bequeath to these students.

If you're not familiar with the name of Peter Drucker (shown to the right, shaking hands with me just a few months prior to his passing in 2005), I can put it in perspective this way: studying management with Drucker would be akin to studying theoretical physics with Einstein.

If you are interested in registering for either class, visit the COC website by [clicking here](#).



From Ara's Journal

Bill Cosby's Skeletons

Bill Cosby has been an icon to so many, and for so many years. As one of the most successful black entertainers of all time, rivaling the likes of Oprah Winfrey and the late Michael Jackson, Cosby was and is a very talented comedienne and actor. His persona has been that of a wholesome family man, contributed in part by his 1986 best-selling book, *Fatherhood*, as well as having been married to the same woman for the past 50 years and being a father of five children. I myself have laughed till my sides ached when I've watched his stand-up routine.



Yet Cosby's reputation seems to be unraveling before our very eyes. Here he is in his late 70s, and numerous allegations have recently surfaced that he has not only been unfaithful to his wife on numerous occasions, but that in a number of instances he has drugged various women before sexually assaulting them.

For the record, I do not consider Mr. Cosby guilty until the evidence in a court of law establishes his guilt. But while I am aware that it is possible one or more women could be guilty of falsifying their stories, it is hard to believe that the total number of women who are surfacing at this time (numbering 16 as of this writing) could all be part of some vast conspiracy.

And thus, it is heartbreaking. When you believe a person to be a role model and then you find out that they are

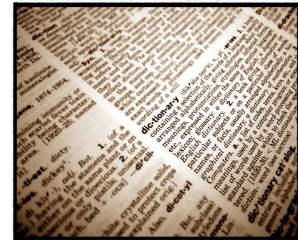
anything but, you weep inside.

And thus we learn that serious wrongdoing of several decades ago can sit quietly, only to surface and destroy a person, even forty years after the fact.

The World of Words

Draconian

Building Your Power of Expression



Draconian adj.

Pronunciation: drə'kōnēən, drā-

Meaning: Any time you have a situation involving overly harsh laws or penalties, you have something that is draconian.

Usage:

- *It is hard to describe the Iranian laws which hand down the death penalty for any Muslims who convert to Christianity as anything other than draconian.*
- *The next issue on our agenda involves a discussion of the draconian measures being proposed by the opposition.*
- *The new policy seems rather draconian and forces smokers to become social outcasts.*

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
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