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Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 090

February 28, 2015

Greetings!

I am pleased to share a few quick thoughts on fitness, on the troubling political landscape, and on the importance of honesty.

My apologies for stacking the deck with a second installment of *Uncommon Sense* in a mere few days. I'll try to do a better job of spacing out the new issues going forward.

And a hearty welcome to our roughly 50 new subscribers.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

The Human Body Needs Maintenance

I just got back from a run. I often run on the track at the local college where I teach, but today I ran in my neighborhood.

There's nothing quite as exhilarating as a good run on a beautiful day where the wind is present in some degree, where there is sunshine but also ample clouds, and where the temperature is mild.

Our bodies are like machines. They need attention and

maintenance. Here are three areas to pay attention to when taking care of your body:



Stretching:

Being limber is a great thing.

Regular stretching exercises, which don't take all that long, will prevent back pain, strains, and other injuries. You probably remember some stretching exercises you learned in the past, or you can learn some online. Yoga is a fine approach. I recommend regular stretching.

Strength exercises: If you belong to a gym or own some weights (barbells, dumb-bells, etc.) you can get in a rigorous workout in less than an hour. But you don't necessarily need weights. You can get down on the floor in your home and crank out some pushups. If you do regular pushups and situps, you will build your strength wonderfully.

Cardio exercises: Running, as I mentioned above, is a great way to exercise the heart and lungs. But running is not your only option. There are stationary bikes, treadmills, and using a jump rope are all great options. In fact, swimming laps is a wonderful alternative to running and has a number of benefits over running. For instance, with swimming, your body is horizontal, and this enhances blood flow. Also, with swimming, you are working more of your body than you do with running. Furthermore, being in the water keeps your body cool and prevents overheating. And the odds of injuring yourself are reduced when swimming as opposed to when running.

There are other aspects to taking care of your body that are noteworthy (such as hand-eye coordination, diet, nutrition, sleep, etc.), but if you focus on those three (stretching, strength exercises, and cardio exercises) and do them regularly - even if for only a very short duration - you will enjoy a better quality of life, you will age gracefully, and you will have more energy and capability of living a

dynamic, active life.

The Elephant in the Room The Left and Self-Delusion

Of the many wise sayings out there that command my interest, the phrase "A fish discovers water last" is among my favorites.

The notion being conveyed is that just as a fish is so inured to its surroundings that it is unaware of them, likewise, we human beings sometimes demonstrate a propensity to be numb to things going on around us. I once read about a family that moved to a town which sported a large factory that manufactured rubber and plastics. The smell that came from that factory was overwhelming to the newcomers. But after a few weeks, they noticed the stench less, and after a few months they didn't notice it at all. They had grown accustomed to it and their adaptation made it difficult to perceive the ugly fragrance. Yet it was there.

I now turn your attention to a fascinating but predictable phenomenon that has taken place recently at one of our elite ivy league universities. Brown University student, Peter Makhlouf, [wrote a column](#) earlier this month about the ROTC which the university had recently formed a partnership with. Makhlouf has been brainwashed by the religion known as Leftism and therefore believes that all things military are evil. Thus, he wants Brown University to reverse its decision and ban the ROTC program from the campus. Further, Makhlouf insists that all ROTC cadets -

and all
U.S.
military
personnel
the world
over, are
criminals
by
definition -
simply by



having an association with the ROTC or the military. In other words, if "John Doe" on Wednesday is guilty of no crime, but then on Thursday he joins the ROTC, as of Thursday Mr. Doe is now a criminal. I suppose Mr.

Makhlouf would have Mr. Doe be incarcerated on Thursday for the crime of showing up to his ROTC orientation program.

Now none of what I have described above should cause anyone much ire. This is how Leftists think - perhaps not each and every Leftist, but those who don't think in such terms are violating a cardinal principle of their religion, namely, all government is good and should be bigger except for the evil military. What is noteworthy about this story, however, is something Mr. Makhlouf wrote in passing: "Admittedly, Brown is more active than most schools, though the overwhelmingly centrist nature of our campus' political discourse should be further reason for opposing military presence."

Mr. Makhlouf reveals much with this eye-opening passage. First, he sees Brown University as Centrist, not Leftist. By implication, he sees himself as Centrist, not Leftist. Yet both he and Brown University are solidly Left-of-center. Makhlouf is obviously even more radically Left than is the university - yet he imagines himself, and his views, as . . . centrist.

And that is the great lesson with this episode. Many Leftists do not see themselves as Leftist. They see themselves as normal, reasonable, unbiased folks with moderate viewpoints. They actually fancy themselves as in possession of standardized, centrist minds and that anything to the right of themselves (since almost nothing is to the left of them) is an aberration, an abnormality, a freakish rogue peculiarity. They would be shocked to find that George Washington was a conservative, albeit a conservative revolutionary. But the shock would wear off because their Leftism, being a religion, would cause them to come to see our Founding Father in a whole new light -- as a flawed and defective human being, furthering their animus toward America itself.

Leftism and self-delusion often go together.

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

Norwood to Speak on Founders

It will be my distinct privilege to be the featured speaker at a meeting of Korean business executives this next week.

The luncheon event will take place in Korea Town and will feature lively and informative content around the personalities, politics, family life, and accomplishments of Six Great Men who stand as towering figures in the founding of our republic.



Executives and other leaders who have attended

previous events where I have spoken have been uniform in their praise.

F. Fernandez wrote:

Your presentation was well received by our members. The extensive research you have done to discover the individual characteristics as well as the idiosyncrasies of each of these important leaders brought about a better understanding of the dynamics of that era that led to the establishment of our government. At the conclusion of your presentation, I can say that our members were very enthusiastic of your remarks. Moreover, numerous members came up to me after our meeting to expressly request that I ask you to return as a speaker.

And C. Freeman had this to say:

Your presentation generated many questions. Your knowledge and personal insight into history and specifically our early Presidents and leaders is evident. Your easy conversational and interactive style kept our members engaged. Thank you for humanizing our founding leaders.

If your organization could benefit from an engaging look at our Founding Fathers such as Jefferson, Washington,

Franklin, and Hamilton, drop me a line.

From Ara's Journal

Choose Honesty

A colleague of mine, Mark, was advising another colleague of mine, Henry, on his resume. I was also a part of that equation, offering my own insights.



Mark told Henry that it is acceptable to lie on your resume, as long as you are careful enough and smart enough to lie about things that can't be verified. For instance, Mark said to Henry, "Let's say that at your last sales job, you only produced 80% of your annual quota. You can get away with saying you produced 120% of quota; they will never be able to verify that. But you can't lie about your title, and you can't lie about when you worked there. Those things are easily verifiable."

In response, I said to Mark, "How about we take a different approach? How about we not lie about anything? That way, we don't have to always be trying to remember what lies we told. Instead, why don't we just perform at our jobs at a commendable level so that we can put truthful accomplishments on our resume?"

Making the decision, the commitment, to be a man or woman of accomplishment, and then backing up that decision with action, is an important decision. When you execute your plan, good results are almost inevitable. And that is something you can put forth with confidence, forfeiting the need to lie, exaggerate, or fabricate. We have far too much of that in our society, and it's costing us dearly.

The World of Words

Genderflex

Building Your Power of Expression

Genderflex, v.

Pronunciation: 'jendər fleks



Meaning: This is a coined word of recent vintage that you won't find in many dictionaries. The basic meaning is to temporarily use communication behaviors typical of the other gender in order to increase potential for influence.

Usage:

- *I know this woman well, and you being somewhat of a macho man, are going to have to genderflex in order to get your point across.*
- *There is no need for you to genderflex on my account; just be yourself.*
- *Try speaking to him in his language; try to genderflex, adapt, and be somewhat like a chameleon.*

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