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# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 108

November 30, 2015

## Greetings!

Great to be with you again.

As Thanksgiving is now behind us (as is Black Friday, where we spend money we don't have, buying useless junk we don't need, elbowing people out of the way we don't know) I share some heartfelt impressions on the subject of gratitude in the **Ara's Journal** column.



Also in this issue, I open up a topic for debate. My **Elephant In The Room** column is handed over to a dear friend and colleague, **Craig**, who is brilliant, passionate, opinionated, and driven. Craig and I share a conservative (i.e., American) world-view, but he has some cautionary words for me on some things I wrote about Islam in an earlier issue (see my "The Two Islams" in issue #99, July 10, 2015.) Craig believes that Islam is, at its core, more dangerous than I do. And so he spells out his thoughts in this issue. I will reply to Craig's comments in the next issue of *Uncommon Sense* (#109), due out in early December. I will give Craig the last word on the matter in issue #110. Readers can decide for themselves where they stand based on the various arguments put forth.

But I begin with a series of quit hits for your self-development.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

## 8 Tid-Bits

- Walk into a bookstore in the next day or so, and browse the new releases. Select a book that looks both interesting and unfamiliar, in terms of the subject matter. Buy that book and read it. You'll benefit immensely from reading something unfamiliar to you.
- Have a place to stash some cash. Regularly. It would help your economic outlook to get in the habit of regularly stashing 10% of your income -- and then not touching it. Do it, and watch what happens (even if it's less than 10% -- *any* amount is better than nothing!)
- Do you know someone who is struggling? Perhaps they are dealing with serious challenges? Give them a call and let them know you care. Be willing to listen to them. It will do them (and you) a world of good.
- Re. food: with Thanksgiving behind us, maybe now would be a good time to revisit the notion of portion-control. You stay in command of how much you consume.
- Plagued by interruptions? Get clear in your understanding of what is most important to you. If you have crystal clear objectives for the day, put a "book mark" on your project and then get right back to it as soon as the interruption passes. Don't get distracted.
- If you are having trouble getting up at an early hour, promise yourself that tonight is the night you will turn it off early and be in bed early. And then arise early the next morning and hit the ground running.
- Who do you need to apologize to? Did you overreact? Were you short or sarcastic? Did you miss a deadline? Did you make someone wait? Did you say something unkind that you now regret? Go to that person and apologize. Today.
- Your major goals for 2015 may still be within reach, but in some cases it will take absolute focus to attain them. If your deadline is December 31st, figure out



which of your unfinished goals can still be reached, and then adopt a "No-Huddle Offense" mentality, and move like gang-busters to nail them! You can do it. Now do it!

## The Elephant in the Room Debating Radical Islam, Part 1 of 3

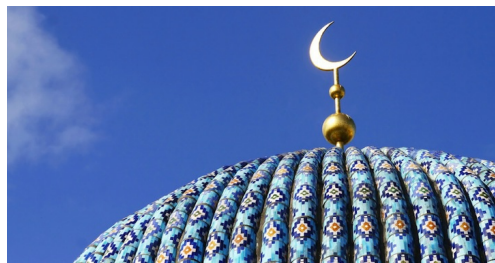
Hello Ara:

In your 99th publication of *Uncommon Sense*, you had a column on Islam, in which you wrote:

*"I know a number of Muslims personally. ZA, MM, and FM come to mind. None of them have struck me as having a violent bone in their body. They are among the most peaceful human beings I know. Conversely, I know a Muslim, FT, who is quite volatile and of a hostile, violent disposition. He seems incapable of controlling his passions and is often quite angry and irrational. While I don't think of him as a terrorist, if someday I found out he carried out a terrorist attack, I would not be particularly surprised. If ZA did such a thing, I would be shocked beyond repair as it would be wholly uncharacteristic of her character."*

So what in this paragraph caused me to write, you ask?

In the Muslim religion, your enemy may be your acquaintance, associate, alliance, friend or even "best" friend. This is because Muhammad and the almighty Allah allow deception among believers to fool the "infidels." This is best put by the following explanations:



"The primary Koranic verse sanctioning deception vis-à-vis non-Muslims, states: 'Let believers not take for friends and allies infidels instead of believers. Whoever does this shall have no relationship left with Allah-unless you but guard yourselves against them, taking precautions.' (3:28; other verses relied on by the ulema include 2:173; 2:185; 4:29; 16:106; 22:78; 40:28)."

Just in case you think you've read this wrong, here's how

the verse is interpreted by Ibn Kathir, one of the principal scholars of Islam: Regarding 3:28 cited above, Ibn Kathir (d. 1373, second only to Tabari) writes, "Whoever at any time or place fears their [infidels'] evil, may protect himself through outward show."

But here's the real clarifying statement: As proof of this, he quotes Muhammad's companions: Abu Darda said "Let us smile to the face of some people while our hearts curse them"; while al-Hassan said, "Doing taqiyya is acceptable till the Day of Judgment [i.e., in perpetuity]."

"In Shi'a Islam, taqiya (تقية taqiyyah/taqīyah) is a form of religious lie, or a legal dispensation whereby a believing individual can deny his faith or commit otherwise illegal or blasphemous acts, especially while they are in fear or at risk of significant persecution." Is this not utterly amazing?

How can we ever know if our Muslim "friends" are really our friends? By the above measures, they can never, ever, be trusted because within their own religion, they're allowed to lie and kill in the name of Allah.

So, even denials of this way of thinking or believing by any Muslim allows deviousness', bald face lying to you or anyone - while they simultaneously smile at you, reassuring you they are not of this nature.

Why it is that so few Muslims have renounced 9/11, or other heinous attacks against the USA? Like the Left, they know they cannot tell the truth lest their ends not be achieved. Like Saul Alinsky, the communist left's "idea man" and chief quarterback, Muslims believe "the ends justify the means." The Left and Muslims have a lot in common.

So then, on this sad but truthful matter, to our "friendly" Muslims, we all must subscribe to the prescription of the late, great Ronald Regan, the greatest president of our time, as he did regarding our then cold war enemies - and really still our enemies, the Russians, "Trust, but verify." But, how do you trust when they have an out, the "lie out?"

Since the Koran allows deceit on this matter, I don't believe one can meaningfully trust, and one can certainly not verify short of spying. Consequently, we're left only with our instincts on this one. Unfortunate, but that's the way it is.

Sincerely,

Craig

## From Ara's Journal

### Giving Thanks

As I write this, I am suffering from a head cold.

I don't like it one bit, but of all the possible diseases I could be plagued with, this one is pretty mild. Thus, I shouldn't complain.

I actually find that when I'm not well, I appreciate my normally good health more keenly.

When I haven't seen my friends for a prolonged period, I find I long for them, and thus value those choice relationships.

When a family member is absent for days on end, I miss that person deeply, and rejoice at her eventual safe return.

When I go too long without a meal, and start to feel hungry, my gratitude for food becomes acute.

When I am cold, I sure appreciate the modern convenience of central heating.

When I am off course, I treasure my GPS app.

When bewildered, I relish the wise counsel from intelligent colleagues, friends, and associates.

When I fail, I treasure the wisdom of the Psalms and the writings of St. John.

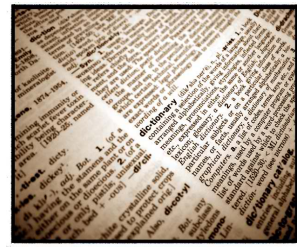
When lost, I relish the power of prayer.

All of these things I give profound thanks for, and hold them close to my heart.



## The World of Words

Gentry



**Gentry**, n

**Pronunciation:** 'jentrē

**Meaning:** This word refers to a classification of people, specifically those of good social standing. When you see this word, think of well-born, well-bred people of relatively high social class. The word is especially used to describe such people from an earlier point in time.

**Usage:**

- *It was amazing: she went from the underclass to the gentry in less than 18 months!*
- *Washington, though land rich and cash poor, could be said to be among the gentry of his day.*
- *Not all high-brow gentry are unfeeling to the plight of others.*

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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](mailto: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](http://www.aranorwood.com)

**Sincerely,**

Ara Norwood  
Leadership Development Systems