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# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 124

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## Greetings!

I hope this finds you well. And I hope you are having both an enjoyable and productive summer.

Taking a look at the **Self-Development** column, you will find a distinction in your planning that may be valuable to you. You decide.

As for the **Elephant in the Room** column, we explore the allegation, in fact, the assumption, that one party has a monopoly on being concerned about poverty while another party is part of the problem. In fact, the opposite is the case.

Finally, I ruminate in the **Ara's Journal** column about man's inhumanity to man. While it could leave you feeling low, take heart. The quote that is attributed to one of the wiser lights of the past that appears at the end of the article should give you hope.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



**Self-Development**  
Managing One's Time: Tasks vs. Schedules

Time management is one of those things that we all know is important, but few of us do it well.

Here is a very simple and obvious idea to consider when trying to get better at managing your time. It involves the distinction between a task and an appointment.

People who are serious about using their time wisely try to be organized. Thus, they keep a list of things they wish to accomplish for a period of time -- usually spanning a single day. That list gets updated each day as certain tasks that were accomplished get checked off and tasks that did not get accomplished usually remain on the list for the next day as additional new tasks get added on.

Allow me to get conceptual for just a moment. Some things could be thought of as fluid, others as solid. Some as flexible, others as firm. Some things have a variable quality to them, while others are invariable. This describes the distinctions between a *task* and an *appointment*.



Be mindful of the fact that a typical task list (or, if you prefer, a "To-Do List") is, by its very nature, fluid. While the task itself may be (and should be) precise, the fact that it is on a list and not on a schedule makes it imprecise in terms of when it will be done. While one might place on one's To-Do List the following -- "Pick up birthday card for David," there is no concrete time-frame in which that task will occur. It may happen in the morning, during the lunch hour, when heading home from work, or after dinner. And it may not happen at all if other pressing matters distract one from one's task list.

But what if the person in question had actually taken the task to pick up the birthday card for David and placed it in their calendar. It then becomes part of their schedule. This moves the nature of the task from the world of the fluid to the world of the solid. There is now an element of precision injected into the task. When the item was only on a task list, it was anybody's guess as to when it would get accomplished. But when it is placed in one's daily schedule, it's on the calendar and must be done by, say, 5:00 PM. This is a firm and precise point in time and that fact alone greatly increases the likelihood that the task will get done, because the task has been allocated to an unambiguous slot in the schedule.

The next time you engage in daily or weekly planning, take your various task lists and see if it makes sense to populate your calendar with them. The degree to which you remove ambiguity is the degree to which you greatly increase the likelihood of accomplishing the things that really need to get done.

And you'll be a better manager of your time.

Continuing my response to the challenge thrown my way by Dr. J after he read Issue #120 of *Uncommon Sense*, wherein he retorted:

*It would be helpful to your argument to give examples of how the "Left," antagonistic as it appears to racism, income inequality, intervention into foreign wars, **poverty**, environmental destruction, Global Warming, insider trading, sexism, Creationism, pollution, disenfranchisement of voters, etc, poses an existential threat to the US. If anything, the progressives in this country appear host to its better angels.*

So my friend and, in this instance, opponent, Dr. J believes that the Left is antagonistic to poverty, along with the requisite implication that it is Democrats who care about the little guy (i.e., the common man) and it is the evil, selfish Republicans who only care about getting wealthy at the expense of others.

Being a member of neither political party, all I can say is this: Actions speak louder than words.

I see the Left from a different vantage point than do other Leftists. And my analysis tells me that the Progressive Left does a poor job at self-analysis all the while engaging in a lot of congratulatory back-slapping on their giving lip service to the ideals of going to war against poverty. What follows are my concrete arguments on why I think the Left is self-deluded in this regard:



- While Democrats claim to be the party that fostered the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the historical fact remains that it was Republicans who voted for it in greater numbers. Want specifics? [80% of Republicans](#) in both the House and the Senate voted for the bill. Less than 70% of Democrats did.
- It is Democrats who support mass, unchecked immigration while the working classes suffer economically. This is because illegal immigration results in an estimated \$25 billion sent back in remittances to Mexico each year. That is money that would have otherwise stayed in the pockets of the working class of American citizens. Illegal immigration, which is shamefully and unabashedly supported by the Left, leaves American citizens with less money in the pot to draw upon, an example of Leftist policy positions that poison the economic well of the body politic.

- Moreover, the additional social expense associated with millions of undocumented workers - in rising health-care, legal, education, and law-enforcement costs - is usually picked up by the public taxpayer, not by employers. Again, Liberal Democrats give lip service to caring about the poor and downtrodden all the while their unwise policy positions impoverish working Americans.
- If Liberal Democrats ever bothered to ponder the question of who does not benefit from mass illegal immigration, they would discover, perhaps to their horror, that it's mostly the poor, minorities, and the lower-middle class, who are not employers, but rather, who are forced to compete with undocumented immigrants for low-wage jobs. They usually clean their own houses and do their own yard work. They cannot afford to send their children to a different school when theirs becomes overcrowded. They cannot afford the increased taxes needed for social support of millions of new arrivals.
- If my esteemed colleague Dr. J needs further evidence of the massive failure of Liberal Democratic policy when it comes to poverty, he need only look at his own state of California as a case study. California has been run solely by Liberal Democrats for years, yet poverty is still here. According to [one source](#), about 4 in 10 California residents are living in or near poverty.
- I look at the good intentions put forth by Liberal Democrats, such as Affirmative Action, and I find that such good intentions have sorry outcomes. [Thomas Sowell](#), a black economist who has done the requisite analysis, unequivocally states that Affirmative Action, intended to help blacks, has actually hurt poor blacks, causing them to fall further and further behind. Here we gave state-sponsored efforts the power to force companies to hire blacks and the results do not end up helping blacks at all.
- The Left often ask the question, "Why is there poverty?" But they never seem to get around to asking the question, "Why is there wealth?" If they did, they might stumble on to a truth -- namely that poverty is the default reality for most of the earth's inhabitants since the dawn of time. But the inconvenient truth that Leftists cannot bring themselves to gaze at on the assumption that doing so might cause them to turn to stone is that free market capitalism -- something the Left abhors -- [has produced more wealth](#) than has hitherto been possible under socialism, communism, or monarchical systems. This makes one wonder what it really means to be "poor" in America in the 21st century.

- Thus, in 2010, [the vast majority](#) of those designated as "poor" in America lived in a dwelling with air-conditioning (far more than can be said for the total American population in 1970); owned a microwave oven; owned a vehicle (and 31% of them had two or more vehicles); had cable or satellite TV; owned at least one DVD player; owned a personal computer (and one in seven had two or more computers); and, if they had children in the home, owned a video game console such as Xbox or PlayStation. Further, 43% of the poor had internet access. One-third owned a wide-screen plasma or LCD TV, and one-fourth owned a digital video recorder system such as a TiVo. Should we compare the American "poor" with their poor counterparts in Calcutta?
- Finally, I should point out that when one examines the amount of charitable giving done by states that are designated Blue States (i.e., states in which Democrats dominate) and Red States (those where Republicans are in the majority), one finds that [the Red States give more](#), not less, to alleviate poverty than do those dominated by Liberal Democrats (a redundancy). Thus, we see that Leftists talk about the woes of poverty while conservatives -- especially religious conservatives, actually pull out their wallets and give.

Speaking of giving, I am reminded of the well-worn adage, "Give a man a fish, you feed him for a meal. Teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime." Leftists give lip service to the first half of that couplet. Religious conservatives tend to do a lot of the first, and even more of the second segment of that couplet.

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

## Shameless Plug

### Norwood to Deliver Two Programs This Week!

It will be my distinct privilege to deliver a full-day workshop on Tuesday of this week. My topic will be centered around how individuals and teams build relationships based on trust and respect. Rapport-building is an important factor in any business relationship and so I am looking forward to putting this corporate audience through a litany of exercises, readings, and discussion topics relative to the importance of building and maintaining trust.

On Thursday I will be delivering a separate program, to a different corporate audience, on the important topic of effective interviewing. All of the issues relative to reviewing résumés, planning the interview, greeting the candidate, asking the right questions, and effectively concluding the interaction, will be included in this no-holds-barred dose of reality.

I am looking forward to delivering both programs and am excited about the skill transfer that is going to take place with both audiences.



## From Ara's Journal

### Man's Inhumanity to Man

When WLS Radio announcer Herbert Morrison, who had been assigned to cover the Hindenburg Zeppelin on May 6th, 1937, saw the massive craft suddenly and unexpectedly burst into flames over New Jersey and come crashing down, killing 36 people, his frantic and dramatic reporting on live radio included the phrase, "Oh, the humanity!" An odd phrase by today's standards of expression, but given the chaos and carnage of the moment, Morrison can be given a pass for his outburst.



Still, his use of the term *humanity* to describe the horrors of an accidental disaster are odd. We normally think in terms of humanity when we think of the overt and deliberate actions we mortals take towards each other.

And while there are praiseworthy examples of kindness and graciousness that pop up here and there, I am struck by the level, common and disturbing, of man's inhumanity to man.

We know the 20th century was the bloodiest in all of recorded human history, with luminaries of pure evil such as Hitler, Mao, Stalin, Pol Pot, (all of them secular) and others committing atrocities, the scope of which would make the Crusades and the Inquisition (carried out by those who professed Christianity) appear as truly jayvee by comparison. But the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire in their genocide of the Armenians carried out between 1909 and 1918 and resulting in the murder of 1.5 million Armenians (a fact still not acknowledged by the Turkish government) is an example of a religious people (believers in Islam) freely murdering an innocent religious people (Christians.)

Some of the ancient kingpins of evil lived so long ago that history doesn't tell us how many people lost their lives due to such villains. Although we know Genghis Khan (1162-1227) is said to have killed some 40 million people, the number of people maimed and killed by Attila the Hun (d. 453 AD) is unknown.

In our day it is easy to see that inhumanity is commonplace. It doesn't merely manifest itself in the extreme form of butchery, such as we see with ISIS and other groups within the family of Islamic Jihad ( Hamas, Hezbollah, the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, etc.) It also manifests itself in ways that fall far short of murder:

- Political candidates and their operatives that seek to destroy the reputations

- of their opponents.
- Gay rights activists who deem it well within bounds to destroy the careers or the bank accounts of those who do not support their agenda, making it difficult to put food on the table.
  - Corporate big wigs who neither flinch nor hesitate when they see an opportunity to crush an up and coming small business who they might one day compete with.
  - Ungrateful and spoiled teenagers who have no compunction about telling imperfect yet still decent parents to "F\_\_\_ off!"
  - Drug dealers who peddle their illegal poison to make money, not caring a whit about the horrible outcomes their customers (and everyone in the lives of their customers) will soon face.
  - Wicked perverts who engage in human trafficking, placing ever younger and younger girls in the sex trade to be treated like non-human objects rather than the beautiful and virtuous ladies they were intended to become.
  - Power-hungry bosses.
  - Mean-spirited husbands.
  - Cut-throat lawyers.
  - Activist judges.
  - Corrupt politicians who can't even pass something as simple as [Kate's Law](#), giving preference to illegal alien killers over their own citizens.
  - We even see cruelty in something as small as restaurant patrons who don't like their server for some reason and so rather than report their misgivings to management, they leave a gratuity of four pennies to make their statement loud and clear.

The list goes on.

It is depressing.

But we can take solace in the wisdom attributed to Gandhi: "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

That will have to do for now.

## The World of Words

### Ostensibly

#### Building Your Power of Expression

**Ostensibly**, adv.

**Pronunciation:** ä'stensiblē



**Note:** Unless I am mistaken, all of my previous **World of Words** columns have featured either verbs, nouns, or adjectives. With this issue of *Uncommon Sense*, I offer, for the first time, an adverb. Quick English lesson for those of you who slept

through your high school English class: an adverb is a word that describes, or modifies, or qualifies another word (an adjective, a verb, or perhaps even another adverb) expressing a relation of place, time, circumstance, manner, cause, degree, etc. Examples, using italics to highlight the adverb, would include, "He *quickly* runs," "She *slowly* walks," and "He *happily* spouts his opinions." You always know you have an adverb if the word is describing a verb, adjective, or another adverb.

**Meaning:** This word is used to in the sense of *apparently, seemingly, purportedly, etc.*, but not necessarily *actually*. When a surface meaning suggests one thing, but the actual motive or meaning is different, the word *ostensibly* could be drawn upon.

**Usage:**

- *In the late afternoon, James came by my office, ostensibly on his way to the cafeteria, casually asking me if I had the list of donors ready for him.*
- *It is ostensibly a book about football.*
- *This led to the arrest of of some 45 men and women assembled in Plumbers' Hall (ostensibly for a wedding) none of whom could produce any type of identification.*

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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).

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