


# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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**Issue: # 156**

**November 30, 2017**

**Dear David,**

 Ara Norwood

Happy Thursday to you.

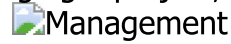
So much is happening in the world! It's staggering to consider the consequential events that are happening with such enormous simultaneity. North Korea, the spate of firings over sexual harassment behavior by so many in the media and in the Hollywood culture and elsewhere, the great advances in Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Robotics, and Miniaturization, the growing economy, the energetic and controversial occupant of the White House. We just survived Thanksgiving, Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and additional, made-up commercial events, and Christmas if fast approaching.

Take a moment to read through this issue of *Uncommon Sense*. I give you several short, crisp, bite-sized doses of reality that I am certain you will profit from.

OK, let's get started.

## Self-Management

While the management of others is a task of enormous consequence, the management of self comes first, and is, in many ways, even more consequential. Self-management is a pre-requisite to managing in larger spheres of influence -- managing one other person, managing a team, managing a project, managing a large department within an



organization (perhaps a business, a military unit, a hospital, an athletic organization, a church, or a symphony orchestra.)

Here are some areas you must consider when assessing your own level of self-management:

***The management of your time.*** We live in an age of distraction. We see it in any music video ever shown on MTV or VH1 from the 1980s onward, with random images flashing before our eyes every 0.8 seconds. Our microwave world brings with it a seemingly unending barrage of interruptions. If we yield to the bombardment, we fail to accomplish much. That is why it is critical that we learn how to turn away from the onslaught of intrusions. We can do this by spending less time in meetings, and less time on the wave of irrelevancies that bombard our mobile devices, and more time locked away from view, working on, and accomplishing, matters of substance.

***The management of your health.*** The foods we consume, the amount of sleep we get consistently, and the amount of exercise we engage in all contribute to a sharp mind and an energetic body. Managing our health through regular visits to our primary doctor and dentist, eating smart, staying limber, building strength, and especially, of getting enough cardio-vascular exercise, will pay great dividends over the long haul and enable us to be physically capable of great things.

***The management of your relationships.*** We are no longer in a hunter-gatherer world. This Knowledge-Age demands that we tap into other people to accomplish great things. Being able to get along with people, having a personality that is not alienating, making more friends than enemies, and building a large and ever-expanding network of contacts is crucial to opening doors you cannot otherwise open on your own. Additionally, regular attention to your circle of true friends will lend a sweetness to your life that can get you through your darker moments. And always make time for the core relationships in your life (immediate family and your closest inner circle of friends.) Neglecting either will lead to dire outcomes.

***The management of your career.*** People are living longer. In fact, various technological advances are coming together to significantly elongate life expectancy. If you were born after 1955, the chances are very good that you will live past 90. With greater windows of time to perform in the world of work, Knowledge Workers (which is most of us) are going to have to rethink retirement. A retirement age of 64 is no longer a mandate. Ever increasing numbers of us will

work full-time to age 70, and then switch gears and continue to work, albeit it in more flexible work structures, well into our 80s. Many of us will select a whole new career in our 50s or 60s, abandoning the type of work we did for over 30 years, and embrace something radically different. Nurses will become Research Librarians. Postal Workers will become Restaurateurs. Chemists will become Professional Cello Players in the symphony orchestra. And College Football Coaches will become Newspaper Columnists. We will only be limited by our imagination and our resolve.

***The management of your deeper purpose.*** Most of us imagine we know ourselves rather well. We do not. There is so much about ourselves that we simply do not understand, or even think about. But we can decide what our deepest governing values are. We can think through what our mission or purpose is about. We can decide what is jugular to us, and what is peripheral. And we should do this. Some of us will accomplish this through religion, adherence to a church or a spiritual movement that provides us with substance and meaning of the deeper questions of life. Others may join some sort of cause they feel is deeply substantive. Yet others will just decide to be a catalyst for good, and seek to impact the lives of others one person at a time. All of us would benefit from being clear on what we want written on our tombstones, and in the hearts of those we impacted when they think of us. Having that "true-north" sense of purpose can be a force of enormous impact that provides guidance in our life -- throughout our life.

Now, I've just presented you with five separate areas to consider as you begin to practice self-management. Which of those five will you start working on first?

## **The Elephant in the Room**

### **The Misrepresentation of Separation of Church and State**

Whenever you hear someone saying something in the public square that includes the phrase *separation of church and state*, you can almost always bank on the following being true:

- The person imagines that the phrase "separation of church and state" is found in the Constitution, or the Declaration of Independence, or one of our other founding documents. It is not. The person in question has not the faintest clue as to the origins of the phrase (which is a [private letter](#) written by Thomas Jefferson on New Years Day 1802 to 3 committee members of the Danbury Baptist Church in Connecticut in which he clearly expresses favorable views regarding the "church" side of the equation.)
- The person is a secular individual who loves government power and holds a special disdain for religion in general, and Christianity in particular.
- The person imagines that the phrase "separation of church and state" means that state is to dominate church, or that religion is to always be held in a subservient station when compared to government, unaware that Jefferson's personal letter is not a binding document, and it actually shows that he felt "State" should not hamper "Church."

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

Check out [my website](#) for tools to help you with your career, your presentations, and other matters.

### From Ara's Journal

## Public Sins vs. Private Sins

I had a conversation with a dear friend, DB, some time ago. She was putting forth the idea that when someone does something immoral, or unethical, it makes no difference whether that person does it in a clandestine way, or out in the open.



Journal  
Writing

I disagreed, but during that conversation, neither time nor circumstances allowed me to put forth a coherent line of thought, something I will attempt anew at this time.

Most people who do something wrong do so under the radar. This is as it should be. Under normal circumstances, there would be (and there should be) consequences. Using the ethical code known as the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20:3-17) as my guide, if a person takes something that does not belong to him, that is called stealing. If the thief is discovered, law is applied and the thief pays some sort of penalty. Depending on the laws in place at the time of the theft, the guilty party may be arrested, fined, jailed, or having their right hand amputated (as the criminal code in The Sudan dictates.) Likewise, if someone commits murder, or deliberately tells an untruth, consequences are imposed.

But what if the perpetrator lives in a society where consequences are not imposed? What if there are no furtive glances over the shoulder? What if wrongdoing is not done covertly, but rather, out in the open, in bold defiance of societal norms? Then you have a society similar to what we saw in Iraq during the bloody reign of Saddam Hussein, who, along with his sons, Uday and Qusay, unleashed mayhem with regularity on the people of Iraq.

If you have a society that commits public "sin" without fear of consequence, you have anarchy. If you have a society that has a portion of the populace committing private "sin," and that society has consequences in place for such sins, you have a healthy society that will probably be a place of relative safety and order.

### The World of Words

Animus

Building Your Power of Expression



Dictionary

**Animus** n.

**Pronunciation:** ánəməs

**Meaning:** Feelings of hostility or ill will.

**Usage:**

- *The story is discredited due mainly to the author's animus towards her.*
- *I presume that, due to the animus the team seems to have for each other, they won't be together next season.*
- *The Democrats (and even some Republicans) show considerable animus towards the President.*

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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,**

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