Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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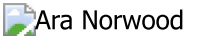
Dear David,



Wonderful to have your attention for a few minutes.

The year is winding down. And for me, it's been quite the whirlwind of a year. Would you agree?

In spite of all the drama and chaos taking place in our world, I have been very committed to bringing you commanding content and compelling commentary on a wide variety of issues twice each month. And this month is no different.

In this issue of *Uncommon Sense*, you will learn about the fine art of conversation. See the **Self-Development** column right below.

Check out **The Elephant in the Room** column, where you will see a white-hot spotlight aimed at several cases of extreme corruption and bias among some Leftists in positions of power. It pleases me to expose them for what they are, however, I wish such corruption did not exist.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I do something I've never done before: I write an open letter to a person who is deceased, a person who was murdered in cold blood, and her killer was exonerated. My letter is directed as much to the people who refused to allow justice to be served as it was to the victim. I hope you read it. It's a sad story.

And, of course, you get another nifty word in **The World of Words** column that will help you expand your power of expression.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

Self-Development

The Fine Art of Conversation

It seems to me that one of the most enjoyable moments in one's life is when one is involved in a great conversation. It could be with just one other person, or it could be in a small group setting involving three to (perhaps) eight other people. You may have played a dominant role in such a conversation, or a more-or-less equal role, or a subordinate role, not getting much of the airtime -- yet still found it a very engaging moment. The conversation may have been about something harmless (like sports, a book you 

read, or a movie that just came out), or it might have been about one of the issues of the day (perhaps involving politics, or a social issue), or perhaps about something profound or philosophical (the meaning of life, the possibilities of life after death, why and how two people find each other and fall in love.) Whatever the content, however long the duration, and regardless of how many people were involved, great conversations leave us feeling very positive and highly energized. They give us zest for life and bring buoyancy to our pace.

Great conversations are so invigorating because they stimulate your mind to think, to consider the input from the other person (or persons), and cause you to think in expanded ways in order to communicate your views. Here are four of the underlying elements that make great conversations possible. Embrace them, and you greatly expand the likelihood of enjoying an abundance of great conversations.

A spirit of inquiry. Being inquisitive, being curious, having an animated desire to know things and take in new input all aids in the process of staging a great conversation. When a person possesses a spirit of inquiry, that person asks questions about other people's views, experiences, ideas, etc. Such a person is authentically interested in what the other party has to say. Such a person is open to being exposed to new ideas and new worldviews. And the questions asked are not asked for the purpose of trapping the other person (as might happen in a debate or a verbal chess match); instead, the questions are posed solely for the purpose of fostering understanding.

A penchant for advocacy. The ability to put forth one's own experiences in intelligent and articulate ways is a powerful gift. To have opinions, stories to tell, a point of view, and information to reveal, makes for a potent compound, a helpful cocktail that puts one in a position to fuel the fire that allows for a sparkling conversation.

The art of listening in ways that encourage. To be able to listen in ways that promote input from the other party is a virtual guarantee that a lively conversation will take place. Imagine the opposite: openly not listening, visibly rejecting what is being put forth by someone else. That shuts down trust very quickly and kills dialogue. Now consider the opposite: showing by your facial expressions and your words that you are very open to what the other party is saying; you literally draw out of that person the input they have stored inside of them, lubricating the conversational skids, so that the other party does not hold back, but generates contributions that keeps the conversation fire crackling.

A sense of humor. Being able to inject some measure of humor, while not a prerequisite to an engaging conversation, certainly does add some spice to the overall "flavor" of a given conversation, making it even more enjoyable. People love to laugh, and, given that laughter appears to be a uniquely human ability, when we engage in it, we are doing something quite remarkable. Unless the laughter is of the cynical, sarcastic, mocking variety, laughter releases endorphins into our bloodstream and this brings about a natural "high," heightening our sensitivity.

Remember that great conversations are a joint effort. Monologues are not great conversations. The two-way nature of a great conversation means that both parties (or all parties) must bring something to the table to shape the overall outcome. Having the courage and the willingness to put yourself out there and offer your unique perspective, as well as to embrace and interact with the perspectives of the other person, can go a long way to fostering, and achieving, this strange, wonderful exchange known as the art of conversation.

The Elephant in the Room

The Latest in Leftist Lawlessness: Bias and Corruption

What do you do if you are a Leftist FBI agent who loves Hillary Clinton and hates Donald Trump? Make sure you become a top agent on Robert Mueller's Russia investigation and also make sure that you are in charge of a large segment of the Hillary Clinton email investigation. Peter Strzok heavily edited former FBI Director James Comey's draft 

statement on the Clinton email investigation. While Comey had originally written that it was "reasonably likely" that hostile actors gained access to Hillary Clinton's private email account, Strzok changed that wording to merely "possible." And while Comey had originally written that Mrs. Clinton's actions were "grossly negligent" (a chargeable offense), Strzok had that language changed to "extremely careless," (a non-chargeable offense.)

What do you do if you are a Leftist FBI director who simply does not wish to indict Hillary Clinton when she is in the middle of a political campaign? Easy. Send out a draft statement to top FBI officials that clears Mrs. Clinton of any criminal wrongdoing. And do it in May of 2016 -- two months before the FBI even completed several dozen interviews, including interviews with Mrs. Clinton herself. That is precisely what James Comey did. That is akin to calling an election before all of the votes have been counted, or calling a football game before the 4th Quarter is over.

What do you do if you are a Leftist legal activist who wants to overturn the results of a Presidential election you didn't agree with? Easy. Simply offer to pay off the mortgage of women who are willing to go on TV and claim Mr. Trump sexually assaulted them. Yes, it's true: Lisa Bloom, who has always tried to build a reputation of being on the side of female victims of sexual harassment, went out of her way to solicit funding from wealthy donors to pay off various women if they would go on TV and claim that they were sexually assaulted by Mr. Trump. She even offered one woman $750,000 (of which Ms. Bloom, the daughter of Gloria Allred, would keep one-third) but that woman declined. A second woman who received what amounts to a bribe by Ms. Bloom also declined the offer. Two other women accepted the money -- again, money of which one-third will go into Lisa Bloom's pockets. Does Lisa Bloom really care about women who might have been the victims of sexual assault? Or is she just running a racket to line her pockets with cash? The answer might be apparent when one considers that she had agreed to represent Harvey Weinstein early on, claiming, falsely, "I was never aware there were allegations of sexual assault," before stepping down from such representation due to the fierce blowback directed at her hypocrisy.

What do you do if you are a Leftist radical who happens to work for the U.S. Department of Justice? Well, if you are Bruce Ohr, you deliberately conceal from your colleagues the fact that you have held secret meetings with the men behind the anti-Trump "dossier" -- the infamous compendium of salacious and unverified allegations about then-candidate Donald Trump. You also fail to reveal that the woman you are married to worked for the organization that was behind the circulation of the dossier, Fusion GPS.

These four stories, which are a mere sampling of many similar stories, demonstrate unequivocally that there is much corruption out there. Leftists do not play by the rules. Leftists do whatever it takes to win. Leftists are unscrupulous. Leftists have no moral compass.

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

From Ara's Journal

An Open Letter to (the late) Kate Steinle

Dear Kate,

I don't know if there is any way that God will allow you to read this letter, given that you are now with Him, and not with us, but I need to write it anyway.

I didn't know you in this life. I only came to know you from a distance, based on the news reports I read or heard following your untimely death at the hands of an illegal alien criminal who shot you in cold blood. I was horrified when I tried to fathom the unimaginable physical trauma you experienced after the bullet severed your aorta, the major artery that lead to you heart, and you essentially died slowly and painfully, drowning in your own blood. I looked at your picture, and it spoke volumes -- you appeared to be a vibrant, beautiful, spirited young woman with a wonderful life, which was stolen from you in a very unforgiving and violent manner. You didn't deserve to die. At age 32, you had a lot to live for.

And so I was left with the expectation that justice would be served. I expected your killer, an illegal alien from Mexico by the name of Jose Inez Garcia Zarate (who also goes by the name Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez) would be tried in a court of law and convicted of murder. After all, Mr. Zarate had broken the law by being in our country illegally, and had previously been deported five times. He also was a convicted felon with seven separate felony convictions on his record. This man was a dangerous drug addict, a user and distributor of heroin. He picked up a loaded gun he claimed to have found under a bench he was sitting on, and he claimed he wasn't shooting at you, but was shooting at seals. Then he later changed his story completely and claimed he never was shooting at anything, but merely picked up the gun and that the gun went off on its own, without him ever having pulled the trigger. Given the discrepancies in his two stories, (shooting at seals changes to innocently picking up a gun and not shooting at anything), and given that he was holding the gun whose trigger was somehow pulled, resulting in your death, I was certain that a jury of your peers would convict this criminal of murder.

And this would have happened had the trial been held in almost any U.S. city, except one: San Francisco. And, unfortunately, San Francisco is precisely where this trial was held.

Predictably, the jury in San Francisco decided that the man who murdered you was not guilty of murdering you. The reason for this miscarriage of justice is that San Francisco is the most notorious of all the Sanctuary Cities in the country. The people of San Francisco possess the sick, bone-deep belief, that an illegal alien criminal who has 7 convictions and 5 previous deportations -- who continually breaks the law -- is of far more value to their society than you. His life and his "rights" must be preserved and protected at all costs; your life is expendable. This is the actual, underlying paradigm of the Leftists who live in and who run the city of San Francisco.

The reason they feel this way is simple: they believe, rightly or wrongly, that illegal aliens will one day be allowed to vote. Hard to fathom this upside-down thinking, I know, but that's what they believe, and that is what they hope for, and that is what they work towards. And they further believe that when people like Mr. Zarate eventually get the right to vote in a country they have no business being in to begin with, that such criminals will vote Democrat, not Republican. This is because the Left has taken over the Democratic Party, and the Left is, by nature, lawless. Thus, the power that Leftist Democrats believe they will derive in the future from their illegal alien constituency is intoxicating to them, and thus, they have no morality, no compassion for the innocent, and, instead, they have open disdain for their own citizens. Citizens like you, Kate.

Mr. Zarate was convicted of one charge: being a felon in possession of a firearm, a relatively meaningless charge when stacked alongside the charge of murder. One would have thought that the legal team assigned to defend this piece of human refuse would have been delighted at the jury's decision -- gleefully realizing that their client -- a murderer -- had just dodged a bullet that you were not able to dodge. But one would be wrong to think this. So steep is the Leftist mindset in wickedness, that Mr. Zarate's legal team was outraged that their client was convicted of anything. In their minds, you, Kate, were not the victim here. Mr. Zarate who murdered you was the hapless victim. They felt he should not be convicted of anything, and that he should be free to roam the streets of San Francisco, and that perhaps a parade in his honor should be organized. Perhaps July 1 (the date of your death) should be officially recognized as Jose Zarate Day. So the defense attorneys, in an act of pure evil, filed a motion to have the gun possession charge dismissed as well.

Kate, you were a beautiful, lovely, decent human being. And that is why San Francisco hates you. That is why Leftists hate you. You received no justice here in this life. That justice will have to wait a bit, but it's coming. Mr. Zarate, his defense team, the judge, and the jury in your sham of a court case will soon be facing a new trial, one before a perfect Judge, and justice will be served at that time. In the meantime, I trust you are presently experiencing an unspeakable joy in your new environment, one that brings you light and love such as you never knew in this drab plane of existence.

The World of Words

Eventuate

Building Your Power of Expression Dictionary

Eventuate v.

Pronunciation: əv̇en(t)SHəu̯āt

Meaning: This word refers to things that come about as a result of something else. When something eventuates, it comes about, comes alive, becomes real or relevant. To eventuate is to *eventually* bring about an outcome.

Usage:

- *If we approach this intelligently, the campaign may well eventuate in a win.*

- *I believe in that particular case, the famine eventuated from the crop failure.*

- *The propaganda spewed out by this group eventuated in another violent protest on the campus.*

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