

# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

I hope you are having a lovely and productive summer. I leave for Europe later this week for a quick visit to Spain, Italy, and France. And then I come back and resume teaching a couple of Management courses and also an Investment course at the college. But in the meantime:

In the **Self-Development** column, we explore the importance of speed when it comes to time management.

In the **Elephant in the Room** column, we remind ourselves of how the Left looks at America very differently from how Conservative Americans look at America. Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York, helps us clarify some things.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I share some recent learnings about problems from a wonderful book I am reading.

In the **World of Words** column, you'll add yet another great word to your ever-expanding vocabulary.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



## **Self-Development**

### **A Note on Time Management: Quickness and Speed**

One of my favorite pastimes is to watch football -- particularly college football. And during the years 2009 through 2012, a particularly favorite team to watch was the Oregon Ducks, whose head coach was Chip Kelly. The thing that made Oregon's football style so exciting for me was the Blur Offense. Essentially what it means is that the offense, led by the quarterback, does everything in double-time, if not triple-time. The play is called in the huddle -- sometimes several successive plays are called in a single huddle -- and then the entire offense, every single member, races to the line of scrimmage. They execute the play, and then they start the process again, racing back to the huddle for the next play (that is, if the next play hadn't already been revealed in the previous huddle). They averaged about 15 seconds from the spot of the ball to the next snap (whereas most other teams averaged about 25 seconds from spot to snap.) Oregon's offense moved at dizzying speed, so much so that rival teams appeared glacial by

comparison. The rapid-fire succession of their plays was bewildering to opposing defenses.

And the result? For the four years that Chip Kelly coached there, he amassed an astounding overall record of 46 wins and only 7 losses (33-3 in conference play). They went undefeated one year, they played in the Rose Bowl twice, in the Fiesta Bowl once, and they played in the National Championship game once. They ended up with top 5 rankings for the season in the last 3 of those 4 years (ranked #3, #4, and #2 respectively.) And Coach Kelly was named Coach of the Year by various bodies 8 different times during those 4 years.



We can learn something from all of this.

Speed. Quickness. Being fleet of foot. That general approach to life can have its place. While there certainly are instances when taking things slow, or being methodical, or taking time to smell the roses has their place, productivity and accomplishment is usually more rewarding and more sure when we move with rapidity.

Productivity is about finding short-cuts. Accomplishing more happens when we correctly identify what is extraneous, or what is inefficient, and we remove such things from our processes. Here are some possible examples that may make you speed things up in life:

Prepare your clothes that you will wear the next day so there are no unnecessary delays in the morning trying to figure out what to wear, or looking for a clothing item you can't find, or you need to iron a shirt the next morning. Take care of all of that the night before.

If you plan to bring lunch with you to work or school or wherever your next day will take you, prepare it the night before, so all you have to do is grab and go.

Got an appointment with the doctor, the dentist, the physical therapist, the marriage counselor, the lawyer? Since there is a chance you may be faced with downtime in their lobby or waiting room, bring work with you, and get to that work the moment you sit down after checking in.

Got a phone call to make or an email to write or social media to post on? Be succinct. Share only the essentials, then get off that platform and get to what's next. Some people with an appreciation write crisp emails by writing their message in the subject header only.

Get up earlier. (That also means you have to go to bed earlier to get the same amount of requisite sleep.)

Commit to ignoring all distractions. Doing that has enabled me to bang this out in about 7 minutes.

Now, on to the next thing!

## **The Elephant in the Room**

### **The Left and the Denial of American Exceptionalism**

When Barack Obama was just days away from being elected our 44th President in 2008, he said something I found very peculiar at a campaign rally in Missouri. "We are five days away from fundamentally transforming the United States of America!" The crowd went wild with thunderous applause.

What is one to make of such a comment? What is one to make of the crowd's reaction? Here is my take: Mr. Obama believed that the country he was about to lead needed a fundamental transformation.

But what does that imply?

It means that the country is fundamentally flawed. You don't transform a good thing. You don't transform something that is noble or decent, or wonderful. You transform your eating habits if you're eating junk and it's adversely affecting your health. You transform your wardrobe if it is worn out, or out of style, or you just plain don't like it anymore. You fundamentally transform your habits or your persona if there are deep flaws in them.

All of these concerns I am attributing to POTUS #44 were born out when he went on what has been called his "Apology Tour." While he never formally uttered the words, "I apologize," he said in one speech that "there have been times where America has shown arrogance and been dismissive, even derisive." In another speech on that same tour, he said "another issue that confronts all democracies as they move to the future is how we deal with the past. The United States is still working through some of our own darker periods in our history. Our country still struggles with the legacies of slavery and segregation, the past treatment of Native Americans." In another instance, after citing the horrific evil we experienced as a country on 9/11, Mr. Obama said, to a Muslim audience, that the fear and anger of that act "led us to act contrary to our traditions and our ideals." All of these are veiled apologies, contrary to CNN's insistence to the contrary. The message is, essentially, "We are really not that great of a country. We have nothing to boast of. We haven't behaved as an upstanding global citizen. We're really no better than anybody else."

Ruth Bader Ginsburg is perhaps the most Left-Leaning justice on the U.S Supreme Court. While she was in Egypt in 2012 speaking to Egyptian legal scholars about writing their own, new constitution in their post-Mubarak world, she was asked by one Egyptian legal official about whether it made sense for them to draw upon other nation's constitutions. The specific query from the Egyptian official included the following: "Would your honor's advice be that a society like ours. . . to get part or use other countries' constitutions? Maybe the United States or other countries

as a model?" Justice Ginsburg said, in part, "I would not look to the U.S. Constitution if I were drafting a constitution in the year 2012. I might look at the constitution of South Africa."

Clearly, there is something flawed about the U.S. Constitution in the mind of Justice Ginsburg. She cannot recommend it to others as a model. It is unworthy, in her mind, of providing the necessary wisdom and guidance needed today. It's an old relic. (By the way, she did recommend the constitution of South Africa.)

The latest Leftist to weigh in on the question of American greatness is New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. In a statement that did not conceal his hatred for the current sitting president, Donald Trump (whose signature campaign slogan was "Make America Great Again!") Cuomo said publicly, "We're not going to make America great again. It was never that great." Of course, a few days later, realizing the foolishness of tipping his hand and exposing for all to see what he and other Leftists really think, he said "Of course America is great and of course America has always been great. No one questions that." Well, Mr. Cuomo, for one, did more than question that. He asserted, without equivocation, that America was not great. But he now claims his earlier comments were "inartful." Rich!



To the Left, America is a thing to be despised, to be hated, to be embarrassed by, to be transformed, even though:

- America has provided enormous liberty to people to pursue their dreams.
- America has provided a system of free enterprise, and free market capitalism, that has taken massive numbers of people out of poverty.
- America has stood up to dictators such as Adolf Hitler, and has sacrificed much blood and treasure to enable people to have a chance at a decent and safe life, not just in the U.S., but all over the globe.
- America has allowed people to experience religious freedom without interference from the government.

It is very important that we understand the non-violent civil war that is taking place in our country at the present time, and the two sides could not be more stark in their differences:

- Conservatives cherish the Founding Fathers, seek to protect the U.S. Constitution, are very proud patriots, and loyal to the flag.
- Leftists despise the Founding Fathers, seek to change the constitution in a way that turns America into something closer to Europe, loathes liberty and law, and seeks to transform America into a godless, socialist society, void of

conservatives, and totalitarian so that they can impose their Leftist will on the body politic.

It is important that we remember the words of Benjamin Franklin at the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Upon leaving the state house where the constitution was drafted, he was asked by a lady what kind of government they had decided on. He answered, "A republic, if you can keep it."

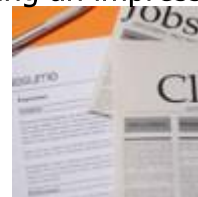
If Leftists such a Mr. Cuomo have their way, we will fail to keep this republic, this shining city on a hill. It will be up to true Americans to have the courage to prevent that from happening.

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.

## **Shameless Plug** **Is Your Résumé Overdue For an Overhaul?**

You may be gainfully employed, you may be unemployed, or you may (knowingly or unknowingly) be heading for a layoff. Having an impressive résumé can set you apart from the competition and position you for your next job.



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If you are in need of a quantum improvement of your résumé, you will benefit from my eBook, Crafting a Winning Résumé, which you can order by [clicking here](#).

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"I purchased Norwood's résumé guide last month and it's amazing! He goes through the processes step-by-step and you end up with not only a résumé that will get you that interview, but the skills necessary to be confident so you succeed in your interviews resulting in you receiving job offers (yes, offers)." -- D Smith, Santa Clarita, California

"I could not have gotten my first job without your expertise. Thank you so much! I learned that I had to reword and improve my résumé in order to be taken seriously in the workforce. I had been given tips from my professors in Health Science and other professionals but your advice was just what I needed. It took weeks of frustration waiting for interview calls when I happened to stumble across your website and discovered that I needed help. Your publication enlightened me with your knowledge on the wording and format needed to attract an employer. Furthermore, your booklet helped me recognize certain skills and work experience that I would have never considered important until you got me thinking about it. Thanks for a great product!" -- R. Espana, Valencia, California

## **From Ara's Journal**

### **Problems**

I have recently been enthralled with a book titled *Principles*, published last year by Ray Dalio, the founder of Bridgewater, the largest hedge fund in the country. While I don't automatically subscribe to every single thing advocated by Dalio I recognize that he's a lot more accomplished than I am, and I have much to learn (or relearn) from him.



I was particularly intrigued with his comments about problems and their nature. Here are some of his observations:

- View painful problems as potential improvements that are screaming at you.
- Don't avoid confronting problems because they are rooted in harsh realities that are unpleasant to look at.
- Be specific in identifying your problems.
- Don't mistake a cause of a problem with the real problem.
- Distinguish big problems from small ones.
- Once you identify a problem, don't tolerate it.

But my most valuable learning from reading his thoughts on the nature of problems is his notion that for virtually every problem, there is a way to attack the

problem and destroy it so that you can move on with your life. And thus, now, when I am buffeted by problems, (which happens every single day), I don't get discouraged. I don't get angry. And I don't throw in the towel or become despondent. Instead, I see the problem as if I was looking at an opponent, or as if it was a riddle, and my job is to think through the most efficient and effective way to either destroy the problem, or at least get around it.

It is a robust and courageous way to think. And it gets results I would otherwise not enjoy.

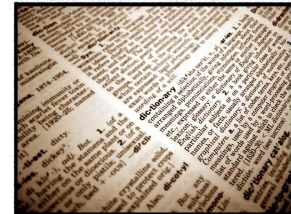
## The World of Words

### Endemic

#### Building Your Power of Expression

**Endemic**, adj.

**Pronunciation:** endemik



**Meaning:** Ever consider the things that are normative or regular to a certain area? Bananas are endemic to Costa Rica; marsupials are endemic to Australia. That is what endemic refers to -- things that are typical or standard to a certain area or a certain condition.

#### Usage:

- *Most notable of all, Yellow Fever was eradicated where it had been endemic for centuries.*
- *Ineffectiveness has been endemic in almost all 2nd term presidencies.*
- *In fact, famine is, for all intents and purposes, endemic in India, and is a problem to reckoned with every year in some portion of that vast area.*

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)).

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