

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

I hope you had a lovely Thanksgiving.

I'm up in the San Francisco Bay Area as I write this, and I am highly pleased at the prospects of you reading this issue of *Uncommon Sense*.

In the **Self-Development** column I offer some counsel re. the conditions under which a person should call it quits at work.

The **Elephant in the Room** column addresses the matter of tolerance on the part of the American Left.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I offer some reflections on the value of gratitude, an apt exploration given the holiday season.

And, of course, the **World of Words** column adds yet another winner to your ever-expanding vocabulary.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Jumping Ship

When should you leave your current job?

It's an interesting question and one fraught with complications and many variables. So allow me to simplify the question with a few fundamental principles.

If you and your boss don't see things the same way, you have to consider whether your boss is truly being toxic, or if your boss simply has different priorities than you. A toxic boss isn't likely to change, and is probably going to cause you more harm than is reasonable, and therefore you probably want to plan your exit strategy. However, in cases where your boss sees things differently, you may have to remind yourself that you are there, at least in part, to support your boss, and perhaps it is better for you to stick it out and see what you can learn from your boss.

Let's say your boss is deliberately blocking your ability to contribute. You have talents that would help the organization but your boss has decided those talents

will never see the light of day. This is both bad for the organization, and bad for you as a professional. A conversation with your boss would be in order. But if said boss simply has it in his/her heart to prevent you from performing, relegating you to remedial tasks, that probably means the boss doesn't want you on the team and is probably planning to cut you loose sooner or later. In such circumstances, you plan your exit strategy. Your hard-earned skills will be better utilized in a new environment where they may get some air time.



Finally, if you simply don't like your boss, just remember that you are not employed to be friends. Your place of employment is not a social club. You don't have to like your boss to be productive. You do, however, have to be clear on priorities and expectations and then perform to those. In such cases, the issue is often a personality clash. You just need to do what you have to do to work around those moments of distaste and throw yourself into the task at hand, focusing your attention on actual accomplishment. That is where you will find fulfillment.

Finally, a word of caution: unless your boss is truly engaging in blatantly unethical behavior (or illegal behavior), I do not recommend bringing your boss's idiosyncrasies to the powers-that-be in the form of a formal complaint -- even if it is done through an anonymous channel. Such actions taken by employees almost always come back to haunt them. The boss almost always figures out it was you that reported them, and then it's war. It rarely ever helps the subordinate, and virtually always spells their demise.

Adhering to these principles can serve as a lodestar for your career as you weigh the pros and cons of remaining with your current employer or seeking greener pastures elsewhere.

Good luck.

The Elephant in the Room

The Tolerance Lie

The American Left fancy themselves as uniquely in possession of a quality they call tolerance. But are they?

Tolerance is the ability or willingness to put up with something, in particular the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with. It is the capacity to endure coexistence with a person or an ideology even though one might not find that person or ideology valid or decent or warranted.

Let's say I am walking from the parking garage at my place of employment to my desk, and I am carrying some large, unwieldy boxes. While I am walking, I have the distinct sensation of a small pebble in my shoe and it is causing me mild discomfort. I am tempted to stop and remove the pebble from my shoe before continuing my journey to my desk. However, this will require me to put down the boxes I am carrying, and then pick them up again -- a prospect I find highly inconvenient. So I make the decision to tolerate the discomfort the pebble is causing me, walk to my desk, and only when I get to my destination will I put down the boxes and then remove the pebble from my shoe. I decided, in effect, to tolerate something I do not like. I will, for the time being, allow the pebble to continue to annoy me.



That's tolerance.

Is the Left tolerant as they claim they are?

Well, first off, it should be noted that historically, Leftists have not so much claimed they were tolerant as they demanded others to be tolerate of them. Along with their loud proclamations extolling the virtues of inclusion (meaning they wanted the society at large to embrace them in spite of their aberrant proclivities) they have demanded that everyday citizens tolerate them, whether that toleration was meant to include deviant health practices (i.e., drug use), sexual fetishes, gender dysphoria, body piercings, tattoos, spitting, hair styles, use of vulgarity and profanity, lack of personal hygiene, or a basic disregard for manners (manifested as treating their elders with blatant disrespect). Now that such things have become more or less commonplace, with very few people of a decent disposition having the courage to call out such modern Troglodytes to account for their deviancies, the American Left has gone on to market themselves as paragons of an enlightened tolerance, which is merely a ploy to reinforce their messaging that the rest of society should follow suit and we should all just live and let live, no matter how destructive Leftist ideology becomes to the populace at large.

But all indications are that Leftist claims of being tolerant are a blatant lie. For one recent example of why this is so, consider the case of [Isabella Chow](#).

Miss Chow is a student at the University of California. Studying at their flagship campus located in Berkeley, California, Miss Chow is a junior with a double-major of music and business administration. She is a student senator. She is also a deeply devoted Christian.

And therein lies the problem.

As a Christian, she is in possession of a set of ideals, the nature of which do not fit in with the culture at UC Berkeley -- a culture I would describe as narcissistic, radical, profane, uncharitable, self-serving, secular, and primitive. Yes, primitive. Having been on the campus myself a number of times, I find that many of the students there remind me of primates more than they remind me of normal human beings. I have often found them reactionary, ill-tempered, caustic, somewhat mercenary, immature, historically illiterate, cloudy in their cognitive skills, and not very well-read.

But be that as it may, after the Trump Administration recently indicated they were giving thought to reversing an Obama Administration definition of gender, under Title IX, from being determined by the whim of the individual to being determined by their obvious genitalia at birth, a radicalized student organization at UC Berkeley known as the Queer Alliance Resource Center drafted a student government bill condemning the return to normalcy. And of the 20 student senators, 18 signed the largely symbolic bill. Thus the bill "passed" at UC Berkeley, for whatever that's worth (which, truth be told, is nothing.) Of the two student senators who did not sign the bill, one of them was absent. But the other student senator was Isabella Chow. She refused to sign it on the grounds that doing so compromised her Christian beliefs.

It should have ended there.

But it did not.

Miss Chow was harassed and hounded mercilessly by her fellow students. Thousands of students came forward and openly condemned her, claiming her views were "violent, hypocritical, and bigoted" but failing to explain how they were violent, hypocritical, or bigoted. She was told that she must sign the bill -- whether she wants to or not -- or she will be banned from the senate and stripped of her role as senator. She was labeled "homophobic" and "transphobic." The campus newspaper, the *Daily Californian*, ran an editorial condemning her, but when she wrote a response defending and clarifying her position, the student newspaper refused to run it, essentially placing a journalist gag over her mouth and denying her First Amendment rights.

Miss Chow's fellow student senator who sponsored the bill, Teddy Lake, who is a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community, in a perfect example of projection labeled her a bigot, claimed her comments were "disturbing and irreconcilable," (irreconcilable with what?), claimed they contained "hateful prejudices," and that her views ultimately, if you can believe this, "deny Lake's very existence as a member of the LGBTQ+ community." I think Mr. (or is it Miss?) Lake should be awarded an honorary doctorate in hyperbole.

Former ASUC presidential candidate Gia Cordova said she hopes Miss Chow asks for forgiveness, but then, cryptically, warned that she (Miss Cordova) "won't be f__cked around with" and is "down to fight." Are you processing this? Gia Cordova believes that since Isabella Chow won't tow the Leftist line, Gia Cordova is prepared to beat her up. Miss Chow no longer feels safe walking to class alone and therefore has her friends walk with her to class for purposes of protection.

If you wish to read Miss Chow's very thoughtful letter on the matter, [click here](#). Then contrast the tone of her letter with the tone of her Leftist antagonists who have denied her rights to a different opinion, have shown blatant intolerance of her views, have claimed Miss Chow's views represent violence, all the while the LGBTQ+ radicals have threatened her with violence, have name-called, and have demanded she no longer function as a senator, merely for holding an opposing viewpoint.

So again, I ask: Does the Left speak the truth when they claim to be paragons of tolerance?

I know: dumb question.

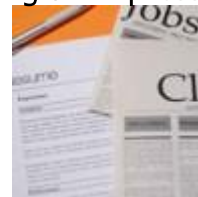
And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

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

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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

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From Ara's Journal

Why Gratitude Matters

I should like to pose a question: Why does gratitude matter? I can think of three reasons:

First, being grateful, and showing gratitude, even if only through words (like saying "Thank you") establishes a connection with another person, namely the person who provided the gift or blessing that is the source of that gratitude. Many times that will be another person. Other times, it will be a Person of a different sort -- God. But whether we are demonstrating gratitude for a person or for God, the expression of gratitude links us to that person or Person and a bond of solidarity is formed. This is a good thing.



Second, being grateful makes us more evolved in our humanness. We begin to sense that we would be worse off without the thing that stirred feelings of gratitude, even when it involves something as small as someone holding the door open for another person. Just yesterday, as I was walking out of a Starbucks after visiting with two friends, I noticed a lady approaching the door. She appeared to be in her early to mid-60s. I held the door open for her. As she passed me and took her first steps outside, she turned to me and, with a glowing countenance, let me know verbally that she deeply appreciated my manners in holding the door open for her. Her warmth was palpable. I replied to her, "Thank you for noticing such a small gesture." She replied, "It wasn't so small to me." In this instance, we

both were grateful to each other over a seemingly small gesture. I felt more humane and was humbled by her decency and graciousness. I can only sense that she felt similarly. We are clearly both better off for that passing exchange.

But this second reason for being grateful also encompasses occurrences with much more significance, such as when an ambulance shows up after we have been injured, or when some motorist stops to lend assistance when our car broke down on the side of the road, or when someone defends us and our point of view when we are being castigated in a meeting or elsewhere. We recognize in those moments that we are being rescued in some way, and that thought, not being lost on us, brings a sense of relief and hope.

Third, gratitude matters because it reminds us of something profound. It reminds us that all of our problems and heartaches and anguishes are counter-balanced by some measure of good fortune. This is critically important. Imagine if our brains were wired to only remember the bad things that happen to us, and incapable of recalling the good things. Life would take on a dour, bitter hue. But because we are just as capable of remembering the good as the bad, we can bring a sort of temperance to our consciousness, a more balanced outlook, a sense of perspective that our lives are not solely fraught with the bitter, but the sweet as well. There is an opposition built into all of our human experience, a constant balancing act between misfortune and blessing. It is critically important that the former not dominate our thoughts and that the latter is absent from our awareness. Thanksgiving enables us to achieve that needed balance.

The World of Words

Enigmatic

Building Your Power of Expression

Enigmatic, adj.

Pronunciation: ɛnəɡmədɪk



Meaning: When something is enigmatic, it is difficult to interpret or understand. You could think of it as somewhat mysterious. This word brings to mind the word enigma, which refers to a person or thing that is difficult to understand, or that seems odd or out of place in some way.

Usage:

- *He took the money with an enigmatic smile.*
- *Almost every sentence in this treatise is enigmatic in some way.*

- *David paused in the hallway, pondering where the enigmatic swami may have gone.*

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