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Issue: # 183

January 16, 2019

Dear David,

It's great to be back in the saddle again with a new year having been launched. 2019 should be great! And this issue of *Uncommon Sense* is getting us off to a great start!

In the **Self-Development** column we explore the world of drugs and medications -- the beneficial variety.

In the **Elephant in the Room** column, I lay before you the cold, hard facts regarding the border wall and the opposition to it from one of the major political parties.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I reflect on friendship, a favorite theme of mine.

The **World of Words** column gives you yet another elegant word that, if used, will enable you to sound informed, learned, and cultured. So use it.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



**Self-Development**

Drugs and Medications

Doctors and the entire medical profession has been a significant boon to a better quality of life. Life expectancy has gone up considerably. My father, a life-long cigarette smoker, died at the age of 67. That is the age I will be in less than 7 years from now. I have a difficult time imaging myself not surpassing him in terms of longevity and in terms of quality of life. Life expectancy in the United States is currently at around 78 years, slightly less than Canada and the UK, and slightly more than Mexico and China.

Life expectancy could see a huge spike upward in the coming years. This could be due to a complex of factors, some of them lifestyle choices (diet, exercise), some of them psychic choices (setting demanding goals, finding purpose in life), but I think the biggest factors may involve drugs.

I'm not talking about illegal drugs, narcotics, and the like. Things like opiates, cannabis, psychedelic drugs, depressants, and stimulants that are bought and sold illegally (or in the case of marijuana, legally according to some states) are not going to aid in the long-term quality of one's life. But legitimate pharmacology research has resulted in medications that can enable an aging population to avoid some of the natural pitfalls that all of us



face to some degree. Whereas the biggest killers today include stroke, cancer, and heart disease, and many of us have high cholesterol, high triglycerides, and other problems brought on by diet, lack of exercise, or something we cannot control -- genetics -- doctors can, perhaps through some trial and error, come up with a cocktail of medications that can work wonders in getting your vital signs where they need to be. Whether it involves blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol, or matters involving the pancreas, liver, or kidneys, pharmacologists are consistently churning out new and better drugs that can help us live life as optimally as possible. Your doctor is probably informed about these new developments and can prescribe the right combination of medications to enable you to live a reasonably healthy life.

So choose your doctor carefully. If you feel your doctor is unclear, or incapable of unambiguous communication, or if your doctor strikes you as unmoved by your concerns and uninterested in your questions, fire that doctor and hire a new one. Because they work to serve you, not the other way around.

And remember, they "practice" medicine, and they should do so with your involvement and input. You need to be an active participant in the process of maintaining your health, so ask questions, give input, make suggestions, and see how your doctor responds.

Get tested regularly (every 6 to 12 months -- more frequently if there are acute problems.) And don't be afraid to try new medications to see if a new combination provides better results.

Do these things and you will be benefitting from some of the great outcomes of modern science. You may well also enjoy a better quality of life as you age.

## **The Elephant in the Room**

### **The Democrats and Border Insecurity**

I will be very blunt. Democrats today do not want border security. They have seen that a wall works in Israel, and therefore, they insist a wall is -- are you ready for this? -- immoral. They do not explain what makes a wall immoral. They just hope the American people won't ask.

You may recall a term that was in vogue some years ago -- the new morality. Democrats would do well to resurrect this now arcane term. The new "new morality" is, for a Democrat, an insecure border where MS-13 gang members, illegal drugs, human trafficking, terrorists, and other unmentionables flow freely across

our southern border. Yes, I am aware that normal Mexican citizens who, for whatever reason, also are among the numbers of individuals who come here, but it must be remembered that when they do not



follow our immigration policies, they come here illegally. They are breaking the law.

To the card-carrying Democrat, coming here illegally is moral, not just for decent Mexicans who are seeking a better life, but for brutal, dangerous criminals. Illegality and Morality are now intertwined.

And what is the reason behind such warped thinking? Actually, it is not warped at all. It is a cold and careful calculation based on a set of assumptions:

- Assumption 1: People who are here illegally, and certainly their children, will eventually be given the right to vote.
- Assumption 2: The vast majority of such persons will vote for the party that promises them all sorts of free goodies. That is the Democrat Party.

- Assumption 3: Thus, Democrats, wielding a new treasure trove of votes, will remain in power for generations, and will be able to impose their radical, Leftist agenda on the American people, bringing Barack Obama's prophecy of fundamentally transforming the United States of America to fruition.

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**

## **Norwood to Teach Business Ethics Course**

In early February, I will be privileged to teach a 17-week course at College of the Canyons (located at their satellite campus in Canyon Country, California) on Business Ethics. The course is a very popular one and focuses on how to become a more ethical individual by maintaining a heart of peace, the various philosophical underpinnings of ethics, including a look at Aristotle, Kant, Bentham, and Mill. We will also see what Divine Command Ethics can teach us, looking at that school of thought through the lens of Rabbinic Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and as understood through modern-day prophets within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



In addition, we will spend a significant amount of time delving deep into the Enron scandal, that saw a multi-billion dollar conglomerate implode on itself in less than 30 days due to some of the most treacherous of ethical lapses.

The class is eye-opening, and, I dare say, transformative. At least that is what my students have said:

*"I've never had a teacher blow me away. I cannot even begin to say how much I've learned. It seems like he would be a professor from Harvard and COC just lucked out. On a scale from 1 to 10, he's a 12!"* Lucy Mansourian, Spring 2006

*"Professor Norwood is filled with wisdom, and I wish I could pick his brain for hours."* Vinnie Palmieri, Fall 2006

*"Thank you for all that you taught me. You have opened my eyes to a new way of thinking and a new perspective. Your teachings not only touch basics on an academic scale but completely enlighten on a personal scale. You are an extremely open-minded, charismatic, and knowledgeable teacher and are able to capture and keep student's interests."* Cynthia Ceballos, Fall 2007

*"His class was/is amazing. This class was Life Ethics rather than Business Ethics. I would take his class over and over again."* Luz Philipous, Spring 2008

*"I have never learned so many things from one teacher. You're a teacher of life, not just ethics."* Monica Alex, Fall 2009

*"Taking this course helped me discover my purpose in life."* Mina Nikkhoo, Fall 2010

If you think you might like to join us, the class is held on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 PM to 9:35 PM beginning on February 5th, 2019. You can learn more by going to [www.canyons.edu](http://www.canyons.edu).

## **From Ara's Journal**

### **"Let's Just Be Friends..."**

I've heard that phrase going back to perhaps the 5th grade.

Usually the phrase was uttered by a girl to a boy if the boy wanted some sort of amorous relationship and the girl wanted him to keep his distance. (For what it's worth, boys said it to girls as well, and for much the same reason.) The phrase has



maintained its currency into adulthood as a way to keep people at bay. This has the unfortunate outcome of bastardizing the meaning of real friendship.

When a person says to another person of the opposite sex, "Let's just be friends," you can rest assured that 9 times out of 10, being friends is the last thing that person really wants. What they are really saying is, "Let's just keep our distance from each other. Please." It might even mean something along the lines of, "Frankly, I find you repulsive. I feel nothing but nausea at the very thought of being in the same city limits as you. Please go as far away from me as humanly possible, and never contact me again."

The problem with such double-speak is that it blurs the meaning of true friendship. Friendship may not be synonymous with romantic love (although romantic love is probably at its best when the two people involved not only love each other deeply, but regard each other as their best friend.) However, true friendship, and here I am speaking of friendship void of romance, is one of the most soul-satisfying of all human experience.

When I think of all of the people I interface with, I realize that those who occupy the status of a true "friend" represent a very small segment of that group. As a college professor, I interface with many students. I would find it odd for one of them to be my "friend" during the time I am serving as their professor (although several have gone on to become a friend on some level in subsequent years.) I interface with clients, suppliers, prospects, and colleagues in my professional life. It's very rare to count among them what I would think of as a friend, even when the nature of the relationship is hugely positive.

So what are the characteristics of a true friendship? Admittedly, I find it hard to articulate such attributes, but I know it when I experience it. I think we all do.

As I think of the handful of people who are true friends (CM, DB, another DB, RB, LR, MS, MF, RS, DH, HH, NM, AP, among others), the thing that sets them apart from all of the other people I interface with is that I don't need an agenda when they enter my orbit.

With everyone else, there has to be a reason for us to be in each others' presence: teaching, advising, brainstorming, problem solving, getting information. With friends, just being with them, with no other reason, is enough. We like each other for who we are -- warts and all. We converse about anything and everything. We are comfortable about getting together to socialize and kill time together. If any one of the aforementioned friends were to show up at my house without warning, I would instinctively think in terms of inviting them in and spending quality time with them, listening, talking, being. If anyone else were to show up on my doorstep, I would wonder why they were there. I would instinctively want to know what was behind their visit. I would be uncomfortable and ill-at-ease until I understood what caused them to show up. I would be focused on what their agenda consisted of. There would have to be a coherent purpose for their presence.

Not so much with a true friend. With a true friend, I would let my guard down. I would be me. I wouldn't have to be "on." I would just be open and enjoy the time with my friend.

So when someone says, "Let's just be friends," too often is it the case that their words are offering you one of the grandest bonds of human intimacy imaginable.

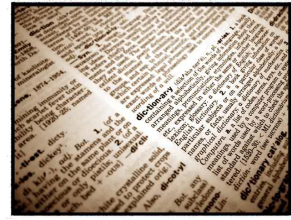
But their intent is actually a far cry from what true friendship is.

# Ardent

## Building Your Power of Expression

**Ardent**, adj.

**Pronunciation:** ărdnt



**Meaning:** This elegant gem refers to anything that represents passion or enthusiasm. Think of it in terms of wholehearted, intense zealousness.

### Usage:

- *I'm sure she would want to go because she is an ardent fan of soccer.*
- *I am really beginning to cool to his advances; he strikes me as a bit too ardent a suitor.*
- *Tuesday is my favorite day of the week, given my ardent love of tacos.*

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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