

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

I hope you had a good Valentine's Day! And another holiday is upon us -- President's Day. Try to give some thought to the greatness of our two most consequential Presidents today -- Franklin Pierce and Millard Fillmore.

Kidding! George Washington and Abraham Lincoln!

In today's **Self-Development** column I will briefly opine on the notion that practice makes perfect, *and why it doesn't!*

In the **Elephant in the Room** column, I waded into a highly sensitive and controversial topic involving the "T" in LGBT. Read it and see if it makes sense to you. I am sure it will stir some feelings in certain segments of the population, who imagine that if you do not engage in an unconditional surrender to their radical views, that makes you Satan's spawn.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I reflect on exclusion. I'll leave it at that.

In the **World of Words** column you get one of the coolest, swankiest words in the English language!

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Practice Makes Perfect?

Some of you may be involved in skill development. Maybe you play chess. Perhaps you are into acrylic painting. Or you study the martial arts. Or you like archery. Or acting. Or dance. Or writing poetry. Or playing a musical instrument.

Whatever the case may be, you have undoubtedly heard the phrase "Practice makes perfect."

Of course, the phrase is a bit of a myth. It's a myth for two reasons: one being that perfection is usually something reserved for deity, not mortals. Attaining perfection -- true perfection -- is almost non-existent. (What is "perfect chess"? What does "perfect acting" look like?)

The other reason the adage "practice makes perfect" is a myth is because it is based on a fundamental misunderstanding.

There is a very real likelihood that practice being carried out by people has embedded within it poor habits. Thus, people

in all walks of life are practicing incorrectly. And in so doing, they are acquiring poor habits.



Always remember this more accurate adage: "Practice does not make perfect; *Perfect practice* will come close."

The Elephant in the Room

Crossing the "T" in LGBT

The Regressive Left in America love causes. They love to put lots of energy and resources around their pet projects. Global Warming is a big one. Their campaign against plastic bags mostly succeeded, and now they have targeted plastic straws. When they feel they have succeeded there, they will manufacture a new crisis to spend their energies and resources on.

Another project that the Left is obsessed with involves the unraveling of normalcy in the sexual area. Hence what they referred to as "gay rights" was front and center for the Left for many decades. This initiative reached, if you will pardon the expression, a climax in the summer of 2015 when the Left-leaning U.S. Supreme Court made same-sex marriage the law of the land. Of course, gay rights activists are often dissatisfied with such advances for their cause, and since they need to continue to be perceived as victims, they still are out manufacturing persecutions and fantasy crimes against themselves to try to keep public perception focused on their victim-status. (I'll be writing more about this in an upcoming issue of *Uncommon Sense*.)

But it seems that where Leftist activism has taken center stage of late is in the area of transgender issues -- the "T" in the LGBT and whatever other letters follow.

"Transgender" as a category is an interesting one -- and is unique in that it doesn't deal with sexual orientation as does the LGB. Transgender almost seems out of place in that construct precisely because it is not concerned with matters of sexual attraction, but rather with something quite unfortunate. One can argue, for instance, that a person is "born" with same-sex attraction and therefore they cannot help it; it's just who they are. Or, in the case of a bi-sexual, one can argue that they were born with an innate sexual attraction to both males and

females. (Whether that is true or not is a debate that is beyond the scope of this short article.)

But if a person is born with all of the obvious signs of being a male (male genitalia, XY chromosomes, etc.) and that newborn boy grows up and develops a deep male

voice, a beard, and all of the telltale appearances of being male, then that person is, by definition, a man. Likewise, if a baby girl is born bearing female genitalia, XX chromosomes, and that newborn girl grows up and develops all of the usual characteristics of a female, we can rest assured that the person in question is a



woman. But if something quirky happens with the merging of the sperm and the egg, resulting in an abnormality in the genetic structure, it is possible that the resulting birth could be something other than a normal male or female. They might be mostly female or mostly male; they might be mis-identified in some way. It is very rare, but it is possible.

However, while no one born this way should ever be subjected to persecution, bullying, mocking, or belittling in any way, and should only be treated with sympathy and understanding, in no way should society be told: "This is normal. This is preferred. This is something we should all strive for." Here are some examples that may clarify that point.

If a child is born blind, is that a good thing? Is that something we should celebrate? Should we wish all of our children (and all of society) were blind? Likewise, if a child is born with some deformity or some disease, certainly the child should be on the receiving end of care, love, understanding, compassion, and raised in a way that enables them to overcome their misfortune and live as productive a life as possible. That child or, eventually, adult, should be cheered on for every accomplishment he or she attains. But would we really take the position that the malady affecting that person is something we now bequeath the status of the "new normal"?

The problem with the Left is that in their desires to shield the transgender from persecution, they go too far the other way and end up normalizing the abnormal. In fact, I am certain any die-hard Leftist reading the previous sentence is right now recoiling with rage and frothing at the mouth with barely coherent "emotions" [I made that word up] such as: "Outrageous! Who are you to decide what is normal?! Maybe you are the one who is abnormal! Maybe we should ostracize you!" -- completely oblivious to the reality that in so responding, they

have abandoned their claimed ideals of protecting the abnormal (in this case, me) from persecution.

The latest example of the trend towards normalizing the abnormal comes to us courtesy of Phil Murphy, the radically far-Left Governor of New Jersey. He recently [signed a bill](#) that makes it mandatory for all middle schools and high schools to highlight the "rich contributions" from the LGBT world. I will not be addressing his decision to include Lesbians, Gays, or Bisexuals. I will instead limit my focus to the decision to include Transgendered people.

When I think of people who have provided "rich contributions" to the American Experiment, I think of people like Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, the Wright Brothers, Steve Jobs, Ray Kroc, Bill Gates, Thomas Jefferson, Neil Armstrong, Mark Twain, Elvis Presley, Benjamin Franklin, Sojourner Truth, Martin Luther King, Babe Ruth, Walt Disney, Alfred Hitchcock, Jesse Owens, Billy Graham, Muhammad Ali, Steven Spielberg, Oprah Winfrey, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Rosa Parks, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, Helen Keller, Joseph Smith, Charlie Chaplin, J. Willard Marriott, or Andrew Carnegie -- what I call The Big 32 (and certainly there are many others I could include). As far as I am aware, not a one of them suffered from gender dysphoria. And I wonder how many of the above-named persons will be displaced -- excommunicated from New Jersey middle and high school curriculum -- to make room for, . . . for who?

I admit it, I am unaware of transgender people who have made "rich contributions" to America. So I went to the internet to find out what I could about this. Here is what I discovered:

- **Caitlyn Jenner**, who, as Bruce Jenner, was a terrific Olympic athlete, winning the gold medal in the decathlon at the 1976 Summer Games in Montreal. However, Jenner's accomplishments there were achieved as a male, the way he was born. In reviewing his/her profile on Wikipedia, I see no discernible accomplishments of Jenner as a woman, other than the fact that he transitioned from male to female. That's it. As a trans woman, Caitlyn Jenner is famous for being a trans woman and nothing more.
- **Carmen Carrera** used to be a male and is now a female. She is a burlesque performer and drag queen performer. Is that supposed to be an accomplishment? She is also petitioning to be accepted as the first transgender model for Victoria's Secret. Again, is that something of significance?
- **Amanda Lepore**, (born Armand Lepore) is a model, socialite, and singer whom I've never heard of. She is said to be one of the most notable transgender public figures in America today. Again, I've never heard of her. What has she accomplished, apart from appearing in advertisements for various cosmetics companies? Do her accomplishments rival those of the Big 32 mentioned above? Should we remove Sojourner Truth from the social studies textbooks and replace her with Amanda Lepore?
- **Chaz Bono**. Chaz has some famous parents, Sonny and Cher. But what great things has Chaz accomplished? Born a woman but having transitioned to a male, he is said to be a writer, musician, and LGBTQ advocate. So what?

In fact, after scanning a list of 62 allegedly famous transgender people on a website called Ranker.com, I found no one had accomplished anything of consequence that should be listed in a textbook to educate our youth, except for Bruce Jenner who was a normal male at the time he achieved his success. There probably are a very small number of transgendered people who have accomplished something significant, but does their transgender status need to be the thing that is most highlighted about them? Yes, if you are on the Left.

Is Governor Phil Murray obsessed with the sexual orientation of the Big 32? Does he care if Rosa Parks was heterosexual in her orientation? Does he want New Jersey students to know Ms. Parks' sexual orientation? Not at all; he couldn't care less if the great achievers are heterosexual. But if some achiever happens to be homosexual, or bi-sexual, or transgender, that peculiarity must be sounded loud and long from the rooftops if you are to believe the radical Left.

Thus, it is inescapable that Governor Phil Murphy is not interested in filling the pages of New Jersey textbooks with people of actual accomplishment, but rather, of people who are transgender simply because they are transgender. What the governor is actually attempting to do is to normalize the abnormal, to say to the youth of New Jersey, "There is nothing strange about being transgender; there are lots of transgender people out there; it's normal; you may want to consider it for yourself."

He is attempting to brainwash an entire generation.

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

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So you have trouble with job interviews? You get nervous? You feel unprepared? You get psyched out? I understand. And that is why I am pleased to alert you to my eBook: ***Your Interview Roadmap***. At over 12,000 words and with six appendices, this guide book will open your eyes to what really goes on in the world of interviewing from both sides of the table, and will prepare job seekers to hit it out of the park 80% of the time. (OK, more like 90%, but I prefer to be understated.)

If you are interested in purchasing the product, you can [click here](#) to make your purchase. The advice you will glean from this eBook is golden! I would

charge you six times the price of the eBook to give you the same advice in person.

If you've done poorly in job interviews in the past, you can turn it around. The answers are there. Take action!



From Ara's Journal

The Law of Exclusion

Years ago, perhaps in the late 1970s or early 1980s, I heard a motivational presentation on audio cassette tape by a guy named Skip Ross. I don't know much about Mr. Ross but I do remember hearing him on that recording talk about something he called the "Law of Exclusion." If I recall correctly, the main point of that law was stated as follows: "Get rid of what you don't want to make room for what you do want." And I seem to recall him talking about getting rid of clothing, foods, habits, and even other people that are in your life that perhaps shouldn't be there.



I have been living by that maxim a lot lately. I have recently "shown the door" to roughly six people who have been in my life, many of them having played very consequential and important roles in my past. Some of them do not know they've been shown the door. And it probably doesn't matter to them either way.

And I admit, this "housekeeping" activity has left me with feelings of loss. Duh! But I attribute that to the nature of the change. Yet I remain resolute that this is the right thing for now. I keep remembering the second half of Skip Ross's adage: ". . . you make room for what you do want."

And what do I want? Frankly, I'm not sure, at least, not as it pertains to people, relationships, etc. I know what I want in other areas, and I am pursuing those things with gusto.

I guess I will just have to see how things play out.

That's it for now.

Contemplative

Building Your Power of Expression

Contemplative, adj., n.

Pronunciation: 'kəntemplədɪv



Meaning: I love this word! As a noun, the word describes a person whose life is devoted to the deeper, more cerebral pursuits, such as prayer, rumination, pondering, and deep reflection. As an adjective, the word denotes the expression of prolonged thought and consideration.

Usage:

- *St. Thomas Aquinas was truly a contemplative of the first order.*
- *She regarded me with a contemplative eye.*
- *His approach to problem solving is slow, methodical, contemplative. . .*

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).

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