

# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

I truly hope this finds you well.

Jump into the **Self-Development** column to get some tips on how influencing others works.

And since words mean something, you'll find the **Elephant in the Room** column instructive. I offer up some observations concerning the favorite (and thus, overused) words of the Left.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I offer some sobering thoughts on drug addiction.

And, as always, in the **World of Words** column you will be instructed yet again on a word that is sure to elevate your power of expression -- but only if you use it.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



## **Self-Development**

### Influence

I've been pondering the notion of influence.

Influence can be a risky business. If people have good ideas, expertise, virtue, and other positive qualities, (and note that I did not include "good intentions") then it's a wonderful thing when such persons exercise their ability to influence others.

But what if the person doing the influencing is foolish, or ill-informed?

I don't want the riff-raff of society trying to influence others, though that is precisely what they attempt to do. It's unfortunate, but a lot of individuals get duped by the influence of bad people with bad ideas.

Fortunately "good" people often strive to influence others with good ideas.



So on the assumption that you wish to improve the world around you with your influence, and that your ideas are positive, here are a few tips to consider:

- Get results with regularity. Those who accomplish things of substance develop a reputation for results. And results breeds trust. The more things you accomplish that are significant, the more impressive you will be and the more likely people will want to hear what you have to say.
- Teach often. Speak or write your thoughts and opinions. Get them out there. No one can be influenced by something they haven't heard.
- Speak and write well. If you are able to speak and write in compelling ways, using elegant language that suggests you are somewhat learned (but not in a way that comes across as pompous) that will be a good thing. Just to elaborate on word choice: words like *propensity*, *tenuous*, *consequential*, and *garner* are just a bid above the norm of typical conversational discourse. That's a good thing. Words like *toxin*, *insouciance*, *putatively*, or *congeal* (all of which appeared in an essay I read recently) is perhaps a bit much.
- Be even-tempered. If you are writing about controversial subjects like politics or social issues, come across as cool-headed. Few people trust firebrands. There is a world of difference between someone like Mark Levin and the late Charles Krauthammer. Both men are brilliant. Both men are informed. Both men have important things that need to be said. But Krauthammer is trusted more because he was not a hothead.
- Be willing to listen -- really listen -- to others who have opposing views. If you listen first to what they have to say, and you do so with the intent to understand deeply where they are coming from, you have a much stronger likelihood of exercising influence when you respectfully respond to their statement with your own, accounting for the valid or plausible points they made, and presenting your own outlook in compelling ways.

## **The Elephant in the Room**

### Words in the Leftist Lexicon

Conservatives tend to favor certain words. Certainly words like America, Patriotism, God, Family, Prayer, Virtue, and the notion of Personal Responsibility tend to be ideas that Conservatives are attracted to.

If you are a regular reader of *Uncommon Sense*, you are aware that I devote much of this column to matters pertaining to the dynamics of Leftism and American Conservatism. And believing that the words we use tell us much about ourselves and our values, I now take this opportunity to offer some of my own observations concerning how Leftists tend to emphasize certain words over others.

Favorite words of Leftists:

**Diversity:** This is one of the most-used words of Leftists. It is so pervasive that most colleges and universities have departments devoted to the ideal of diversity (Dean of Diversity, Office of Diversity, etc.) And a new trend is for corporations to create jobs such as Director of Diversity, Vice President of Diversity, etc. I have no idea what people with such titles do on a day to day basis, but I suppose their job is to make sure that fewer and fewer white males are hired and more and more minorities, regardless of their skill level, fill the ranks of organizational life. Of course, when Leftists speak of diversity, they don't really mean it across the board. What they have in mind is race, ethnicity, language, and a favoritism towards the LGBTQIA community. But what they do not have in mind is diversity of thought. In other words, Leftists abhor diversity if, by diversity, one is to allow for different world-views. That is because Leftism, by its very nature, is totalitarian. Leftists cannot tolerate the notion of diversity if it is to include religious or conservative viewpoints.

**Divisive, Divisiveness:** This term is used by Leftists in an attempt to preempt counter-arguments by those who do not agree with their views or policy positions. Any sort of refutation against their views is labeled "divisive," as if Leftists are paragons of civility and decorum.

**Hate, Hater:** Any time a Leftist encounters a person with an opposing view, that person is labeled a hater by the Left. In the world of the Left, there is no such thing as simple disagreement or a different way of seeing the world. If you do not subscribe to whatever the Left is pushing, you are, by definition, a hater. And hatred against anything is wrong.



**History:** This term is used by the Left in a particularly unorthodox way. History, to a Leftist, is whatever the current Leftist fad is. They usually use the term in the sense of "the right side of history" (i.e., anything Leftists believe, no matter how aberrant) or the wrong side of history (anything Conservatives believe.)

**Inclusion, Inclusive, Inclusivity:** Whenever you read a policy statement of some kind, be it in the corporate market or in a college or university environment, containing one of these words, you can be sure it was written by a person of the Left. It is often used in the same sentence as diversity. Thus, what they intend by this term is a desire to include everyone and everything that fits within their Leftist agenda and exclude things they loathe (white males, Conservatives, Christians, etc.)

**Justice:** This is truly a sacred word to the Left. You'll hear them slap this term onto a whole host of concepts: Social Justice, Climate Justice, Racial Justice, Eco-Justice. (I made that last one up, but I'm sure it means something to someone.) It's usually used by Leftists who fancy themselves as victims.

**Multi-Cultural:** As the Left maintains a special disdain for both America and its Founders, the Left also disregards the uniquely American motto *e pluribus unum*, which means "out of many, one." Thus, to subvert that motto, they prefer people be divided into various racial and ethnic classes. Thus, the Left prefers people be

thought of as African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans, etc., rather than simply Americans.

**Nazi:** This epithet is hurled quite freely, not at people who really are modern-day Nazis, but at anyone they differ with. President Donald Trump is routinely called a Nazi. So was President George W. Bush. Of course, in overusing this term, it not only becomes somewhat meaningless, but it actually cheapens the significance of Hitler and the holocaust, as any holocaust survivor will readily tell you.

**Progressive:** Possessing a very high view of themselves, this is how Leftists self-identify. They don't even see themselves as Leftists. Virtually every Leftist will deny that they are Leftist, but instead, lay claim to this seemingly unassailable term. Of course, if you want to ever see a Leftist stammer, just ask them to give you an example of what they have done recently that suggests progress.

**Racist:** Short-hand for any Conservative who does not agree with a Leftist. In fact, many white Leftists insist all whites (including themselves) are racist. In this, they are half-correct, as most white Leftists are, in fact, racist. But they project that racism onto their opponents quite freely, without a shred of evidence. It's just a convenient way to end a conversation.

**Science, Scientific:** Since most Leftists do not believe in God, certainly not the God of Israel as taught in the Holy Bible, they turn to what they consider to be a higher authority -- Science. Of course, many Leftist scientists behave very unscientifically, placing their political ideology ahead of science, bending the evidence to support their preferred ideology. This routinely take place in the area of climate science, where the narrative that Global Warming is going to decimate the entire planet within 12 years causes Leftists to manipulate their so-called "climate models" to show that this is actually the case. Any who even dare question the narrative is called a "climate denier" and is said to be worthy of imprisonment.

**Tolerance, Tolerant:** This word is a Trojan Horse of sorts. Leftists want their strange views to be merely tolerated, right? Wrong. They use that term, but what they really mean is they want their strange views to be embraced, championed, and made the norm so they can then be intolerant of what was once considered standard or orthodox.

**Woke:** This clumsily used word is a new addition. It is employed to condemn white people who are alleged to be oblivious to the rampant racism against blacks that is supposedly at epidemic levels in American society today. The notion is that a white person is not "woke" (or awake, or aware) of the avalanche of racism, both overt and nuanced, that is assumed to be baked into the American experience on a daily and hourly basis.

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

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## Shameless Plug

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## From Ara's Journal

### The Power of Drug Addiction

If you step into the current of a river, if that current is swift enough, you could be swept away. You could join the many who have died in such circumstances. Similarly stepping into the illegal drug culture is akin to stepping into the swift river current. You're playing Russian Roulette with your life.



I have never once taken an illegal drug. Not one pill. Not one puff. Not one injection. So I don't have any first-hand knowledge with what illegal drugs can do to a person.

Having said that, as it turns out, I happen to possess a vast amount of knowledge and understanding of illegal drugs. But my knowledge is of the second-hand variety. I have observed individual addicts going back to my college days. I had been in several rock bands in my younger years and virtually everyone in the bands of which I was a member used illegal drugs to some degree -- a few to a great degree. Some of my former band mates are no longer alive because of this. I have had family members who have become drug addicts and their addictive behaviors spilled over into my world, affecting me greatly.

Apart from the caustic, destructive nature of illegal drugs on the body, and apart from the fact that being on drugs tends to cause addicts to put their life on hold, drugs also does a number on one's brain. A drug user on, say, heroin, or meth, has, as it were, two brains: their normal brain, and their addict brain. The normal brain may tell the user: "Look, you need help. Badly. Call someone and see if they can help get you into a rehab center. Call them now."

The addict will pick up the phone and place the call. They will ask for the help. Let's say the person (me in this case) jumps through hoops and finds a rehab center that will take the addict that evening. The addict is informed. The addict says, "Thanks. I'm on my way to that rehab center. I'll be there in an hour." You hang up the phone thinking a wonderful outcome is on the horizon. Then you get the phone call about 3 hours later from the rehab center claiming the addict never showed up. The pattern repeats itself the next day when the rehab center calls you and claims they heard from the addict and was told the addict would be there by 7:30 PM that night at the latest. But alas, the addict fails a second time to make it there.

That's the "addict brain" at work. Somehow, the addict brain kicks in and says something like, "Hey! What are you doing?! You need the euphoria of your next heroin injection, not the painful process of detoxing at a rehab center. Shoot up now and we'll revisit this again later." And thus, the addict is left rotting in their car, lying in their own sludge.

I have to imagine the addict brain is quite persuasive. I see that it has triumphed over the normal brain many, many times. But sometimes the normal brain comes out on top, and the addict, who has experienced enough trauma and pain, finally staggers into a rehab center to get the help they desperately need. For those who do not do so, death is often the outcome.

People take illegal drugs for a variety of possible reasons. They might be trying to cope with some other illness or physical pain. They might be trying to mask some type of mental or emotional pain. They might be bored with life and have no sense of meaning. They might be trying to fit in. They might just be plain foolish. But whatever their reason, illegal drugs always -- without exception -- complicates and harms their life in myriad ways.

And it adversely affects those closest to them as well. *That* is something I do know first-hand.

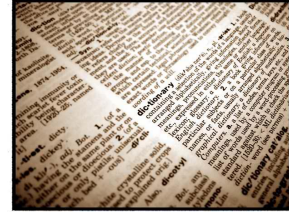
## The World of Words

### Remonstrate

#### Building Your Power of Expression

**Remonstrate**, v.

**Pronunciation:** rəˈmənstrət



**Meaning:** To present and urge reasons in opposition. To plead in protest or reproof.

#### Usage:

- *"You don't mean that," she remonstrated.*
- *"I'm trying to defend you," remonstrated the attorney to his client.*
- *He told those who remonstrated to mind their own business.*

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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