

# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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**Dear David,**

Today is my birthday. It has been a fun and festive day, and I am grateful to all those who took the time to send me their well-wishes! It's also a great feeling to send out my latest thinking on a myriad of important subjects.

Check out my short pep-talk in the **Self-Development** column to juice up your skill set.

And for those of you who are sick of being called a racist every few minutes by some so-called "Progressive," you'll want to read the **Elephant in the Room** column, where I address that.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column I share portions of a personal note I received from a friend that it at once sobering and sad. Read it for what it's worth.

And build that ever-expanding vocabulary of yours with a walk through the **World of Words** column!

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



## **Self-Development**

### **Skills**

*"Easy is not an option. No days off. Never Quit.  
Be fearless. Talent you have naturally.  
Skill is only developed by hours  
and hours of work."  
Usain Bolt*

Talents are innate; we seem to be born with them. But skills, on the other hand, must be worked at. We acquire them over time. We hone them through practice. They may not come naturally to us, but we can develop competency if we are willing to learn, practice, study, get some mentoring, and stick with it. For instance, Magnus Carlsen, at age 28, may be the greatest chess player alive today. He once said something to the effect that while he knows a great deal about chess, he doesn't know much about anything else. I believe Mr. Carlsen is

talented at chess. He was born to play and play at a very high level. However, while he probably has zero understanding of playing the trumpet, if he wanted to, he could develop the skills of a reasonably good trumpet player. But it would take dedication and focus, lots of study and practice, and probably the guidance of a good instructor.

I would like to suggest two things to you.

First, you are in possession of a set of skills. They may be sharp. They may be flabby. If they are not sharp, I would encourage you to evaluate which skills you wish to refine. Map out how and when you will do this. And be prepared to reward yourself when you reach a milestone.



Second, alternatively, you can instead begin the process of developing a new skill. Public speaking? Playing chess? Martial arts? Painting? Massage therapy? Listening with empathy? Playing pinball? Playing poker? Throwing a boomerang? Training dogs? Learning French? Making cheesecake? Coding? Whatever your interests, you can develop into a skilled practitioner of the same and become known for wielding that skill. And you can do this at virtually any age in most instances. (Winston Churchill was 40 years old when he took up painting, after seeing his sister-in-law working at her easel. While he started out with some trepidation, he received a hefty push into the deep-end by Hazel Lavery, a skilled painter in her own right, and thus Churchill relinquished his cautious, methodical approach, and let loose with reckless abandon, painting virtually every one of the remaining 50 years of his life except the war years).

Sharpen your skills. Start today.

## **The Elephant in the Room**

### **The Race Card**

Recently I [posted a story](#) on my Facebook page concerning Oberlin College. Apparently the college itself, along with its Vice President/Dean of Students, Meredith Raimondo, was hauled into court and found guilty of libeling a local bakery. The bakery had been labeled as "racist" for being confrontational with three Oberlin students who happened to be black men. These students had been guilty of shoplifting and of attempting to use a fake ID. Even though the students were arrested and pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges, and even though the students read statements confirming that the treatment they received by bakery employees was not in any way racially motivated, that didn't matter to the Leftist Social Justice Warriors at Oberlin College. They began a campaign labeling (or, rather, libeling) the bakery as racist. A jury of their peers found that the college

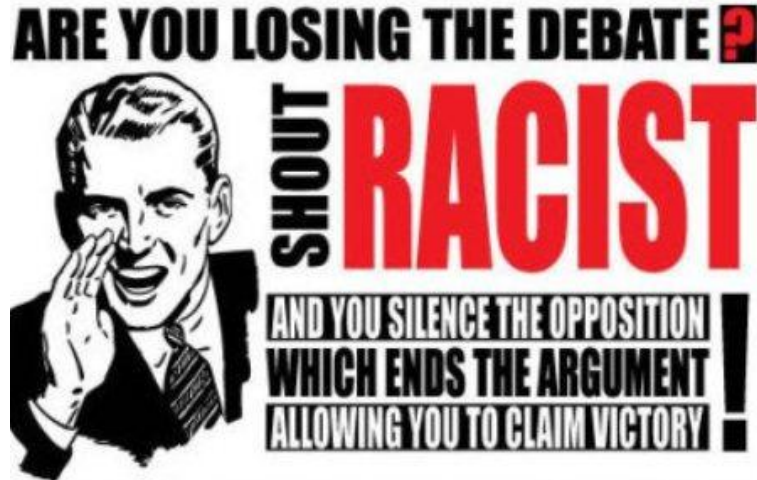
was guilty of playing fast and loose with the racist charge and the college now has to pay millions of dollars to the bakery -- \$11 million dollars to be precise. Not a bad payday for the bakery.

Falsely accusing others of being racist is par for the course for those on the Left.

If some non-white group of people behave like thugs and are brought to justice (not "social justice" but actual justice) Leftists reflexively call those who defended themselves against such thugs "racist." It's

automatic. It's a knee-jerk response. It's like a mindless mantra for the Left. Leftists cannot conceive of a scenario where blacks or Latinos or Asians, or Native Americans can be brought to justice for doing something illegal. The concept that a black or a Hispanic individual could

actually be guilty of wrongdoing is a concept that is as foreign to a Leftist as the most advanced concepts of Quantum Mechanics are to the average person. So the race card is thrown. It just seems like the Leftist thing to do. And it's dishonest.



When I posted the Oberlin College story on Facebook, I appended the following commentary: "GREAT story! Wonderful to see Leftists, who so freely and regularly accuse non-racists of racism finally be held accountable!"

HB, a regular on my Facebook wall, and something of a gadfly, posted her typical commentary, which included the statement: "Your comment, Ara, about your fabricated Leftists [SIC] conspiracy theory is unfounded."

It should be noted that HB is a deeply committed Leftist herself who not only denies she is a woman of the Left, but further, denies the very existence of Leftism in the first place. To her, there is no such thing as Leftism. Leftism is a figment of my imagination, a fairy tale, so says HB. But leaving that delusion aside for the time being, it is fair to ask: Is HB correct that Leftists do not freely and regularly use the race card?

Let us see. . .

- Dominique Moran, age 23, a perfectly decent (i.e., non-racist) employee at Chipotle [was called a racist](#) when a bunch unruly black teenaged boys demanded service just before closing. These same boys had previously played a game of "dine-and-dash" by handing over a bad credit card for payment and then dashing off with their food before they could be stopped. Ms. Moran simply told them they had to pay first before receiving

their food. The boys used their smart phones to video tape the confrontation, then posted it on the internet, claiming they were the victims of racism. The video went viral. Ms. Moran became the target of an online Leftist attack and was subsequently fired from her job. She doesn't have a racist bone in her body, and she was traumatized by the experience.

- Waitrose grocery chain in the UK was [accused of racism](#) over the names of three chocolate ducklings they sold. They packaged three different chocolate ducklings (white, milk, and dark chocolate) and called the three "Fluffy," "Crispy," and "Ugly" (as in the Ugly Duckling children's fable by Hans Christian Anderson.) Which of the 3 was called "Ugly"? Well, all you have to know is that it wasn't the white chocolate version. And that alone became the source of a heated response by the radicalized Left, with the grocery chain being labeled racist, when in fact, they never had any intent of any kind to do anything racist.
- Burger King in New Zealand was [castigated as racist](#) for showing an ad that featured chopsticks. The ad was actually comical, but because it featured chopsticks, it was conveniently called racist.
- Leftist radical Rebecca Mankey of Palo Alto verbally assaulted a 74-year-old Jewish man, calling him, among other things, [a racist](#). His charge? He was wearing a MAGA hat.
- Stacey Abrams, a Leftist woman of color, ran for Governor in Georgia and lost. Presidential candidate Seth Moulton, a Left-leaning Democrat from Massachusetts, insists that Abrams [lost due to racism](#). Candidate Pete Buttigieg [also claims racism](#) as the reason for her loss. Ms. Abrams herself has frequently attributed her defeat to racism.
- A wonderfully popular middle school instructor showed a video in his classroom. The video had a conservative viewpoint. The instructor was suspended for doing so, and the Principal of the school claimed that the instructor was [guilty of. . . racism](#). I've seen the video. It has nothing whatsoever to do with racism or race. But Leftist school administrators find the racism charge much easier to make than to simply admit that they cannot tolerate conservative viewpoints.
- Far-Left Sarah Lawrence College recently was in the news because some of it's students demanded that the institution take teaching duties away from white Professors. Why? Because the White Professors [are, by nature, racist](#). Just ask the students. They know. . .

To these seven examples I could add many more, including the time The Gap ran an ad that was called racist simply because it featured a white girl leaning on a black girl. I'm sure if the ad had the black girl leaning on the white girl, it would still have been called racist. I could likewise cite the time not long ago when American Grammar itself was called racist. Or the Princeton University professor who called President Trump a racist during a commencement speech. Or the university students who called Thomas Jefferson a racist, and thus, demanded a statue of him be removed from the campus. Or the time when the Star Spangled

Banner was called racist. Or the time Professor Ekow Yankah of Yeshiva University, who is black, wrote an Op-Ed in the *New York Times* in November 2017 wherein he opined he could not really be friends with white people because America is a racist country.

I could go on and on and on and on. But I think you get the picture. The Left, HB's assertions to the contrary, routinely pull out the race card.

Merely moments ago, a Google search using the search terms "Trump is a racist" provided over 117,000,000 hits. "America is a racist country" produced over 90,000,000 hits.

The Leftist narrative, though false, is alive and well.

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**

**Need Help Preparing For That Next Big Interview?**

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 Problem With Father's Day

In a passing conversation with a buddy of mine, the subject of Father's Day came up. He is the father of several children, and although I don't know his children all that well, I do know he's had intermittent challenges as a parent over the years. So I asked him what his plans were for Father's Day. He replied, "I don't celebrate Father's Day."



Perplexed, I wondered if he belonged to some esoteric religious sect that had some unusual reason for banning holidays such as Father's Day. I briefly entertained the notion that perhaps it was a religion that felt all glory should be for the Father of us all, and that earthly fathers should not steal away some of that glory so as not to offend God. Or something along those lines.

So I asked him to explain his statement. Unfortunately, he had to go but promised to send me a note via email, which he did. With his permission, and with only minor editing on my part, I share his note with you.

*You asked why I don't celebrate Father's Day. Well, let me assure you it has nothing to do with any sort of religious tenet as you suggested. Nor does it have to do with any disdain I have in principle for the holiday. I think that, by and large, commemorating fathers is a good thing, not only because it reminds fathers of how much they are (or should be) appreciated, but it also reminds fathers of the enormity of their responsibility and the key role they wield in society.*

*I don't celebrate Father's Day for the simple reason that Father's Day is, in part, a celebration of the father's fruits of his labor -- the good citizenship of his children. And in my case, I have failed miserably in that aspect. I have children who, for the most part, have made (and continue to make) horrible choices. Most of them are lawbreakers. Most of them would be in jail if law enforcement officials knew of their deeds and/or knew where to find them. One of my children is homeless, living out of her car, solely due to the continued bad choices she willfully makes.*

*I believe I failed that child in some way, even if I do not know precisely how; I failed to be the kind of example that merits any sort of acknowledgment of good fatherhood. I have another child who seems to be a professional con artist and thief. She shoplifts regularly. She steals from her best friends. She lies with the ease that you and I breathe. This has become a way of life for her. Granted, she is the product of her choices. But can I seriously absolve myself entirely from responsibility for the path she is on? I do not think so. Somewhere, somehow, I*

*failed that child. I evidently was not a solid enough example to entice that child to live an honorable life.*

*The same is true of most of my other children. When my friends or colleagues talk about their children and the universities they are graduating from, or the honorable careers they have launched, I dread the moment when they will ask me how my children are doing or what university they attend or graduated from. I find myself wanting to run from such conversations because the pain and the shame are too great.*

*I frankly do not celebrate Father's Day because I do not feel worthy of being acknowledged, given the nature of my relationship with my children and what they have become. While I believe in Father's Day generally, I feel it would be a sham for me to be celebrated in any way, shape, or form.*

*So there's your answer.*

I can only feel sorry for that man and his children. While I will never know the full story of either this man or his children, I can say that his explanation touched me deeply and caused me to remember the phrase, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

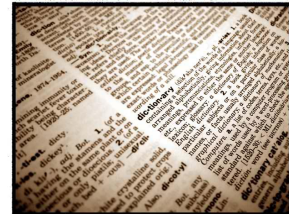
## The World of Words

### Evince

#### Building Your Power of Expression

**Evince**, v.

**Pronunciation:** əˈvɪns



**Meaning:** This nifty word refers to the act of revealing the presence of a quality or a feeling. It can also suggest an indication, as in something that reveals or manifests something else. Think of it in the sense of to display clearly or to constitute outward evidence of.

#### Usage:

- *His letters evince the excitement he felt at undertaking this assignment.*
- *With this example, we once again are confronted by the reality of man's inhumanity to man as evinced in the use of torture.*



- *This news story evinced the usual mixture of sympathy and satisfaction.*

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)

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