

Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

Great to have your attention for a few short minutes!

I hope your holiday season is getting off to a good start.

In this issue of *Uncommon Sense*, we will consider some important issues.

The **Self-Development** column shares a nifty trick to help you memorize certain types of things. Read my account, and then act on it. You may find it very handy in certain situations.



The **Elephant in the Room** column takes a peek at a matter that has been on my mind for quite some time -- the propensity of some people to find victimhood to be a trendy thing to embrace. I identify several different groups that do this and attempt to shine light on their methods.

In the **From Ara's Journal** column, I meditate on the meaning of Thanksgiving. As usual, it shares some of my deepest, personal reflections. For whatever it's worth.

And, of course, the **World of Words** column equips you with yet another word to add to your ever-increasing vocabulary. I hope you find reason to employ that word today. Make it a point to do so.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

Self-Development

Using Memory To Get Somewhere

Many people have a poor memory. As we get older, it sometimes gets tricky to recall certain things.

Here is a methodology that may serve you well when you wish to memorize something like a short list of items in a very specific sequence.

On one occasion in my past I had an upcoming job interview with an organization I truly wished to work for. Among other things, I wanted them to know that I had

studied their corporate values and could name them, in order, as I found them on their website. Their values were listed as follows: Excellence, Innovation, Collaboration, Respect, Dedication, Integrity. I quickly memorized them in that order, using a clever technique I learned long ago.

The way it works is this: you come up with a word, preferably a noun, that rhymes with each number from one to ten. These function as your Code Words. For instance, I used the following Code Words which I associated with the following numbers (and in parentheses I give you some alternatives you could use instead were you so inclined):

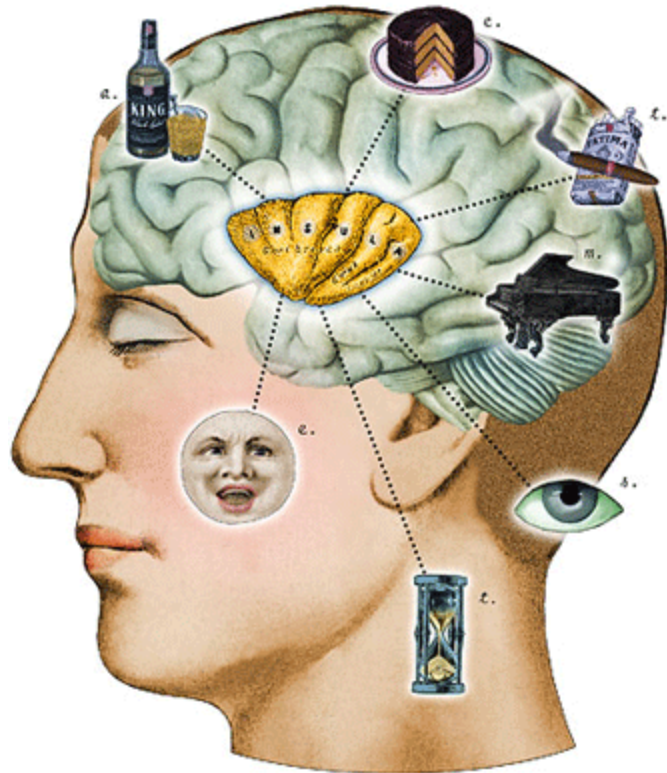
- 1 - Nun (or you could go with sun or gun)
- 2 - Shoe (or glue, screw, or zoo)
- 3 - Key (bee, knee, or tea)
- 4 - Door (boar, drawer, floor, shore, or store)
- 5 - Hive (archive, hard drive, swan dive)
- 6 - Sticks (bricks, crucifix)
- 7 - Kevin (I actually think of a guy I know named Kevin; but you could use "heaven" or "leaven" if you don't know a Kevin)
- 8 - Gate (crate, plate, skate)
- 9 - Vine (mine, shrine, sign, spine, wine)
- 10 - Hen (Big Ben, pen)

Since this organization only had six values, I only needed to use the first six items above.

The next task was to connect their core values with my chosen Code Words:

- 1 - Nun (Excellence)
- 2 - Shoe (Innovation)
- 3 - Key (Collaboration)
- 4 - Door (Respect)
- 5 - Hive (Dedication)
- 6 - Sticks (Integrity)

Finally, I needed to take those associations between their core values and my code words and spin an outlandish and zany story in my head following the sequence of my first six code words. Here is one example of what this looked like:



- 1) I saw a Catholic **NUN** sitting there reading the book, In Search of **EXCELLENCE**.
- 2) I looked down and saw that her **SHOE** was a brand I had never heard of before called **INNOVATION**.
- 3) She got up and walked towards the back of the room to make her exit. She pulled out a **KEY** but there were two key holes and she needed someone else to come with another key. They **COLLABORATED** by putting in their respective keys which unlocked the door.
- 4) The nun opened the **DOOR** and, I could hear Aretha Franklin's song "**RESPECT**" blaring in the background.
- 5) I followed her in the room which was filled with Bee Hives. Each **HIVE** had bees in them that were all very **DEDICATED** to their task of making honey.
- 6) The Nun pulled out a special stick to stir the pot of honey that was nearby. I asked her what kind of stick that was. She winked and said it is called an **INTEGRITY STICK**.

Now, granted, the story is nonsensical. But that is what makes it simple to recall.

I was able to play that story in my head, which I made up out of whole cloth, to memorize the six core values of that fine organization. And during the interview, I was able to rattle off, from memory, their six core values. They looked both shocked and impressed when I did this. I'm not sure everyone in that panel interview could have named their six core values in that order from memory.

And what's more, I got the job!

Can you use just such a technique to memorize, in correct order, up to ten items? Absolutely! Try it. You will surprise yourself and others.

The Elephant in the Room

The Virtues of Victimhood

While one of the classic American values involves self-reliance, those who fancy themselves as "Progressives" often embrace a series of opposing ideologies. One of the favorite anti-American principles among the Left is that of victimhood. The instances of this are legion.

Here are five random examples.

Climate Activists: An immediate personality that comes to mind is Greta Thunberg, the Swedish Climate Change activist who, at age 16, vigorously scolded the members of the United Nations in New York for taking away her future. This young and very unhappy girl imagines that she [has no future](#) whatsoever, and it's the fault of the leaders of the nations of the world for not changing something over which they have no real control in the first place. And Ms. Thunberg is correct in a sense: she herself, and others like her who have concluded that the

world as we know it is going to ignite in an Armageddon-like conflagration due to global warming, face very bleak prospects. The reason is that she and they will live their lives in constant fear, finger-pointing, and non-productivity. She, and they, are victims of a horror story of their own making. Given that she is not [grounded in reality](#), but in a strange, ghoulish nightmare disassociated from actuality, she spends her time skipping school, shouting at others, and watching the clock for a catastrophe she will have wasted her life anticipating. Meanwhile, these climate activists are busy victimizing others, stopping traffic, interrupting [football games](#), and basically making a [nuisance](#) of themselves.



Black Lives Matter: this group launched in 2013 following the acquittal of George Zimmerman who had shot Trayvon Martin in self-defense. Mr. Zimmerman was falsely characterized by the media as a "white Hispanic" - an invented term the media employed merely to stir up tensions between whites and blacks; Zimmerman is Hispanic (his mother is from Peru). The group really picked up some steam the next year following the fatal shooting of Michael Brown (who is black, 6'4" and weighs over 300 pounds) by police officer Darren Wilson (who is white.) Brown, who had just stolen merchandise from a retail store, had physically attacked Officer Wilson, attempted to grab his gun, and, after running away with Officer Wilson in pursuit, turned around and charged Officer Wilson. Fearing for his life, Officer Wilson shot Brown several times, but Brown continued to charge towards Officer Wilson, reaching into his waistband, until Officer Wilson fatally shot him in the head. An accomplice who was with Brown falsely claimed that Brown had his hands up and his back to Officer Wilson and had surrendered. Although this proved to be fabricated testimony (as Brown was never shot in the back and witnesses testified they saw Brown charge the officer) many people in Ferguson, Missouri where this took place believed the false testimony, and a new anti-police chant was born: "[Hands Up. Don't Shoot!](#)" Since that time, the members of Black Lives Matter have on occasion suggested that police should be murdered ("Pigs in a blanket; fry 'em like bacon" was a popular rallying cry.) Other members of Black Lives Matter have gone onto college campuses and [created havoc](#), attacking whites randomly. The movement has raised the issue of [government reparations](#) for slavery of an earlier era, believing they, in our current age, as



the offspring of 18th and 19th century slaves, are entitled to government payouts. Further, this group has created a narrative that blacks who are in prison are there [due to systemic racism](#), not due to blacks committing crime.

Antifa: This group markets itself, as its name suggests, as noble guardians of our republic because they are opposed to Hitler-like fascism (meaning Conservative Republicans). Wearing masks and helmets, they then go around creating bedlam and mayhem, often on [college campuses](#) whenever famous conservatives show up to give a speech they were invited to deliver. Members of Antifa are violent and ruthless. They crack skulls with baseball bats, use pepper spray and bear spray, smash windows and cars, engage in arson, and it is not uncommon for 20 or so of them to [gang up on one person](#), beating that person senseless. The irony behind this group is that they see themselves as victims of fascism, all the while they behave like fascists.



LGBTQIA+: Although members of this group see themselves as [traumatized victims](#), they have succeeded in obtaining legal sanction for same-sex marriage, have obtained protected class status, and have successfully [changed the perceptions](#) of the majority of the rising generation into believing that LGBTQIA+ members are perennial victims. The curious thing is that most LGBTQIA+ activists spend their time victimizing others. It is routine for an activist member of this group to savagely attack their opponents (real or perceived) by working to bring about the loss of their

business if they are business owners, or losing their ability to [earn a living](#) if they are not. In addition, many take their activism even farther, threatening their opponents' children and/or wives with homosexual gang rape and other such things.



The activists within the LGBTQIA+ movement are without question the cruelest and most cut-throat of any demographic of which I am aware outside of radicalized Islamic terrorists. Their motive seems to be an unconditional surrender of any and all Christian groups that have not yet forsaken Christian principles. The activists routinely label their opponents "haters," all the while the activists themselves present us with picture-perfect displays of what shrill hatred really looks like. They have made it an artform to position themselves as victims even while they are in the act of victimizing others.

Illegal Immigrants: There are individuals among us who have broken our immigration laws to be here. Some of them have come because they wanted a better quality of life, but cheated by bypassing our immigration process, essentially sneaking to the head-of-the-line. Others have come here due to civic unrest or

corruption in their home countries. Others are here simply to cause problems, not contribute, and of that latter group, many of them are criminals, not just by breaking our immigration laws, which goes without saying, but by committing all sorts of other crimes: rape, assault, robbery, murder, drunk driving resulting in the death of innocent people, kidnapping, arson,



etc. What is interesting about this group is that one does not generally hear them calling themselves victims. But one does often hear Leftist politicians and other so-called "progressives" touting these people - all of them, including the hardened [criminals](#) among them - as hapless victims. Many of them are victims. But the hardened criminals among them are not victims. They are the victimizers. Yet the Left run cover for even those dangerous individuals with "sanctuary city" policies, even when they [commit cold-blooded murder](#).

What we can take from this review is that almost all groups who claim to be victims are either delusional, or they are deliberately deceptive. The unfortunate thing is that many people are duped by their claims of victimhood, feed into that false narrative, and perpetuate a myth. And worse, such persons who cling to the notion that they are victims spend the majority of their time proclaiming their victimhood rather than being productive and contributing to the betterment of society.

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

Thanksgiving

The greatest thing about the holiday we call Thanksgiving is not the food. Nor is it the socializing. Nor is it the fact that most of us have the day off from work.

The greatest thing about the holiday we call Thanksgiving is that we are confronted with an opportunity to turn our attention away from our problems and sorrows and embrace a spirit of gratitude.

Thanksgiving serves as a reminder to reflect on all of the wondrous blessings that we have. For some people, having reasonably good health is a treasured gift. For others, having food to eat is a sign of good fortune. For still others, having certain people in their life brings unspeakable joy, whether it's a lover, or a family, or a bevy of friends that brings with it a very unique measure of companionship.

This year I was alone on Thanksgiving for the majority of the day. (A dear friend, knowing of my circumstances, invited me to join her extended family for dinner, and when I politely declined, as I did not wish to impose or be a burden, she insisted I join them to at least keep her boyfriend company whom she feared might be bored. So I accepted). But even in my solitude throughout the day, my heart was drawn up in a spirit of gratefulness for all of the richness of my life, a richness I believe to come from God, a richness which is undeniable. Focusing on such good fortune keeps one grounded and centered, and puts life's heartaches in a new light. I recognize that whatever my disappointments in life, they are dwarfed by the bounties which have come my way - amazing and caring friends, a multi-faceted career that keeps me engaged, robust health, and new adventures



on a daily basis. There are heartbreaks to be sure, but my focusing on the things for which I am thankful brings about a healing and a remembrance of the good fortune I have been the lucky recipient of.

Thanksgiving, as a holiday, can be transformative.

The World of Words

Expanse

Building Your Power of Expression

Expanse, n.

Pronunciation: ik'spans



Meaning: This word could be used in the sense of an area of something, typically land or sea, that presents a wide continuous surface. It could also be used in the sense of the distance to which something expands or can be expanded.

Usage:

- *I marveled at the green expanse of this forest.*
- *This particular moth has a wing expanse of 20 to 24 mm.*
- *The expanse of the national debt seem to be spiraling out of control.*

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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