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Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Welcome to the final issue of *Uncommon Sense* for 2020, a year that was, . . . interesting to say the least. Let's see what awaits you in this issue.

The **Self-Development** column gives you your final marching orders taking you into 2021. Read it and take action.

In the **Elephant in the Room** column I hand it off to Victor Davis Hanson of Stanford's Hoover Institution. He is a brilliant classicist and historian and his recent column from *The Daily Caller* is so brilliant that I had to share it with you. It is a must-read!



The **From Ara's Journal** column contains some musings I have been pondering about various peculiarities I notice taking place. For whatever they are worth.

The **World of Words** column delivers yet again on a nifty word you can use immediately.

I am aware that it's been a tough year, folks. Not just locally, but globally. I have been rather fortunate in many ways. Others, not so much. Let's do what we can to remember others who are down on their luck and do what we can to quietly and without fanfare lift them back to their feet. At every opportunity.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

Self-Development

Awaken the Entrepreneur Within!

As 2020 closes out, I have my mind (as do you) on the future – particularly on 2021. What will that year be like for me and for you? It's anybody's guess. We have a new Administration likely to take office in January. We can't predict with finality how the

Coronavirus will impact us during the year. And there are myriad of unknowns lurking in the shadows, some good, and some not so good.

However, as I think about the future, I am reminded of the power of entrepreneurship. Why? Because entrepreneurs are builders, they are doers, they are risk-takers. And whether you yourself are an actual entrepreneur or not, you can adopt both the mindset and the attributes of the classic entrepreneur. In fact, we have a word for working professionals who are gainfully employed in a larger enterprise (or a small business). These people are, technically speaking, employees. But some of them think and behave like entrepreneurs. The term for these people is intrapreneur. They are not in charge of the business. They don't run it. But they do take ownership of the part of the enterprise that falls within their purview, and they approach their work the way an entrepreneur approaches theirs.



What are some of these attributes? Here are three:

Risk, not Comfort Zone: Entrepreneurs are not risk averse. That doesn't mean they are rash or fool-hardy. The risks they take are based on careful calculation, but they are risks, nonetheless. If you wish to excel in 2021, you may want to ask yourself how timid you are, how gun-shy you've become. You may want to take a few more risks in the future than you did in the past.

Innovation not Status Quo: Entrepreneurs are curious souls; they question relentlessly. They continuously try to improve processes, products, procedures, and they even examine their relationships to ascertain if they are still worth keeping intact or whether it is time to do some pruning. Entrepreneurs tend to create anew the systems and processes they routinely utilize. They don't assume the status quo is sacrosanct. What can you do that is new, or unique, or creative? Are you in a rut? Do you tend to do things the way you've always done things? Adopt a mindset that enables you to question everything you are doing. Ask yourself this question (which I gleaned from Peter Drucker): Knowing what I know today, if I were to do this all over again, would I do it differently? If your answer is anything other than no, you need to take action.

Anticipation, not Reactivity: Want to know one unusual thing people living in poverty have in common? They don't think beyond the immediacy of their lives. Their perception-horizon is no more than about 5 minutes out. They think about the next program on TV. They ponder what might be in the refrigerator to eat. They may briefly give consideration to the location of the nearest McDonalds. In contrast, entrepreneurs think about the future. They engage in long-range planning. They consider what new trends may be coming across the horizon. And they prepare to adapt to them and sometimes capitalize on them.

These characteristics may already be second nature to you. Or perhaps you demonstrate them inconsistently. On the other hand, some (or all) of these attributes may be largely foreign to you. But all of them can be adopted by you, and can be utilized to attain great results in 2021 and beyond.

So embrace them and make 2021 your finest year to date!

The Elephant in the Room

Our Upside Down Post-Election World by Victor

Davis Hanson

After Nov. 3, the meaning of some words and concepts abruptly changed. Have you noticed how new realities have replaced old ones?

Media cross-examination of the president is now an out-of-date idea. The time for gotcha questions has come and gone. Why ask a president whether he is a traitor or a crook when you can focus on his favorite flavor of milkshake or compliment him on his socks?



The old pre-election truth was that new vaccines take years to develop. The new post-election truth is that it's no big deal to bring out new vaccines in nine months. Impeaching a first-term president after his first midterm election — on a strictly partisan vote, for political reasons other than the Constitution's "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors" — is now a terrible idea.

Worse would be to appoint a special counsel to harass a president on unfounded charges of collusion with China. An even scarier notion would be a conservative dream team of partisan lawyers hounding President Joe Biden — using a 22-month, \$40 million blank check.

It would be unprofessional for university psychologists and physicians from a distance to diagnose, in pop fashion, the mental faculties of a President Biden.

Certainly, there would never be talk about Department of Justice officials contemplating wearing a wire as part of an entrapment scheme to remove a President Biden through the 25th Amendment. That would almost constitute a coup attempt.

Almost as bad would be for the holdover FBI director to start "memorializing" his private conversations with Joe Biden on FBI devices. He might then leak such memos to the press — just in case he were to be fired for secretly investigating Biden for "Chinese collusion" and then lying about such a probe.

What happened to the Logan Act? Not long ago it was assumed to be a critically needed guardrail. Wouldn't it now ensure that presidential transition team members were not calling foreign leaders while Donald Trump is still president? How has it suddenly become a defunct, ossified relic?

Leaking classified material would be about the worst thing government officials could do. Imagine if a Trump holdover, burrowed into the new Biden administration, released a transcript of Biden's private conversations with the Mexican president or the Australian prime minister.

Such a breach of trust would be almost as bad as a turncoat anti-Biden mole seeking to resist presidential directives. Imagine if this anonymous staffer were given an op-ed in the New York Times to claim that a cadre of old-time Democrats were shocked by Biden's cognitive decline and resisting his directives.

Is extending security clearances to former high-level officials turned cable-TV pundits still a bad idea? Who would wish to see, for instance, former Director of National Intelligence

John Ratcliffe issuing warnings each night on Fox News? With a wink-and-nod hat tip to his “confidential sources,” Ratcliffe could spin conspiracy theories that Biden is facing bombshell disclosures about his family misadventures with the Chinese.

Is it still important that we keep the tradition of retired high-ranking military officers — all subject to the requirements of the Uniform Code of Military Justice — not disparaging the president? Who would want former Pentagon officials, some of them serving on the boards of military contractors, warning us that Biden should be removed because of cognitive challenges? Certainly, generals and admirals should not compare a President Biden’s policies to those of Mussolini or the Nazis.

At least “dark money” no longer exists. The old idea of right-wing billionaires pouring money into candidates’ political campaigns was supposedly a dangerous practice. It would be far more civic-minded for left-wing billionaires to pour hundreds of millions of dollars into the coffers of nonpartisan state bureaucracies entrusted with guaranteeing the sanctity of national elections.

And apparently after, not before, an election is the proper time to announce critically important news.

- Like the rollout of a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine?
- Like a \$900 billion stimulus package?
- Like a revised upward Fannie Mae report on the economy?
- Like the ties between a Democratic member of the House Intelligence Committee and a suspected Chinese spy?
- Like a federal investigation of Joe Biden’s son and his possible profiteering with rich Chinese elites affiliated with China’s government?

To keep track of our brave new American world is easy.

Just consider everything said to be bad by the “Animal Farm” media before Nov. 3 as now good. And remember that everything said to be good two months ago is now actually bad.

* * * * *

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

Shameless Plug Want to Succeed at your Next Job Interview?

With the COVID-19 pandemic going into its 6th month, many people have become displaced in their jobs. You may have lost your job, or perhaps you may be vulnerable to losing your job in the near future.

While you will be scrambling to start interviewing with prospective employers, it may have been some time since your last interview, and you may be rusty.

You may well benefit from my Special Report, [***Your Interview Roadmap***](#).

Let’s face it: if you hired me to coach you through the process of an effective interview, the fee would run into the hundreds of dollars. And spending hundreds of dollars when you are unemployed (or about to become unemployed) is a difficult thing to do. I wrote this Special Report so that for less than \$100, ***in fact, less than \$50***, you would have

access to the golden nuggets that, if followed, would greatly put the odds in your favor that you'll perform brilliantly at your next interview. And every interview after that.

Just ask D. Smith of Santa Clarita who bought my Interview Guide and successfully landed a job soon thereafter:

"I purchased Norwood's interview guide last month and it's amazing! He goes through the processes step-by-step and you end up with not only the skills that will get you that interview, but the strategies necessary to be confident so you succeed in your interviews resulting in you receiving job offers (yes, offers)."



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've done poorly in job interviews in the past, you can turn it around. The answers are there. Take action! [Click here to get started](#). You won't regret it!

From Ara's Journal

Curiosities

There are a number of things I have noticed in life that I find a tad bit odd. These involve human tendencies that seem to follow a consistent pattern for reasons that elude me. I'm not necessarily critical of these patterns; I just find them curious. Allow a few examples:



This one has to do with religion and belief (or lack of belief). We have among us believers in God and an afterlife. We call them *theists*. Then we have a very small number of people, some of who are rather outspoken, who insist all of that is hogwash. To them, there is no God and no afterlife. This life is all there is. We call them *atheists*. But then we have a third category. This category involves people who are middle-of-the-road on matters pertaining to a belief in God. They neither believe nor do they insist, as do atheists, that there cannot possibly be a God or an afterlife. We call these people *agnostics*. Here's the peculiar phenomenon: agnostics are theoretically "on the fence" as to whether there is a God or there is not a God, yet they routinely fall on the side of the fence of the atheists in terms their behaviors (or lack thereof). Agnostics behave like atheists. They don't go to Church. They don't pray. They don't manage their life in terms of the possibility of there being an afterlife and a judgment and a God who rewards and punishes according to the deeds done here on earth. There is no coherent reason why agnostics behave like atheists. There is nothing logical that requires that they do so. An agnostic could just as easily attend a Church or Synagogue with his uncertainties, and just hedge his bets. But instead, the agnostic virtually always follows the path of the atheist. I find that curious.

Here's another example involving race. When you have a person of mixed race, particularly if the person had one parent who was white and the other parent who was black, that person is neither fully white nor fully black. Yet every time I recall hearing such a person describe their racial identity, without exception I have heard such persons embrace their "blackness" and repudiate their "whiteness." Why? Is there something defective about being white? Is there something superior about being black? Again, as I stated above, this is not so much a criticism as much as it is a curiosity. The only exception I can think of to this phenomenon involves a person who was both Hispanic and white – George Zimmerman, who was in the news in early 2012 for his involvement in the fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin. George Zimmerman's mother is Peruvian and his father is an American of German descent. CNN infamously tried to stir up anti-White commotion by referring to George Zimmerman as a "white Hispanic" – a term they have never used before, not even when referring to their own former news host Rich Sanchez. Still the question remains, why do biracial people who have a white parent and a black parent consistently think of themselves as black?

A final example, this one involving political philosophy. For people who are politically savvy, there are three main camps one may align oneself with. There are conservatives. There are Leftists (also called Progressives). And there are Liberals. We say Conservatives are "right-of-center." You can pretty much tell where Leftist-Progressives are. I think it fair to say that Liberals are somewhere closer to the center, although many people mistakenly refer to them as "the Liberal Left," conflating Liberal and Left. But Liberals and Leftists have [little in common](#). Still, I find it curious that Liberals almost always vote in harmony with Leftist policy, rarely with Conservative ideology. The truth is Liberals have far more in common with Conservatives than with Leftists. Yet Liberals still vote Left. Very curious.

The world in which we live is, indeed, a curious place.

The World of Words

Dither

Building Your Power of Expression

Dither, v.

Pronunciation: dīTHər

Meaning: To dither is to be indecisive, to stall, to beat-around-the-bush. A person who is guilty of dithering is failing to take decisive action. Think of most all politicians, or the typical employee at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Usage:

- *He was dithering about setting up the meeting.*
- *You need to get off your butt and take action rather than dither.*



- *One thing you need to understand about me is that I do not dither – I aggressively make things happen.*

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