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Great to be back with you for another dose of *Uncommon Sense*.

In our **Self-Development** column, I provide a quick tip for maintaining grace under pressure.

The **Elephant in the Room** column outlines the essence of a dangerous force that is busy destroying our country -- the United States of America. I call it out in direct, non-nonsense language.

The **From Ara's Journal** column finds me disclosing some very personal reflections that you may relate to on some level.

The World of Words as usual delivers up a fantastic word you can start using today.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Grace Under Pressure

I read a very instructive and hilarious book one time by Herb Cohen, a world-class negotiator. The book's title is [Negotiate This!](#) And the subtitle read as follows: "By Caring, But Not T-H-A-T Much" which is one of the few subtitles I have memorized. I think the notion of caring up to a point, but not past that point, has some interesting ramifications.

There are times when we are under attack, by which I mean, we are being bullied, or threatened, or scolded or shamed. I am not talking about a criminal act where a thug has drawn a knife, or a mugger is trying to beat us senseless



with his fists. Those sorts of threats are the subject of a very different article. Instead, I mean the kinds of attacks that are not physically violent or criminal. I am talking about being bullied or verbally assaulted by a jerk at your place of employment, or a neighbor who thinks she can push you around to do what she wants you to do, or some person you don't even know on a social media platform.

Those of us who get our feelings hurt, or who feel intimidated or beaten down (again, non-physically), usually feel that way because we actually care (for some strange reason) what that bully thinks.

Let me tell you something: it is liberating to stop caring what they think. People of all stripes think all sorts of things. Some of those thoughts are ill-founded. Many of those thoughts are irrelevant. They are just opinions. So, some of those people are going to use their opinions to try to intimidate you or bully you into doing things they want you to do.

If the person has real authority over you, like a boss at your place of employment, then you probably have to acquiesce to their demands if you wish to stay employed there. (And you may find you don't want to stay employed there, in which case you should find a new job quickly, and then leave that environment. Your jerk of a boss cannot hassle you if you are no longer employed there, so put together an exit strategy.)

But if the person does not have the kind of power over you your boss has, then practice a shift of mind. Try thinking in terms of: "Do you really think what you have to say is something I find interesting?" You may not say that out loud, but when you can bring yourself to think in such terms, you will find your feelings far less hurt than you would otherwise.

Maintaining poise in the face of strife is a great skill to develop. And it can be developed through practice (just as any other skill can be developed). So if you are rattled by the obnoxious personalities of some people in your orbit, embrace the mindset I have articulated here. And practice drawing upon that mindset whenever you encounter such flack from others. Chances are high you will feel more and more invulnerable to the ill-tempered barbs that come your way, and people will see in you an unflappable, calm, dignified thought-leader.

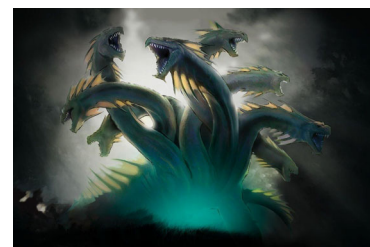
We certainly could use more of those.

The Elephant in the Room

The Leftist Hydra: 7 Points of Attack

*"What kind of government have we given you?
A republic, if you can keep it."*

Benjamin Franklin,
to a female inquirer at the conclusion of
the Constitutional Convention



*"At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected?
I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us.
It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author
and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide."*

Abraham Lincoln
January 27, 1838

We are witnessing the early stages of a full-scale attack on America.

Whether America survives this attack, or whether America will be destroyed as an entity, remains to be seen.

At this juncture, it doesn't look promising for America, because only one side is fighting – the side that is seeking to destroy America. Those who are true to America's mission and values either seem too intimidated to fight, or they are profoundly asleep at the wheel and are unaware a battle is being waged.

America is an idea. The idea is based on principles of liberty, limited government, self-reliance, honoring religion, particularly the Judeo-Christian tradition, a respect for tradition, and an honoring of the law. These principles have made America the greatest and most prosperous and most powerful country in the earth's history. For a variety of reasons, there are forces both internal and external that seek to destroy America. And they seem to be succeeding. America is indeed in decline.

While the external enemies of America include the nation-states of China, Iran, Russia, North Korea, and radicalized Islamic terrorists who do not represent a particular nation-state, there is a single internal enemy. I refer to this internal enemy as the Secular Left, or Leftism. They refer to themselves as Progressives. They have a very healthy, bloated, and unwarranted self-image, in that they imagine they are progressing, or moving this country towards a loftier realm, when in fact, they are actually regressive, dragging the country down into a very dark and destructive abyss.

There are seven broad areas where the Left is eroding the pillars of America. I describe these seven areas below.

Hatred of God, and Judeo-Christian Religion

As a general rule, the Left hates the Catholic Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and any Protestant churches that are conservative in nature (e.g., Baptist, Evangelical, etc.) However, the Left does respect and promote any Christian churches that embrace Leftist causes (such as same-sex marriage, etc.) and see such churches as valuable allies. The Left also hates any and all Jewish sects, particularly the orthodox, that take their religion seriously. Conversely, the Left is very tolerant of Jewish groups that are more secular than religious, or that have forsaken their religious moorings. Having said that, the Left, as a general rule, [despises the nation-state of Israel](#), and seems to have no qualms about [anti-Semitic behaviors](#). The Left finds religious faith a target of contempt and mockery; they find notions of faith and prayer to be unintelligible, backwards, and worthy of scorn.

Racism

The Left maintains an unhealthy and peculiar [obsession with issues involving race](#). This obsession masks a colossal irony: the Left is highly racist in their views. This explains why the Left is so [animated by and focused](#) on matters involving race: [being thoroughly racist themselves](#), they strive to appear as virtuous as possible and [not draw attention](#) to their [deeply racist views](#). The Left also seeks to [paint non-Leftists as racists](#). Thus, race-baiters of an earlier era such as Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson have been replaced by more virulent race-baiters such as [Ibram X. Kendi](#), Patrisse Cullors, and Cori Bush, all of whom promote the lie that America is [systemically racist](#), and that [white people are innately racist](#), or that ["whiteness"](#) (whatever that might mean) must be stamped out and stigmatized. Yet, the white Left truly see black people as inferior, as [incapable of obtaining](#)

[ID](#) in voting situations, as incapable of using English correctly or [doing math correctly](#), and thus, the need to lower or redefine correct English and Math standards, along with a host of other examples. Finally, the Left seeks to institutionalize their racism by teaching [Critical Race Theory in our schools](#), while [denying they do so](#). The result of all of this is that things are labeled racist that have nothing whatsoever to do with race. Thus, Leftists insist the names of sports teams such as [the Cleveland Indians](#) are racist, when they are not. And Leftists claim the [American Flag is racist](#), which it is not. And Leftists claim that if you merely state [that crime is on the rise](#) in certain cities (when it is, in fact, on the rise), you are a racist, when you are not. And Leftists claim [Independence Day is a racist holiday](#), when it is not. And Leftists claim that [banning the use of marijuana](#) for Olympic athletes is racist, when it is not. And Leftists hyperventilate over the supposed racism [inherent in a bird](#), Audobon's Warbler. Yet there is nothing racist about the bird. Nor is racism an inherent part of yoga, the practice of which Leftists insist is racist. In one of the more bizarre examples in recent memory, a monument on a college campus, in the form of [a giant rock, was deemed racist](#) by some students, and true to form, the Administration instantly capitulated and removed the supposedly racist inanimate object, with the students, none of whom had stubbed their toe on the rock, could now begin to heal. Thus, the Left has a perversely unhealthy obsession about racism where none exists, yet they continue to [behave in racist ways themselves](#), betraying no self-awareness of such a flaw.

Lawlessness

Law is what maintains an orderly and safe society. Law brings justice to the victims of crime by punishing those who commit crimes. The Left, on the other hand, [is lawless](#). They assume that if a black criminal commits assault, armed robbery, arson, or grand theft, the punishing of that black criminal represents racism, not justice. Thus, [Leftists seek to go easy on crime](#). Many Leftists who sit in positions of power in District Attorney's offices simply [dismiss cases against criminals](#), even if they involve felonies. Many Leftists seek to [defund the police](#), and they justify this with the lie that police are out there murdering unarmed blacks with impunity. Many Leftists seek to release hardened criminals back into society; some believe it appropriate [to close all prisons](#). They would have the criminal element in society run free, bringing havoc to their communities.

Hatred of America's Founding Fathers, Founding documents, Founding Ideals

When then-Senator Barack Obama was campaigning for the presidency in 2008, he delivered a speech wherein he claimed he and his followers were mere days away from fundamentally transforming the United States of America. That statement accurately captures the mindset of the average Leftist: they want to fundamentally, completely, and totally transform the United States from what it was founded to be to something it was never intended to be. Thus, the Left have no choice but to view the Founding Fathers such as George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson as unworthy of emulation. They see the founding documents (the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and similar founding documents) as nothing to write home about and often as a source of embarrassment. Because they see themselves as "progressives," the Left imagines they are progressing away from the vision of the Founders, and they see that as a good thing. Thus, Leftists support renaming schools and other monuments that were named after the Founding Fathers. The Left would like to erase our nation's history.

Perverting the Idea of Gender

The Left has convinced themselves that [something as fundamental as gender](#), the notion that there is [male and female](#), is false. They believe gender to be fluid, something they

insist cannot apply to sexual attraction, which they consider locked. The Left insists, without any question or without a shred of critical thinking or reflection, that if a man declares himself to be a woman, he is, in fact, a woman. Not only that, but the Left, in true totalitarian fashion, [will experience convulsive fits](#) of fury and [paroxysms of rage](#) if anyone dares question their position, [let alone denies their position](#). Further, if a 13-year-old boy even begins to so much as wonder about his own male nature, the medical profession has taken the position that they must encourage him [to undergo sex reassignment surgery](#) that same day without further thought to turn him into a girl, and if a girl wonders the same thing, she is to have her breasts sawed off and given hormone treatments to help her grow a beard without further consideration. Deny that men can give birth and you are called a hater worthy of a savage beating, all the while the Left, with a straight face, will spew out empty slogans such as "Follow the science" or that "The science is settled" – this coming from people who have never studied science and have nary a clue what science entails.

Perverting the Idea of Sexuality

Sexual expression is no small matter and those who believe in God understand that God has set up certain strictures within which the parameters of sex have proper place. Sex, which is not only the most bonding experience between a man and a woman, but an act that has the power to create life and perpetuate the species, is an act of extreme significance. God has determined that a law, known as [the law of chastity](#), which puts a line of demarcation around the [proper use of sexual expression](#), is the only acceptable way in which sex is to be experienced, and that is between one man and one woman who are legally and lawfully married. Thus, in God's eyes, there is to be no pre-marital or extra-marital sex. Also, abortion, except in very rare circumstances, is abhorrent in the eyes of God. Finally, children, who are not emotionally capable of processing the consequences of sex, should be protected from exposure to sex, either directly or indirectly, in order to [preserve their innocence](#). Unfortunately, Leftists do not believe any of this. Rejecting God, Leftists see sex as something anyone and everyone should experience, with or without commitment, inside or outside of marriage. Leftists [increasingly support pedophilia](#), the horrific and ugly practice of sexualizing children. Notions of abstinence are [routinely mocked](#) by the Left, who adopt an "anything goes" mindset with sex education curriculum in our schools.

A Penchant for Chaos and Crises

While Conservatives prefer to establish order and stability, Leftists, given their love of lawlessness, prefer chaos, mayhem, and bedlam. As Left-wing politician Rahm Emanuel famously said, "Never let a crisis go to waste." In other words, Leftists wish to capitalize on crises, and gain as much advantage as they can because of the resulting chaos. They do this because they strive to impose policies that promote Leftist values in the face of such crises. After all, if there is a crisis, there must be a new policy to address that crisis. That is when the Leftist strikes: to capitalize on the opportunity to impose a new policy. Thus, the fact that the temperature on the planet has risen by less than two degrees causes Leftists to [announce that life](#) on this planet will end within 12 years and therefore we must go back to the Dark Ages and shut down the use of all carbon emissions, including automobile use, air travel, and the use of coal. The Left even puts stock in teenagers who know nothing about climate science (but imagine they do) such as the perpetually happiness-challenged Greta Thunberg, to brow-beat the rest of us into submission to non-facts. In doing so, they revel in a cacophony of noisy pablum, where there is plenty of heat but no light. Global Warming, as it turns out, is a manufactured crisis. It's not that the world is not warming; it is. But the reaction to it, and the shrill

solutions proposed by the Left, represent a lot of unnecessary flailing about, as their doomsday predictions never seem to pan out.

These seven points of attack are perpetuated by the fact that the Left has taken over two other key entities: Schools ([K through Graduate School](#)) and the mainstream media. Most students who attend public schools, and especially colleges and universities are sitting ducks, mere dupes who are fed a steady diet of [Left-Wing propaganda](#). And our media, which is supposed to report the news, [has given up their charge](#) and instead [pumps Left-Wing propaganda](#) to the masses, burying ([or cancelling](#)) any valid news story that [does not reflect well on the Left](#), and often [spinning stories](#) (or [blatantly lying](#)) when it suits them.

Thus, America is rotting from the inside. Unless Conservative heroes emerge and move swiftly and decisively to confront the destructive nature that is modern-day Leftism, America is at risk to be forcefully removed from its original charter of standing as a beacon of liberty, a shining city on a hill, to becoming another failed socialist state. Benjamin Franklin had it right: we will remain a republic if we can keep it. As it stands at this juncture, this experiment in liberty seems to be slipping from our grasp.

* * * * *

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

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You may be gainfully employed, you may be unemployed, or you may (knowingly or unknowingly) be heading for a layoff. Having an impressive résumé can set you apart from the competition and position you for your next job.

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

"I could not have gotten my first job without your expertise. Thank you so much! I learned that I had to reword and improve my résumé in order to be taken seriously in the workforce. I had been given tips from my professors in Health Science and other professionals but your advice was just what I needed. It took weeks of frustration waiting for interview calls when I happened to stumble across your website and discovered that I needed help. Your publication enlightened me with your knowledge on the wording and format needed to attract an employer. Furthermore, your booklet helped me recognize certain skills and work experience that I would have never considered important until you got me thinking about it. Thanks for a great product!" -- R. Espana, Valencia, California

From Ara's Journal

Moments of Melancholy and Nostalgia

My daughter leaves in a few hours from now for Medical School. She has been studying medicine for the last year from home, using remote learning. But today she leaves for the island nation of Grenada. It will fall to me to drive her to the airport. I have a habit of smuggling a special card with a fatherly note into one of her suitcases. I did this whenever she left California for Hawaii during her undergraduate days. Those ended in 2016. I have a new card with a new note containing my brand of fatherly advice, along with a wad of cash. She will be delighted but probably not surprised when she discovers it.



But this time, I think we both know it will be different. And more permanent. She is a young woman now, an adult in her mid-20s. She is going to be a physician. And she will have her life to manage and to lead. I suspect I won't be seeing as much of her in the coming years. And that reality is kind of difficult to face.

I think she knows this as well. That is why she has shed some tears over the last few days.

Time marches on. And as I get older, as I get closer to the day when I will one day leave this place for the final time, I brace myself for the many friends and loved ones who will precede me in that journey. I suspect I will attend a lot of funerals between now and the time that I have my own. Perhaps like many, my life experience going forward will be more weighted on the memories of the past rather than the making of new vivid memories in the future. But does it have to be that way?

People move on. They grow old. They move away. They pass away. Some get lost from view. That's part of life.

But I am not in any way giving up. In fact, as I think about it more, I firmly believe my best and most adventurous years lie ahead of me. Maybe in my mid-90s I'll start to slow down and savor what years I have left of life on this earth. But I suspect that my most consequential years, my greatest achievements, lie in the future, in my 70s and 80s. I really do believe that.

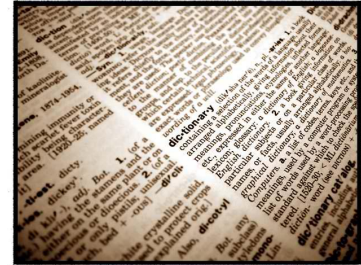
In the meantime, I can just wish my lovely daughter much success and good fortune. I am confident she is going to be a first-rate physician. I believe her future patients will be in very good hands. I feel lucky to be her father. I am proud of her.

I feel humbled that she is my daughter.

The World of Words

Deft

Building Your Power of Expression



Deft, adj.

Pronunciation: deft

Meaning: When something is deft, it is agile, swift in movement, fleet of foot. It can also refer to something that demonstrates skills and an ability to be clever or insightful.

Usage:

- *Both Pele and Ali, in their respective sport of soccer and boxing, displayed deft footwork.*
- *The script was at once highly literary and quite deft.*
- *She is many things: deft, astute, and incisive to name a few.*

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