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Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Hello! Wonderful to have you back for another round of *Uncommon Sense*. I hope you appreciate the larger font size. I know as many of us grow older, our eyesight tends to diminish a bit.

Let's unpack this issue of *Uncommon Sense*.

The ***Self-Development*** column provides a little amusement by having you confront several statements on what leadership is. Check it out.



The Elephant in the Room column deals with a very sobering and serious subject -- a big lie that is being foisted on the American people. It's depressing, but it must be faced up to.

The ***From Ara's Journal*** column shares some musings I have about the oft-spoken subject of integrity.

And, bringing up the rear, ***The World of Words*** column provides a beautifully elegant word that is at once dynamic and expressive.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

Self-Development

Assigning Meaning to Leadership

As a professional speaker who happens to speak on the subject of leadership (among a number of other subjects), I am struck by the many attempts by authorities to define leadership.



Here is a small sampling of definitions of leadership by various people, some of them famous, others less so. See which of them strikes you as most on-target.

"The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor. That sums up the progress of an artful leader." (Max DePree, *Leadership is an Art*, page 11).

"Leadership is first being, then doing. Everything the leader does reflects what he or she is." (Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, page 141).

"As I see it, leadership revolves around vision, ideas, direction, and has more to do with inspiring people as to direction and goals than with day-to-day implementation." (John Sculley, *Odyssey*, page 139).

"The chief object of leadership is the creation of a human community held together by the work bond for a common purpose." (Peter Drucker).

"Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers." (James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*, page 18).

"Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her follows." (John W. Gardner, *Gardner On Leadership*, page 1).

"Leadership is intertwined with culture formation." (Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*).

"Leadership is communicating to people their worth and potential so that they come to see it in themselves." (Stephen R. Covey, *The 8th Habit*.)

"Leadership is about rising to the events of the times." (John D. Sims).

And I will add my own attempt at a definition:

"Leadership is the result of deep thought, of grappling with the right questions, of articulating a desired future vision and having the skills to be a change-agent, of having the iron will to persevere in spite of hardship, of empowering people to follow you because of your high levels of integrity, and of sprouting the seeds of leadership in the next generation."

I just banged that definition out of my head on the spot, although I have thought long and hard about leadership for several decades.

Which definition speaks to you?

More importantly, which inspires you to take the reins of leadership in your own sphere of influence?

The Elephant in the Room

The New Big Lie

There is a big lie being promoted throughout our country at this time. It's being fostered by Big Tech. It is promulgated by the FAKE NEWS mainstream media (AKA the Leftwing Media). It is an article of faith in the entirety of our educational institutions, from elementary school, to middle school, to high school, to colleges and universities, and into our graduate schools. It is a religious doctrine of



the Democrat Party and is even a major talking point of the President of the United States, Joe Biden.

To spell out why this is not just a lie, but a Big Lie, perhaps one of the biggest ever (rivaling the nonsense that men can give birth, or that there is not only two sexes – male and female) it is a Big Lie in that it is not merely untrue, it is actually the precise opposite of the truth.

If someone were to tell you that the greatest threat facing black Americans today was white Americans, (i.e., white supremacists) when in fact white-on-black crime is actually nowhere near close to black-on-black crime, that would be a colossal travesty that such a statement was being promoted when it is so false. But when the news media, the universities, Big Tech, and the President of the United States along with the Democrat Party all repeat the falsehood with the consistency of chanting a mantra, that is enormously problematic.

Right now, as I look at my clock, the time is 8:20 PM on Tuesday May 24th. As I type this (shortly before sending it out) we learned of another mass shooting in a little town called Uvlade located in the great state of Texas. More than a dozen elementary school children were murdered in cold blood. The shooter's name is Salvador Ramos. Judging from his name, I am taking a guess he is Hispanic. The cynic in me imagines President Biden wishes the shooter was a white Caucasian, but no matter. A black teenager by the name of Trayvon Martin was killed a decade ago by a Hispanic man named George Zimmerman, and the media labeled Mr. Zimmerman a "White Hispanic" – a term that, to my knowledge, had never been used before. It may well be used again with today's mass shooting, and for the same reason: to foist a false narrative on the American people.

Just over one week ago, a white teenager named Payton Gendron walked into a supermarket frequented by black people and opened fire, killing 10 innocent people, all of them black, and injuring others. Gendron actually is a white supremacist who is almost certainly mentally ill (not that that excuses his villainy). But such attacks, while beyond tragic, are rare. Yet President Biden, who flew to Buffalo to address the situation, said these words:

White supremacy is a poison. It's a poison — running through — it really is — running through our body politic. And it's been allowed to fester and grow right in front of our eyes. . . . As President of the United States, I travel the world all the time, and other nations ask me — heads of state and other countries ask me, "What's going

on? What in God's name happened on January 6th? What happened in Buffalo? What happ-..." They ask.

Interesting that the President referenced January 6th on this occasion.

But even more troubling is the notion that the President believes that white supremacy runs through the entire body politic. In other words, white supremacy is systemic. (Remember, we are alleged to be a systemically racist country.) Black people, according to President Biden, have great reason to fear white people because, according to the Left, it is white hate crimes that are the dominant problem in our society.

But is that true?

Heather Mac Donald has done the [necessary research](#) to ascertain whether these claims are true. Her research focused on hate-crime suspects whose race and ethnicity were known. Here is what she has found:

- From 2016 to 2020, blacks nationally were twice as likely to commit a hate crime as whites.
- In New York City, from 2010 to 2020, blacks were 2.42 times as likely as whites to commit a hate crime.
- Let's get even more granular. In Los Angeles in 2021, blacks committed anti-Asian hate crimes at 4.8 times the rate of whites, anti-gay hate crimes at 7 times the rate of whites, and anti-Semitic hate crimes at 2.4 times the rate of whites.
- Also, blacks committed anti-trans hate crimes at 2.5 times the rate of Hispanics. Why do I compare blacks with Hispanics for this particular hate crime rather than with whites? Because there were no white suspects in anti-trans hate crimes in Los Angeles in 2021.

And speaking of Los Angeles in 2021, how did black hate crimes against Hispanics compare to white hate crimes against Hispanics?

- Blacks committed anti-Hispanic hate crimes in Los Angeles at 13.5 times the rate of whites in 2021.

As Heather Mac Donald writes:

In the U.S., blacks commit the vast share of the interracial violence between blacks and whites that is not classified as a hate crime: 88

percent. Some portion of the gratuitously brutal beatings and carjackings that have become even more of a routine occurrence in the aftermath of the 2020 George Floyd race riots undoubtedly have racial animus behind them. The authorities treat black-on-white crime as unremarkable, however, and rarely look into motive. Authorities almost always scrutinize white-on-black crime, rare as it is, for a hate enhancement, precisely because it is so rare.

While it is true that black lives matter (I'm not referring to the movement or the organization, but to the broad concept because all lives – including black lives – matter), and while it is true that blacks living in certain big cities of our country have great reason to fear for their lives, those fears do not come by reason of alleged white hatred of blacks. It comes from the fact that it is other blacks who are highly likely to kill them.

Does President Joe Biden understand any of this? Does he want to understand?

Unfortunately, the answers to those questions are no, and no.

* * * * *

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

From Ara's Journal

On Integrity

*"This above all: to thine own self be true.
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."*

William Shakespeare,
Hamlet, Act 1, Scene III,
(spoken by Polonius)



If one were to review the official websites of the top 60 corporations of the Fortune 500, they would discover that 32 of them identify *integrity* as one of their core values. Had I continued the analysis, I'm sure I would have discovered that more than half of the Fortune 500

claim integrity as a governing value. That leads to a couple of interesting questions:

- Apart from listing integrity as a value on their website, what else do these corporations do to foster integrity?
- And more basic, how would such corporate executives define integrity?

I will address the second question first.

While many executives are under the illusion that *integrity* is synonymous with *honesty* (after all, how often have we heard someone speak of both in the same sentence) that is not necessarily true. It is only true if honesty is a core value. Here's why: integrity is about **maintaining congruence with one's values**. If honesty is not a core value, then one can have integrity without having honesty, so long as that person lives consistently with whatever other values that person holds.

Integrity basically means *wholeness*. The word itself shares the same etymological root with similar sounding words, such as *integration*, *integral*, and *integer* (as in a whole number). Integrity is about *alignment* between what one claims he believes and how one conducts his life, not just in public but in private.

And that is why integrity is so elusive. All of us fall short of our ideals. Thus, what we find is that we sometimes maintain integrity, and we sometimes fail to maintain integrity. To the degree that we are aligned with our values, that is the degree to which we exhibit integrity.

As to the first question, I wonder whether these Fortune 500 firms do no more than to slap the word "integrity" on a plaque alongside other lofty ideals. If so, they are not serious, for inculcating high ideals requires regular training, constant reminders, illustrations through stories, and countless examples in order to help shape people and teams

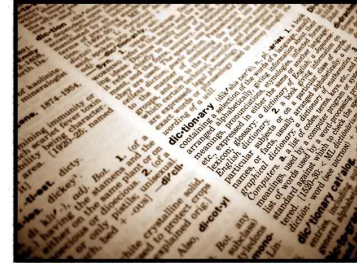
One last thought: while I hope many of us develop integrity, I actually only wish that on people of goodwill. If people hold to values such as faith, thrift, decency, honesty, love, truth, and virtue, then I want them to have integrity – to have alignment with such noble ideals. However, if people cling to selfishness, deceit, cruelty, or lawlessness, then I don't want them to have integrity towards such

things. I prefer they fail to live up to – or, better, down to – such ignoble practices. I'd prefer they be inconsistent.

The World of Words

Catalyze

Building Your Power of Expression



Catalyze, v.

Pronunciation: kadlīz

Meaning: This elegant word refers to the process whereby something is accelerated by some force. In other words, a catalyst (often a person, or an object, or a substance) causes a reaction to take place in a more rapid manner.

Usage:

- The enzyme may well catalyze the oxidation of this compound.
- *This tragic event helped to catalyze the already growing popular anger.*
- *The more China embraces modern technology, the more it will catalyze enormous economic growth.*

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