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I am pleased to be getting this issue of *Uncommon Sense* in under the wire. Let's see what awaits us.

Success and accomplish is a choice. I spell that out in the ***Self-Development*** column. Read it. And apply it.

The Elephant in the Room column illustrates the damage being done to our country by the Left. Review my examples and see if you agree.



A lot of times we get our feelings hurt, or we get incensed at something someone said. I don't think it's necessary we do so. The ***From Ara's Journal*** column spells out why.

The World of Words column adds yet another gem of a word to your expanding vocabulary.

OK, let's get started.

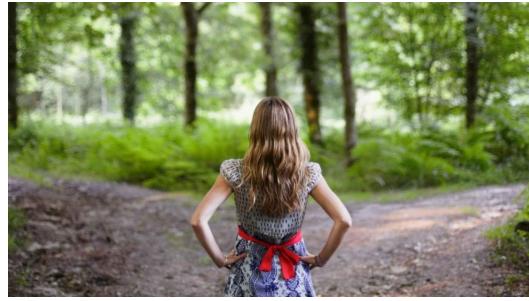
Ara Norwood

Self-Development

Choosing Greatness

I came across Ernie a few years back. All I knew about him as I approached him was he worked in construction. As soon as I saw

him, a flood of implicit bias' entered the window of my mind. The first thing I noticed was he had a "sleeve" -- a tattoo on his arm that covered the entirety of it. My initial impression was that he was a low-skilled worker and would remain such his entire career.



How wrong I was.

Ernie was very articulate and very thoughtful. He was also very smart and well educated, sporting an undergraduate degree from a major mid-west university. His command of spreadsheets was very strong; I would say he was quite advanced in his use of Microsoft Excel. His management skills – particularly his time management skills – were quite deft. He was very focused on productivity and had political acumen in dealing with people and in resolving hurdles that stalled progress.

In speaking with him, I discovered that he is married and has two children. He also has plans to earn a PhD and teach at the university level.

As I reflected on the hours I spent with him, conversing with him and watching him work, I realized that Ernie is the kind of man that made the choice to be remarkable. He *decided* to get educated and to do well in school. He *decided* to master spreadsheets. He *decided* to learn how to work well with people. He *decided* to master time management and to be productive. He *decided* to get married and raise children and be a responsible and respected adult. And all this in spite of the fact that he was raised in an environment where such things were not the norm.

What decisions can you make – should you make – that could propel you to great heights? Are there self-imposed limiting beliefs about yourself that are holding you back? If so, discard them and replace them with raw determination to excel. Think about it: if you paid the price to get really good in even two or three areas of your professional life, your life could really take off. Your reputation could open doors for you. It happened to Ernie. And it can happen to you.

Do this: analyze where you are strong. Write down all the areas where you currently possess some level of skill or talent. Then figure out which of those areas could get even stronger. Map out a plan on

all the things you will do to sharpen your strengths in two or three areas. Perhaps you will take a class or attend a seminar to acquire some new knowledge or skill. Perhaps you will read up on the area in question. Perhaps you can get some high-level mentoring from someone who can help elevate your skills to the next level. Perhaps you will practice the skill in question for a period of time until it becomes performed at a very high level.

Do this, and like Ernie, you may be amazed at the path you will find yourself on.

The Elephant in the Room Specific Examples of the Poisoning of America

Here are some of the stories I was following just in the month of August alone. Review this list and then tell me if you think I am overreacting, or if America as we know it is living on borrowed time.



The Economy

- The Democrats passed the Schumer-Manchin bill on the promise that no one earning under \$400,000 will pay more in taxes. The Editorial Board at the *Wall Street Journal* examined that claim and found that due to this bill, [nearly every American](#) will see a tax increase. The Democrats lied.
- While the Department of Education within the Biden Administration made the claim that student loans would bring in more than \$100B in revenue for taxpayers, the truth is such loans actually [ended up costing taxpayers](#) nearly \$200B. How did this happen? Sheer incompetence. The Biden Administration hires mere children in adult bodies, ideologues who haven't the slightest grasp of how things work.

Immigration

- We are not even through 2022 and yet, due to the Biden Administration's open boarder policies, [five records](#) have already been broken this year with respect to such policies. Here are two of them: known migrant deaths stand at 609 currently, compared to 566 in all of 2021. And, from October 2021 to June 2022, the Border Patrol has logged some 2 million migrant encounters at the southern boarder, an all-time high.

- What's worse, the White House claims with a straight face that illegal aliens are *not* simply walking across the boarder and entering our country. [Yet they are](#). The Biden White House is either hopelessly out of touch with reality, or they are lying brazenly.

Abortion

- A young teenage girl by the name of Grace Hartsock of Kansas was going door-to-door in her neighborhood trying to encourage voters to support a referendum on abortion law. At one particular house she approached, a radical Leftist woman started shouting at her, [then proceeded to beat](#) Grace Hartsock with her fists, hitting her in the head, and telling her "I hope you get raped!" What utter decency and civility.
- The profoundly philosophical sage Whoopie Goldberg weighed in on abortion, claiming [God is actually in favor](#) of it.
- And Leftist author Mary Ziegler wrote in a *New York Times* essay that even so much as [recognizing the personhood](#) of the unborn will harm the health of pregnant women. If you mentally acknowledge that the unborn is a person, a human being, the woman carrying that baby may all of a sudden start hemorrhaging.

Crime

- Anthony Evans of New York City had been arrested for violent crime some 30 times. But because he is black, and the DA in New York believes that incarcerating black criminals is racist, Mr. Evans was [free to commit his next crime](#) -- using a box cutter to slash an innocent 59-year-old Asian woman.
- A group of Left-wing radicals including BLM has demanded we abolish the prison system and [release cop killers](#). Smart.
- A New York City sex offender attempted to murder an innocent man by sucker-punching him without warning, breaking his skull, his cheekbone, and causing his brain to bleed. And what did the authorities do to the perpetrator? They arrested him, and then they [immediately released him](#) without further charges.
- Democrat-run Chicago is on track for [6 times as many](#) car-jackings as 8 years ago. And Chicago is [not unique](#).
- In Yolo County, California, the "injustice" system there released 595 individuals without any bail whatsoever between 2020 and 2021, and yet [420 of them were rearrested](#) shortly thereafter. That's 70%.
- A UN Diplomat from South Sudan was accused of raping a neighbor of his in New York City. He was [released without bail](#).

Evidently New York's justice system believes that diplomatic immunity allows diplomats to rape U.S. citizens at will.

- Los Angeles DA George Gascon [chose not to charge](#) a criminal in Los Angeles County. That decision resulted in the murder of an off-duty Los Angeles Police Officer.
- A Minnesota brewery has been robbed and vandalized so many times, sometimes [by the same criminals](#), that it has to shut down early and lose business as a result, simply because the so-called Justice System there believes it is racist to incarcerate criminals. Thus, St. Paul, where this brewery is located, has a strong criminal element that roams the streets wantonly, and the police have all but given up doing their jobs.
- A bail fund that has been promoted by Vice President Kamala Harris has resulted in bail being paid from donations to allow hardened criminals out of jail to commit more crime. Thus, Shawn Michael Tillman of St. Paul was out of jail for 3 weeks before he then [committed cold-blooded murder](#). And shortly thereafter, another thug named Mohamed Osman Adan who had earlier cut off his GPS ankle monitor violated a No-Contact order that he not go anywhere near 36-year-old Rachel Angel Abraham, who happens to be the other of his children. Also note that he had earlier been arrested for the attempted murder of Ms. Abraham. Upon having his bail paid for through this fund that VP Harris supports so that dangerous criminals can roam free, Mohamed Adan immediately violated his No-Contact order again and [murdered Ms. Abraham](#).

America

- ESPN's Jalen Rose, a man of the Left who despises the very country that has given him freedom and a great career, insists that Mount Rushmore, a memorial carved into a mount featuring depictions of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt, [should be banished](#) from our vocabulary. Why? Because, in his words, it was built "on top of dead bodies" of Native Americans.
- A school district in New Jersey decide to [remove the name of Thomas Jefferson](#) from an elementary school named after him. Why? Because he held slaves. The school board members themselves know nothing about Jefferson's many efforts to end slavery. They judge him by today's standards and that is enough.

Trump

- The [FBI raided](#) President Trump's Mar-a-Lago home, and of course, the FAKE NEWS Mainstream Media declared it was not a raid. It remains to be seen what this unusual and unprecedented

action on the part of the FBI will turn up, but preliminary assessments suggest [the FBI has been weaponized](#) to harm conservatives and do whatever is necessary to keep Donald Trump from running in the 2024 Election. This came out when Mark Zuckerberg [spilled the beans](#) to Joe Rogan and confessed that the FBI warned Facebook about a so-called Russian Disinformation campaign that was about to become public. The FBI was referring to the Hunter Biden Laptop story which was suppressed by Twitter and Facebook and many other outlets. But the FBI was working at the behest of the Democratic Party and was, therefore, tampering with a Presidential Election.

- So over the top is Trump Derangement Syndrome that Michael Beschloss, former CIA Director, suggested [Trump should face execution](#). Why? Because he "may have" shared nuclear secrets with foreign governments. Oh? You mean the nuclear codes? The ones that were obviously changed after Trump left office? Gotcha.

Education

- A high school teacher from Northern California, Gabriel Gipe, who spent his teaching days openly preaching anarchy and pro-Antifa propaganda, was released from his teaching position last year. But he was [rewarded with 3 years of salary](#). Why? Because radicalized school administrators secretly love what he did but were sad he got caught wanted to reward him.
- The Los Angeles Unified School District insists on poisoning the minds of students by [exposing them](#) (in a video) to a partially nude non-binary activist named Addison Vincent. Why that was seen to have educational value has yet to be explained.
- Not to be outdone, after all, we are talking about California, the Department of Education in the golden state now advocates for books promoting gender transitions to [children as young as kindergarten](#).
- An elite all-girls school in Nashville, Harpeth Hall, has now decided that [any boy who pretends](#) he is a girl can attend the school, undress in girl's locker rooms, shower with girls after P.E., etc. School officials have not yet confirmed if they will remove any actual girls who have decided they are now boys.
- A Texas School district got concerned that some books in the school libraries may not be appropriate. So they removed The Diary of Anne Frank, and [The Holy Bible](#). The gay pornography can stay, evidently. In fact, [pornographic content](#) seems to be in vogue at many schools.

- Researchers at Boston University have released a study indicating 60% of college students [suffer from mental illness](#). Given that Leftism dominates at colleges, is there a correlation, perhaps?
- White people [have been banned](#) from off-campus UC Berkeley student housing common areas in a new round of racism from people who decry racism but practice it themselves.

Climate Activism

- [Steven Spielberg](#), a vocal activist who frets about global warming flies around in a private jet that has burned \$116,000 worth of jet fuel in just two months. Do as I say, not as I do.
- His buddy Harrison Ford does the same thing, spewing out [35 metric tons](#) of carbon dioxide in less than two months. Yet he's an outspoken climate activist.
- It was discovered President Biden's Climate Czar, John Kerry, gets his viewpoints from [radicalized Left-wing](#) climate activists, not reputable scientists.

Wokeism

- New York decides, in true Animal Farm style, to [scrap the word "inmate"](#) for those who are in prison for committing crimes. Their new "woke" identifier will be "incarcerated individual." Whatever.
- A Wisconsin school has decided to [redefine girls](#) as "persons with a vulva." They don't like the notion of gender. They want a genderless world.
- In Minnesota, a teachers union has decided to be [openly racist against whites](#). They have ruled that if any layoffs occur, people with white skin must be the first to go.
- In Portland, Oregon, Left-wing Woke policies have fostered a stunning growth in homelessness which has grown so bad that residents are [selling their homes](#) in droves and fleeing the state.
- A Yale University professor named Christy Oleski has decided that children as young as 3 years of age need to question their own gender identity, and she is making it her mission to confuse them and [destroy their innocence](#). And LGBT radicals continue to poison children by exposing them to their filth, suggesting they (the radicals) are [bent on pedophilia](#). But adults are another thing: In Australia, a nightclub will throw out any man who is accused of. . . staring without verbal consent. Yes, before you stare at an attractive woman, [you have to get her permission](#) -- probably have her sign a written statement.
- A Democrat-appointed federal judge decided that any male prisoners who [suddenly realize they are actually women](#) will be

moved out of men's prisons and housed with women, where they can rape at will.

- California's Newport-Mesa school district claims that there are [ten distinct sexual orientations](#) and eight distinct gender identities. In other words, preparing high school students for college by teaching them algebra, physics, literature, writing, or critical thinking is way down the totem pole, but knowing that you might be nonbinary, gender fluid, bigender, polysexual, skoliosexual, or gynosexual will really make a big difference in high school students and prepare them to contribute to the U.S. economy.

Media Bias

- The *Arkansas Democratic Gazette* [refused to publish](#) an op-ed from a conservative, Sarah Huckabee Sanders, but had no qualms about publishing one from her liberal opponent.
- A Cuckoo Bird who works at MSNBC now claims that EVERYONE in the GOP needs to be [treated as if they are a terrorist](#) and extremist.
- Not to be outdone, the *New York Times* creates a "right-wing media" beat, allegedly to understand (i.e., misunderstand) [what is driving](#) the political decisions of conservatives. Oh, and the kicker was they hired a cretin from *BuzzFeed* to lead the effort. Let's not forget that the *New York Times* hires people that [praise Hitler](#).

God, Religion, Christianity

- A school board in North Dakota decided to jettison the Pledge of Allegiance. Why? Because it contains the phrase "one nation under God" and they feared [it wasn't "inclusive"](#) of Hindus and Buddhists.
- A [Satanic Temple](#) sets up shop at a Pennsylvania school, and the school administrators allow it.

Now, as you reflect on all of the damage the Left inflicted on our country (and elsewhere) just in the month of August -- and I did not share everything they did or this column would be too long -- what are your thoughts? Are we going to just sit back and let the carnage continue? Or are we going to be bold warriors and get in their faces and oppose them at every opportunity?

Your answer to that question may well determine whether we survive as a nation.

* * * * *

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

Shameless Plug Six Great Men Speech Continues to Shine

Several more organizations have invited me to speak on our Founding Fathers. It seems there is renewed interest in how our great country got its start. My speech, Six Great Men, examines various aspects of the lives of Franklin, Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton. Various iterations of my presentation have focused on their education and intellect, their political philosophy, what their involvement was and views were with respect to slavery, what they thought about God and religion, and what they thought of each other.



If your organization could benefit from a patriotic presentation on our Founding Fathers, one which bolsters confidence in their wisdom, reach out to me. I'll hit it out of the park on your behalf.

From Ara's Journal Just Roll With It

A lot of people take offense too easily. It's unnecessary. Many times the offending party meant no offense. Their intent wasn't untoward. Perhaps they made a nonsensical comment or even what could be perceived as a mean comment, but in reality, perhaps they



were trying to be humorous. True, the comment was thoughtless, but it wasn't intended to hurt.

Still, a lot of us take offense. And we end up expending a lot of wasted energy, working ourselves up in a lather over what really amounts to nothing.

Case in point, a work colleague, during an exchange of playful banter where I was playing the role of a tough task-master, said to me, "Now I see why you are divorced."

It just so happens I am divorced. And I do hold very strong and serious views of marriage and divorce. I think divorce is a terrible thing in most cases – maybe in all cases. I'm not happy I am divorced. I am not proud of it. I don't see it as a great accomplishment. And so it would be understandable if I took great offense to this flippant comment made by my work colleague. I could have silently thought along the lines of "How dare you mock me for being divorced! Who are you to even comment on something you no nothing about?!"

But instead I brushed it aside. I recognized that he was attempting to be humorous. While one could argue that his comment was foolish, or hurtful, or even just plain mean, I didn't see it that way. And so I decided not to put any further energy into it. In actuality, it wouldn't have occupied my thoughts one iota after the comment was made were it not for the fact that I thought it would make a good entry in this column.

Think of how much negative energy I would have expended had I decided to take offense. Think of how much damage could have been done in the way of poisoning the work environment had I become incensed. It would have been so unnecessary.

Taking offense is a choice. While there are occasions where taking offense is warranted, there are many instances where taking offense is a waste of energy. Furthermore, making the decision to not take offense is liberating. It frees one up to focus on being productive rather than obsessing over injury, real or perceived.

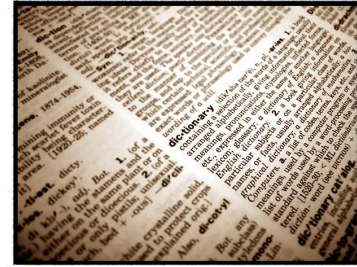
The World of Words

Obviate

Building Your Power of Expression

Obviate, v

Pronunciation: əbvēāt



Meaning: To obviate is to anticipate and prevent, or to remove something (such as a need or a difficulty). It is to make an action unnecessary.

Usage:

- *The new medical treatment obviates the need for surgery.*
- *The Venetian Blinds obviated the need for curtains.*
- *Take This parachute; it can be used to obviate disaster.*

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