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Hello! Glad you could join me for another installment of *Uncommon Sense*. Let's unpack this issue:

The **Self-Development** column focuses on the concept of personality. It's an important topic to be aware of, and I trust you'll find some value in what I have to say about it.

In **The Elephant in the Room** column, I address 3 bombshell news items that the mainstream media mostly ignored. I suggest you read what I have to say about them in order to be informed about the troubling state of our country at this time.

There are builders and there are destroyers. I offer a few thoughts about that dichotomy in the **From Ara's Journal** column. I hope you read it.

And, as usual, **The World of Words** column delivers another gem that you can begin employing immediately. I hope you don't just read about it, but actually employ it in your ever-expanding vocabulary.

OK, let's get started.

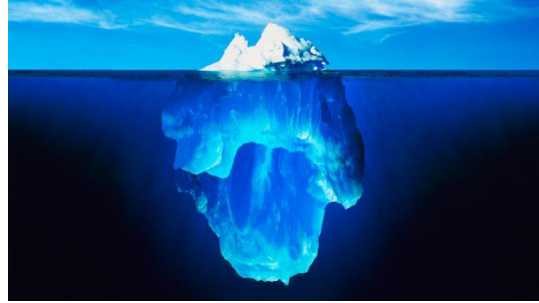
Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Personality

One of the most fascinating things I have pondered about people is the concept of the personality. I was introduced to this concept back when I was about 9 years old, in the 4th grade, and was involved in the Children's Theater program sponsored by the City of



Los Altos. I, along with other kids, would audition for parts in a play, would be given a part, would attend rehearsals, and, eventually, would put on a series of performances before the community. In my conversations with my fellow budding actors and actresses, we would chat about many things, and one of the topics I remember coming up was the notion of a personality. The conversation was framed in terms of how the various characters we played had a certain, distinct personality that we would do well to emulate; but the conversation also focused on actual people in a general sense, with talk of some having a "good personality" vs. others having a "bad personality." I had trouble wrapping my 9-year-old brain around the concept, but over time I began to understand.

A personality is the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character. We could think of it in terms of one's nature, disposition, temperament, makeup, or persona. A personality can be the product of both biology and environment, and it can remain fairly consistent for the duration of one's life. It is also noteworthy that one's personality is not only apparent in how one comes across in terms of behaviors and speech, but also in more subtle ways such as how one tends to think, how events or circumstances cause one to feel in certain ways, and how one develops close relationships.

We've all heard of "Type-A" personalities. This suggests the person is driven, perhaps aggressive, highly competitive, very achievement-oriented, often stressed out and impatient, and perhaps even a bit of a perfectionist. Then there are the "Type-B" personalities, which describe the "cool customer," someone who is more adaptive, more patient, less stressed, more even-tempered. Some Type-B personalities might appear more relaxed, more prone to procrastinate, and unflappable in the face of tense situations.

It was from Dale Carnegie's publications that I learned the importance of having a charming personality; from W. Clement Stone's columns in

Success Magazine that I learned of the importance of having a "pleasing personality"; and it was from Stephen R. Covey's writings that I was cautioned against developing a personality without first developing a strong character. In fact, it was from Covey, whom I was fortunate to work for, that I learned of the analogy of the ice berg shown above, wherein the visible portion of the ice berg was likened to the personality, which sits on top of the larger base of the ice berg that is not so visible because it is under the surface of the water, which is analogous to one's core character. Although unseen (as one's character is often unseen), the character is foundational to, and supportive of, the personality, which can readily be perceived by others.

An interesting thought-experiment is to consider the people around you, whether they be work colleagues, members of an organization you belong to, family members, or your closest friends, and think about how their personalities are different. It is also instructive to pick 6 to 8 people, perhaps famous people, you admire deeply and think about how you would describe their various personalities. You will quickly see that there is a vast range of possible personalities. And when you realize how much you admire any given individual, the temptation may be to try to adopt their personality as your own.

But unless such characteristics are already a part of who you are, I would not recommend being a copy-cat. It's not authentic. It's not you. And you won't likely be able to sustain it.

Instead, try to be mindful of your own personality, and how you come across to others. Seek feedback regularly from those you interact with. Try to refine the best qualities that make you who you are, and try to nullify those areas where you are rough around the edges or otherwise off-putting. Do this consistently and you would find you will be able to present your best self to those around you.

Not a bad outcome.

The Elephant in the Room **Leftist Bombshell After Leftist Bombshell**

While the mainstream media has been largely silent (and thus complicit) about some recent bombshells that show the Left for what they really are -- a dangerous contagion on our nation's stability, a few non-Left-leaning news outlets have recently broken stories that need to be acknowledged.

On Racism

While Leftists (think **Joy Reid** of MSNBC, among many others) are busy calling their Conservative opponents racists, what they usually mean, without being precise, is they believe white people hate black people, with the caveat that if you are a black Conservative, you also hate black people. (Ms. Reid, it may be recalled, recently expressed outrage that Florida Governor **Rick DeSantis** would dare warn looters in his state that they might get shot if they loot. Ms. Reid considers that racist, even though Governor DeSantis never mentioned race).



Yet Vice President **Kamala Harris** expressed her own fondness for racism against white people when she announced that relief for Hurricane Ian would be [given to whites last](#). Isn't that racist?

And Speaker of the House, **Nancy Pelosi**, recently opined that illegal immigrants are [fit for picking crops](#). Really? Doesn't that smack of racism?

And one Leftist stated on national television (NBC News) that the illegal immigrants who were dropped off at Martha's Vineyard [were "trash."](#) Isn't that racist?

And because the country is not systemically racist, a few black people who are racist themselves have to [make up fake crimes](#) involving racism, as one female athlete, **Rachel Richardson** from Duke University, did recently.

But the latest bombshell comes to us from Los Angeles, where a Leftist City Council President by the name of **Nury Martinez**, was caught on a hot mic [making blatantly racist remarks](#) about a white councilmember and his black son. Martinez, who is Latina, seems to despise both black people and white people. (Once this story became public, she had no choice but to resign.)

Trump Derangement Syndrome

The Durham Probe is starting to bear fruit. It came out this past week that the FBI offered **Christopher Steele**, the totally disgraced creator of the totally fake "dossier," one million dollars if he could produce even one shred of corroborating evidence to back up the outrageous allegations he made against candidate **Donald Trump**. The dossier was a bogus collection of allegations paid for by the **Hillary Clinton** campaign and was used to secure FISA warrants so the FBI could spy on American citizens (Trump, **Carter Page**, etc.,) in an effort to destroy the presidential campaign of Donald Trump. Not only did the FBI receive zero corroborating evidence from

Christopher Steele, they received [no corroborating evidence from any source](#). But that didn't stop them from approaching the FISA court to obtain the necessary warrants to try to dig up dirt on Trump.

Lest it be lost on anyone, the FBI was not offering Christopher Steele one million dollars as a sort of dare, as in "So sure are we that you have no corroborating evidence for your Trump Dossier, that we will give you one million dollars if you can corroborate it." Instead, it was more along the lines of, "Please, Mr. Steele! Please! We beg you! We need something -- *anything* -- that can give credibility to the Trump Dossier you cobbled together. We need this to destroy his candidacy and/or presidency. Please! We will give you a million dollars if you can get creative and come up *something* that will lend credibility to it. Please!"

What this tells us is that the FBI has become politically weaponized from the very top. The corruption within the FBI is systemic. The FBI needs to be thoroughly cleansed of corruption. Mass firings need to take place. Yet this will never happen so long as a Democrat occupies the White House.

Southern Border Corruption

Last year at the Texas border, U.S. Border Patrol Agents on horseback were rounding up illegal immigrants from Haiti who were attempting to enter our country. A false narrative was created, suggesting the Agents were whipping the Haitian immigrants. President **Joe Biden** was outraged and said those Agents "would pay!" And Homeland Security Secretary **Alejandro Mayorkas** went in front of a camera at a press conference and claimed the whipping was proof that our country was, in fact, systemically racist. However, Mr. Mayorkas had already been briefed several hours before that press conference by Assistant Secretary of DHS Public Affairs, **Marsha Espinosa**, who informed him that no whipping had actually taken place. So what did Mayorkas do with that information? He buried it because it didn't fit his preferred narrative that U.S. Border Patrol Agents are seething racists. Mayorkas wants open borders because he believes illegal immigrants will some day get the right to vote and will vote Democrat. He sees illegal immigrants, whom he believes are above the law, as the road to power -- permanent power -- for the Democrats. Thus, [he lied, deliberately](#), to perpetuate a false narrative. Will he be held accountable? No, not by the mainstream media, not by the Justice Department, not by the White House. They will all go about their business as if nothing ever happened.

Keep all of this in mind when you go to the polls next month.

* * * * *

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

From Ara's Journal

Here's To The Builders!

I bought my grandson an Etch A Sketch a number of months ago. I am certain readers are intimately familiar with the toy, which features a square flat gray screen within a red plastic frame, with two white round knobs in the lower corners which, when turned, move a stylus that displaces the aluminum powder on the back of the screen, rendering a solid line. Kids and adults alike can amuse themselves drawing all sorts of things with it.



Yet, to erase the drawing, one need only turn the toy upside down and shake it, as doing so causes the polystyrene beads to smooth out and re-coat the inside surface of the screen with aluminum powder, enabling the user to start to draw again.

I think the Etch A Sketch is something of a metaphor for life.

It takes time to create something. It takes very little time to destroy something.

Consider these examples:

- Michelangelo took 3 years to sculpt the David, and somewhere between 4 and 5 years to paint the 343 figures on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.
- San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge was designed in 1917. It didn't open until 1937.
- Likewise, it is said that it took 100,000 men and roughly 20 years to build the Great Pyramid at Giza.
- Ground was broken for the Salt Lake Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1853. That temple was dedicated (i.e., completed) in 1893 -- some 40 years later.
- It took approximately 2,500 years to build the Great Wall of China.

Yet, how long would it take to destroy any of these creations?

Depending on the method of destruction, not long at all -- and considerably shorter time than was needed to create such things.

Thus, I hold builders, those who erect structures, who create works of art, and even those who build people, in high regard. I do not admire those who quickly destroy things.

One reason I so admire those who create music (except for rap "music") is because once the music is created, it cannot be destroyed.

Back to people for a moment: it may take years to build a person into a believing, confident, productive individual. But some people, after being so built, can be destroyed very quickly, with cruel words, demeaning language, or other forms abuse, be it physical, emotional, or psychological.

And all of us are quite capable, in our finest moments, of being a builder.

Yet equally true is that all of us are quite capable, in our worst moments, of being a destroyer.

I need to keep that verity in the forefront of my mind. The only thing I wish to destroy is evil.

For everything and everyone else, I wish to be a builder.

The World of Words

Storied

Building Your Power of Expression

Storied, adj.

Pronunciation: stôrēd

Meaning: Anything that is celebrated in or associated with stories or legends could said to be storied. Anyone who has an interesting history could be said have a storied past.



Usage:

- *We selected the Island of Maldives due to its storied past.*
- *The University of Notre Dame possesses a first-rate faculty and a storied history.*
- *We need to revitalize our storied postal service.*

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