

If you don't accept excuses, people stop giving them and start looking for solutions. And that is a critical issue when it comes to success. When I came to understand that I had control of my own destiny I didn't hate poverty anymore, because I knew it was only temporary.

Alexis de Tocqueville came to America to learn how a fledgling nation, barely 50 years old, could already be competing with them on virtually every level. This was impossible. He was going to sort it out. He found that anyone who had finished the 2nd grade was completely literate and could read the newspaper, have a political discussion, and tell him how the government worked. Questions extracted from a 6th-grade exit exam from the 1800s are beyond most college graduates of today. Our system of government was designed for a well-informed and educated populace. And when they become less informed, they become vulnerable.

5 doctors signed the Declaration of Independence. Lawyers learn in law school how to win. We need to start thinking about how to solve problems and care about other people. Many teachers have told us that when we put a Carson Scholar in their classroom, the GPA of the whole class goes up over the next year (carsonscholars.org). There is something inherently fair about proportionality, the basis of tithing, the Hebrew tax system. When a person is born, give him a birth certificate, an electronic medical record, and a health savings account (HSA).

There have been many stories about the bullying epidemic occurring in our public school system. We should not be surprised that children emulate what they see adults doing, especially politicians. Society works much like marriage in the sense that open communication facilitates harmony. In almost all marriages that end in divorce, there is a serious breakdown in communication followed by false assumptions and outright warfare. We do not have to yield to pop culture, Hollywood, politicians, or the media who are enforcing political correctness. We need to simply ignore the "barking" and act like mature adults who can tolerate hearing something about which we disagree and still remain civil and open-minded.

Cultivating hypersensitivity to perceived slights by conservatives is a convenient way to halt important conversations and to demonize opponents. Political correctness has effectively removed some students' point of view and rights from the debate. There was such a ferocious attack on my comments by the gay community that no argument could have been made that would not have drawn an emotion response instead of a rational argument. Most who disagree with me are good, intelligent people who want to solve problems in a reasonable manner. As for those who are less well intentioned, it is difficult for them to continue attacking someone who is calm and reasonable. They usually realize that they are the ones who look like fools if they refuse to engage in problem solving. The real key to staying cool and calm is to relinquish selfishness and consider the feelings of others. Offense and sensitivity are often feigned for the purpose of garnering sympathy and reinforcing political correctness. If we say "I can see that you were deeply hurt by my choice of words. It was not my intention to hurt you and for that I am sorry. Now I would like for you to know what I intended to communicate to you and I will use different words that will hopefully convey

the spirit of my thoughts and allow our discussion to continue." If it is just a misunderstanding, often the conflict can be alleviated by this kind of open communication. But sometimes you have to realize that you cannot heal all wounds no matter how hard you try.

By creating hypersensitivity and drawing angry reactions, Alinsky's organizers' goal was to make the societal majority feel that their opinion is the minority and that theirs is the majority. The ability to coopt the mainstream media is a gigantic coup. If the majority of people who are rational, reasonable, and full of common sense feel that their opinions are out of sync with everyone else, it is easy to shut them up and beat them into submission. This has occurred in America today. The founders felt that the free exchange of ideas would result in better government and would prevent it from becoming too big and self-important. This is why we must once again insist on freedom of speech and expression, and be repulsed by the very idea of political correctness that muzzles the populace.

Walter Cronkite, was decidedly left wing in his political outlook, but was so professional in his reporting that most people were unaware of this. Elitism knows no single party and elitists constantly find ways to proclaim their goodness and necessity for the well-being of the "oppressed," while at the same time declaring how evil their opponents are and how they would utterly destroy any hope of a reasonable life for the oppressed if they were to gain power. The truth is, the liberal policies of the elite class have done little to improve the lot of those who depend so much on them. Black leaders like Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were great proponents of self-reliance and self-help. Ignorance, whether it takes the form of revisionism or laziness, can hurt our nation too.

It is important that the US maintain our pinnacle status, because if we lose it we will be replaced by another that is unlikely to be nearly as benign. We have moved from a nearly apartheid state to a multicultural society with enormous potential and strength that can be significantly enhanced by the kind of leadership that emphasizes a vision that unites everyone as opposed to exploiting differences to advance political causes. One of the most common tendencies of human nature is to place responsibility on an external agency for our sins. Dr. King concluded, "Not environment, not heredity, but personal response is the final determining factor in our lives. And herein lies our area of responsibility." We cannot ignore the socially tragic events of our past, but they can be taught in the context of learning experiences that improve our unity and vision. We have learned that isolationist policies are not a luxury to be afforded the pinnacle nation in the world. With power comes great responsibility and the need to lead rather than simply react to volatile international situations that may affect our security.

In my experience, bigotry tends to be a product of ignorance. To facilitate dependency by giving able-bodied people handouts rather than requiring them to work for pay is every bit as cruel as the activities practiced by racists of the past. Religious crusaders are so certain that only they can be right, that they will stop at nothing to either convert others or eliminate them. Certainly the Islamic extremists of today feel that way, just as the Christian crusaders felt years ago.

Totalitarianism always starts with restrictions on the rights of others. We must avoid them at all costs.

Thomas Jefferson said it was immoral to leave debt to the next generation. Bigotry can still be seen in the assumption by many on the Right that gays should not have access to children because they are more likely to commit rape or engage in abhorrent sexual indoctrination. If this is true it should be easy to prove statistically, but such proof has yet to be provided.

When special interest groups influence one side or the other, creating dissension, Congress doesn't work well. The primary 2 political parties have become opponents instead of teammates with different approaches to the same goal. Never before Obamacare has any major society-changing piece of legislation been passed in this country without bipartisan effort.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has. It is the natural tendency of all governments to grow and they require revenue to do so. As the rights of the government increase, those of the people decrease. First, concur on what is important to both parties. Next, determine who is harmed by each position and agree not to intentionally harm others. Last, exhibit tolerance without discarding core values.

Bribes appeal to people who feel disempowered, yet entitled. Wide-ranging curiosity and careful study will provide the background to correctly analyze words uttered by politicians and the media. What we already know influences the way we process new information. A good knowledge base avoids having to look everything up on Google and enables instant analysis of new information on an everyday basis. The College of the Ozarks (Branson, MO) and Berea College (KY) require all students to work at least 15 hours/week, All graduate with no debt.

Wisdom is essentially the same as common sense. Like Solomon, I gained great notoriety as a surgeon who divided babies who were conjoined at the head. My mother compared the actions of successful people with those of the many unsuccessful people around us and concluded that the big difference was reading and studying. The wise use of knowledge is more important than knowledge itself.

What people are really clamoring for is not me, per se, but for the return of common sense and intelligible speech to solve our ever-increasing problems. Singapore provides excellent medical care for all citizens for less than 1/4 of what we pay. Providing each citizen with a HAS would put people back in charge of their own health care, bring down costs, and eliminate massive regulatory bureaucratic nightmares for both patients and providers. Ideology frequently renders one incapable of learning and instead makes its ideologues expert excuse makers, with someone or something else always to blame for the failure of their ideas. Capitalism offers a better solution, as long as personal responsibility and compassion are included.

Bullying by the British was a major impetus for the resistance movement that resulted in our ultimate independence and the establishment of our Constitution. When the vision of the US government included guarding the rights of people but staying out of their way, America was an economic engine more powerful than anything the world had ever seen. Because of our neglect of the Constitution, it has been a while since the people of America could agree on a national vision.

The only thing that will correct our downward trajectory is the rekindling of enthusiasm for individual freedom and the reestablishment of the US Constitution as the dominant document. If politicians are unable to explain a law or statute in a way that a 7th grader could understand, then they don't understand it either and should be provided an opportunity to study after being voted out of office. The constitution is easy to understand and serves as a gold standard for the language and size of subsequent legislation that is introduced. **The British adversaries of Washington had no overarching vision, putting them at a disadvantage** even though they were the most powerful fighting force in the world at that time against ill-equipped militiamen. If today's Americans refuse to give up on the constitutional vision, explain their vision clearly, and elect leaders who will uphold it, we will likewise defeat the powers that would bring our country down.

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