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This personal account of a true life story is offered as support and inspiration for your own healing journey. It is not presented as a definitive method of healing, or seen as encouragement to pursue a particular path

### **Into Consciousness**

I became a social worker when I was 26 and around that same time I also did therapy with a psychologist. As a social worker I was exposed to all kinds of stuff and I got an education, however how conscious I was I don't know. It took until later years for me to really have something happen where I can say I opened up. 1993 was when it really became intentional and it was in the early 80s when I started therapy so it was about ten years between the beginning point and between the opening, the real opening.

I was in a lot of pain after a break-up, and I did a couple of healing seminars to help me get over the pain of the separation. I experienced a big opening in a seminar. And that was my first and big awareness. At that time a friend of mine was into the [Course in Miracles](#), he used to hold these little lunchtime meetings at work and it was making me nuts because he would say things like "there are no accidents" and my left brain took off with that one. I would make up all kinds of scenarios to challenge that. Right after that I noticed that something odd happened in the two trainings. In the first one I had one of the most unusual connections with the people I would never have liked or would have chosen to talk to at a party. I would have avoided them. And instead, my heart opened up to them. It was very powerful. And, it kind of confused me. And, then, it may seem small however, this small incident had a effect on my perception of things: at the end, when we all came together as a group and gathered in a circle, it was a quick, informal, and spontaneous. When I looked around, what I saw to my left was the one person and to my right was the other person and exactly next to them was the other person ....I realized that these were the same people to whom my heart connected. I was blown away and I took a couple steps back to see who else was there and what I saw was this perfect arrangement with everybody with whom I had a connection arranged by perfect distance. And I took that in.

So, later on when I did the second one, seminar. I had a curious mind, so I said to myself, let me take a part of my brain and watch and see. See if there's anything in what I get about that unusual awareness I had about those people showing up at that gathering at the end. And so it was for five days and about midway into it I started to notice things. For example, when a seat would be empty next to me I wondered who would sit next to me. Will it be somebody I like or somebody who annoys me, because we usually ended up partnering with them. I started to notice that it was perfect who would sit next to me. And then I got excited instead of anxious about who was going to sit next to me. Curious to see how things played out. And by the end of the fifth day I had developed some kind of an extra sense of things. But what happened was that I was actually

sensing and feelings things out of the ordinary awareness, connections between myself and others and, and between other people and I saw the energy actually run between them. Chords. And I knew that this one person was thinking of that other person and would get up and walk across the room to sit with him for example. And I remember that. It didn't last very long, but what happened to me was that I was very much tuned-in for a while. After that, I continued to have some of that awareness...in the most commonplace parts of life, like getting on and off an elevator or interactions with people.

So, that was my opening and it was in 1993 and this is the year 2000 so I've built upon it, I've kept it open and I worked it. And that was my beginning.

### **And then**

A break-up led me to this 1993 workshop. I felt like I was being unfrozen. And it was a mixed bag of awarenesses, feelings... grief that was unaddressed. And when it came up and there was a bit of relief and joy in the release of it.

It was really intense. Unfinished business came up and there was a lot of positive stuff in there, and that was hard too because that was opening. All the positive stuff just really ripped me open. And I could see some of me where I was unconscious. And it was okay. But, I didn't know some things about myself and it kind of put it in my awareness. I didn't know about where I was afraid. It was surprising, I got a lot of information. It came flooding through. I experienced enough good stuff that I made the decision to keep opening as best as I could. You know the carrot was dangled and I wanted more. I felt sadness and those kinds of emotions too.... it was a mixed bag. And I liked the experience, I liked the opening, I liked the good feelings that came from it. And that's what got me in there, that's what got me in to do more.

### **Facing issues**

One of the things that was interesting is I'm a very outgoing person, I had even taken acting classes in college and I guess you can get that I'm not real shy. Well, that's not how it showed up for me when I was in this group process thing I was scared and I was not the person I knew I was socially or at a party. It was like somebody else showed up. I didn't know what happened to me, at the time I could not reconcile it. And, so there was some piece of me that wasn't connected to the core of me, whatever that was,..... there was a big piece of me that I was surprised to see. Like I was holding back to the point that I was the last person to do certain things within the group. Now that was revealing to me since I was a person who could get up on a stage. And I found when it came to speaking certain words aloud, I could not get those words out of my mouth.

I'm a gay woman, and when I made this one personal statement in front of the group which contained the word "woman", I kept deleting it, forgetting to say it over and over again. I found that revealing and surprising that I had energy on my being a woman, or my femininity,... that I had energy on being authentic in front of people, ... that I was that scared. I had no clue that I was scared about all those things and I was out in the world making out pretty well. One of my friends likes to tell me that I could "Sell sand to the Arabs", and my career life was evidence of that. So here I was functioning pretty well and I wouldn't miss a beat to charm or persuade or flirt or any of those kinds of things. Well, I got under that package that I had put together. That's' what I got under.

### **Confounded**

I was confounded and I still wonder about the split. Who was this scared person hiding inside of me who I never met? Once that part of me got out, I found myself scared to speak in front of groups so, to overcome it, I joined [Toastmasters](#). Like the "sell sand to the Arabs" personality that I knew, the smooth one, was no longer. That wasn't really who I was so I decided to utilize Toastmasters as a vehicle to speak in front of that group authentically. I found my way in a more real sense to put myself forward and that was very powerful. Not to be the smooth person, but to be a real person who could open somebody's heart in front of a room. And I did that.

My self esteem got more solid from doing the public speaking at Toastmasters. I got more solid. My real self in front of the room. I was no longer going to be that other person anymore, it was like the split was coming together. And when I did that I got interested in teaching. So that came out of the initial step of healing myself.

### **Body healing**

And I teach now. Not a lot, but I teach adults. I can put together presentations and teach because of what came out of the initial step of the Toastmasters training. And, later on down the line I got into the breathwork and energy work and then acupressure. I first got into it as a way to heal myself through my body. I discovered a lot about the body. I got so intrigued that I started to study it and now I have a second career. So that's where it took me. I mean it took me a lot of places—I had a lot of fun.

I experience myself so differently now. I remember going through memorabilia, photos, clippings, cards that I bought and forgot to send and I had to laugh. I felt like a six-year-old you know, why'd I pick a card like that? I seemed young.

### **Big headway**

I have made some big headway with a lifelong difficult relationship with my mother. I thought there was no chance in that relationship. I had a very bad turn with my family at the time my father died and for years my mother and I did not speak.

I was also not having an easy time in my intimate, romantic relationships. And after everything I read and heard which pretty much said the same thing... that your relationship with your parents affect your love life, I finally started to connect the dots, especially after I seemed to have the same partner over and over again. I finally saw repetitions of who I was attracted to and how it played out. And so, I approached that difficult relationship with my mother because I really wanted to have a relationship. And I was tired of the same result in my love life. So, it wasn't like I was goody-two-shoes. I figured out the connection between my love life and my relationship with my mother and I decided to try.

So I would go down and I would talk to my mother on any level where there would be an opening and everytime I tried it would be from hell. And, I would keep visiting her, and I would be in hell. After a while I despaired feeling that I was never going to be able to speak to my mother in a way that was connected, or loving, or good.

And, so, one day I got a call from my aunt who told me my mother had a stroke. I felt a rush of energy run from my feet up through the top of my head. The was only one other time I had felt that intense rush of energy; it was like an electric shock, and that was when my father died. I never felt that energy before and I recognized it. It was the only other time. It scared me. So, I called

into work and I jumped in the car and drove down to see my mother. I went in the back door through the kitchen to the front where she was sitting. I said, Mom, I said, how are you? I said, I heard you were sick, I came to see you, I heard you were sick. And she responded with "Who the hell told you that!"

### **Something different**

I said, aunt so-in-so. She said, well, that's none of her damn business and you should tell her that she should mind her own damn business. And I thought, this is not going to go well; I drove several hours for this? Remembering how hard my loss was when my farther died, I was determined to stick it out; I was not leaving until I got through to her. So after a troublesome attempt at conversation, we went for a car ride; she was talking at me and I was bordering on an anxiety attack. She was talking and talking at me and I thought I was going to die. It was so awful. I was determined to do it that day, to have a breakthrough with my mother. And I thought, I'm not leaving. I'm not leaving until I have some connection with her. This stops. So, we went for the car ride from hell and we came back and then she starts telling this story that I hate about some neighbor. This was a familiar dance; mom tells this same kind of story. I get annoyed and then I turn around and I say something awful and then we're in a big fight. So, she was going on and on about the same story, and I thought, she sees my body language going oohhhh. I thought I was going to die. A voice in my head said "Do something different. Just try anything, just do anything different. Act interested, that would be different."

### **I turned around**

So, I turned around to her and I said, "really, mom, how is she? The neighbor?" She said, huh? She looked at me like, what are you, crazy? So, I said, "yes, you know, Mrs. So-and-so, the one that lives around the corner, how is she?" Well, she's fine, she's telling me. "And her son, does he still read those weird books?" And she started telling me all about it. And in that instant I saw her eyes change. She looked at me with total fear in her eyes. She was scared. I had an insight into my mother right then and there that she was more afraid than I was afraid of her.

And I saw it, I mean there was no explaining how I saw it. And, in that moment, when I answered her, she took me in like a sponge. Sucked up all my presence and my good energy, and for that moment we were friends and we were girlfriends, and she was telling me her story and it was important to tell. And she was somebody different in an instant.

Her gesture of loving

And at that time, I was eating special food, a lot of yogurt, I was on a temporary diet regime. And when it was close to the time for me to go, she brought over a bundle of yogurts that she had wrapped up and said "this is for you", and she laid it on the counter. And I knew what that was, that was a gesture of affection,(my mother's not very warm). Rather than get mad at her for not being the loving mother that I wanted, I took in that this was her gesture of loving me. This is the best she can do. I get emotional telling it.

And so, when I went to leave, I grabbed her and I hugged her (tears) and I told her I loved her for the first time in my life.

When I got there she looked like hell.. She had a stroke, that was a mini-stroke, actually, but she had a stroke and she lost her peripheral vision. Her skin looked gray and terrible. And when I gave her a hug and told her I loved her, my brother was about two feet away, and he gave me the thumbs-up sign. When I hugged her, she was so scared that she left her body.

And then I pulled away and I looked at her and her coloring had completely come into her face and her eyes were sparkling. She looked different. Her color was great. The gray pallor had left, the dullness in her eyes left and she had good rosy coloring. Her eyes were no longer dull, they had a sparkle in them. And she walked me to the door and, I said, now mom, you should get out and walk a little bit and, you know, get some exercise, maybe start a little bit a day, maybe a block, you know. And she said something like. She turned around to me and she said, "I'm afraid." She said, "I'm afraid I will fall." She said, "I can't see."

And in that moment I got so scared because my mother eats nails for breakfast and I was scared and I went, "this cannot be my mother. .... vulnerable, .... She never let me see her scared like this before." And she must have seen my fear and she said, "Besides, I could step in pigeon shit."

And I looked at her and she said, " you know its good luck, isn't it?" And she laughed. And our relationship was never the same again. We never went completely back there. We have never been back. One time I had a bad experience, another healing crisis, where she did go back. And I went into my trance and that put me way back into it. I came out again even more released from the dynamic of that relationship, but we really as a habitual way of relating did not go there again.

I worked hard for it. It didn't come easy. That changed my whole relationship with my mother. And healed her too I know. She is excited to see me now, and she is more respectful towards me.

### **Bigger than me**

I felt that it wasn't fully healed but I felt a big opening. I didn't feel like it completely healed--there was such a big woundedness with her. I'm still unraveling it. It's deep. It's really bigger than me. It's bigger than what I've gotten now -it is beyond my lifetime. It's my mother's life and everybody who came before her. It's not really isolated my issue.

And I got that recently, just this past summer and this spring, really. It was after the second crisis with my mother where she, was again sick and we got back into the bad stuff again just briefly. That hurt me and I went down under with that and came back up. And I realized that its really not just me, its my mother, its my family, its everybody. And it's so big, you know. But at least now that I see how things work I can enjoy the process, because I have an awareness of a bigger picture. And I am a part of it. Everything is so profoundly interconnected. That has a profoundness that is amazing even though it also can be painful. So with that I can do it. And it's not like completely healed, but its moved along in such a way that my life has changed. My relationships have changed.

### **Healed breaks**

What can I say is fully healed for me? Break ups. Like the breakup I went into the therapy over. It's fully healed. We met in New York City just this spring and it's really healed. It's complete. Yeah. And there's no hangovers. That particular breakup is what got me into the work that was my spiritual opening. And I saw her up in New York on my birthday, actually. We had met before and had lunch and we talked and it was good. But now it's full circle. Yeah, could say that is fully healed.

I'm not jealous of her new partner. I am appreciative of her relationship and wish her well. I can enjoy her company without remembering all the stuff that happened or any of that. And, I enjoy

the connection that we have. And the boundaries are in place, its all fine, you know. There's no confusion around that. My heart doesn't have any love sickness stuff in it. You know, it's just fine.

### **Healing old choices**

There were wrong turns in my relationship stuff -- I was choosing the emotionally unavailable types and I did that over and over again. But I think that's what we do, you know until.... You know I feel finished with that now. That was a repetitive problem and I really got how it connected to my mother too. I saw that. I saw that the ambivalence that I was attracting to me was the same ambivalence that my mother sent me. Not consciously, of course. I was trying to get it ( an ambivalent dynamic) to work. And it doesn't work. When my mother was sick the second time all the old craziness came back. I was a mess for a couple of weeks. At that same time I was attracted to someone who was ambivalent towards me. That went on for about a year and it was painful and I felt like there was no way out...my love life seemed like one unending date with the same dysfunctional relationship, same person, different body.

I went through a phase where everywhere I went I attracted an ambivalent attraction. You know, I'd end one dysfunctional connection and the next day happen upon another one and I didn't even have a day off. And I thought, what the hell's going on here? And it kind of pushed me, it pushed me to my limits. And one day I had an flash of insight when my mother was giving me a mixed up communication on the telephone, "don't come near me I'm mad at you." And then in the next breath she said, "Where have you been. How come you don't come to see me." And I flashed and saw that of course, this is the same ambivalent persona I have been dating.

### **Healing detours**

I met some healers that were goofy and I, one guy he just had no boundaries and he, in retrospect, probably was attracted to me. He once told me that when I became whole, I would become a "heterosexual". And then there was a counselor who played cupid with me and the person with whom I was struggling to stay out of an unhealthy relationship with. Instead she invalidated my concerns about this relationship (which by the way turned out to be quite valid) and played matchmaker.

So, I've done a lot of things. I went to this one particular seminar organization which was very authoritarian and dogmatic (and of course having had a Catholic school upbringing, that was familiar). This organization invalidated your emotions and gave mixed messages constantly. Well, I went through a lot of training with them--even became a member of their organization on some level. And it was all nuts.

### **Clear self-authority**

I'm very clear now about trusting my inner voice. I really got it. I was aware on some level that that organization was nutty while I was participating, and I took the good and threw away the rest. There was some good there. And then once I got really clear about it, I got healthier. Then I had no tolerance for it and I was out of there. And the other two folks I mentioned, I was really furious with them and I am not now. I see their limitations and their confused good intention.

I can see them more, my perspective is bigger, I see their woundedness and confusion and that is what helped me let it go. With the help of time and distance and a clear intention to heal it and let it go, I got past it. And out of it I got a stronger sense of myself. The word self-authority would sum up what I got out of that.

### **My inner voice**

When it comes to turning my power over or allowing someone to define reality for me, well I am a whole lot less vulnerable in that area and that's not going to happen . . . not like that again. After that I found my way to teaching a night class in developing your intuition. And I taught intuition because of all my experiences of not listening to my inner voice and what that looks like, what that feels like. I'm going to do it all in one lifetime.

### **Constantly good and safe**

I just know that when I was up against it, going through the healing process, having an opening and having things happen with the healers that were off the wall, then I felt like I was really up against it. There was no where to go, that it was like quicksand. I was kind of despairing but I think I had enough support. My best friend who is someone who is connected to her inner voice and can "see" me, has been with me through all of it. She's always a consistent, supportive factor for me, so no matter what, I could rely on her sanity and that was critical for me. Yeah, I had that. She was the one thing that was always constantly good and safe no matter what I would go through. She was very nonjudgmental. So I had that.

### **All in my body**

What I started to learn after awhile was that I found that a lot of it was in my body. That's why I got into the bodywork. The spiritual, the psychological and the emotional are in the physical body. And that's what I learned. I found it all in my body—I couldn't separate it out. And that's what got me so intrigued.

A couple of times I can remember when I noticed a knot kind of in my abdominal area, just like tension. I'd occasionally think, "What is that?" "Oh, I wonder what that funny feeling is?" It wasn't painful, just slightly uncomfortable, just a little knot in my abdomen. And during a session with a bodyworker I tapped into what was inside that knot and that's when I cried the hardest I ever remember crying. I went into some other state of consciousness. I was awake and dreaming at the same time and I got some interesting metaphorical images which began to give me information which later would make sense and unravel a puzzle for me. I released so much out of my body that the knot was gone, my anger was gone, even low grade resentment was gone. What happened was when I cried, that knot that was in my stomach completely left. And I had a very clear awareness that that emotion was in that knot and that I had released all kinds of stuff that I did not quite understand out of my body.

I had another couple of occasions happen where old hurts were showing up in present time. It matched energy with the initial hurt, not the story, bearing only an energetic like resemblance to the initial incident. My left brain would have never connected the dots. A number of times present time experiences took me to old memories and feelings that were stored in my body and when I made the connection to it, I felt it and released it So, I've had numbers of those experiences. My understanding of my bodywork practice is a result .... not just an idea or a theory.

### **Forces playing upon me**

I have had a number of difficult times. The first things that come to mind: the breakup of my first gay relationship and the death of my father and a very spiritual conflict in later years.

I guess isolation was the feeling that I had all those times. And anger at being unfaired against. During what I am calling a spiritual crisis I had another one of those expanded awareness experiences. Later, I discovered the word that may capture that experience in some way: multi-

dimensional experience. Where I lay on that couch immobilized to move forward in this very loaded and intense situation. I felt as though there were a lot of forces on me that were not mine and were playing upon me. Very intense energy from the other parties and I saw glimpses of what would happen given my continuance in the matter on a karmic level and a spiritual level. I saw that. It was intense.

### **Someone with vision**

What I needed was not just anybody, but somebody strong, somebody who had a plus one, or a plus two, somebody who had higher vision and higher consciousness. And I did find somebody who was like that. A woman who I did not speak with for any length of time however, it had high impact as far as resolution for me. And I had other people around I could talk to, however, their strength wasn't as high as I needed. The issue with which I was dealing with was huge. I needed somebody who was definitely pretty big to play off of that. Who could provide higher consciousness and clarity on the situation for me. And I did find that. Although it didn't mean that all of it wasn't terribly painful, it was.

But to have people around me that, you know, adored me and thought I was smart or whatever, was not what I needed. I needed somebody with a bigger perspective, and strong. I needed somebody mature at that difficult time.

### **Healing tools**

I did a lot of body work. The body work was to keep me just in my body, to keep me healthy. I used the psychotherapist and I used the body work on a regular basis. I was a Reiki practitioner, so I gave Reiki which was very good for me. I was channeling Reiki at the time I did that. That was good, it was light too. It was a nice energy.

### **Changed beliefs**

I guess I haven't really articulated this before but my thoughts about right and wrong were challenged. In a way I was permanently changed. Because you don't just go through something like that. You have to reconstruct it, and I am still making new ground-- working with it.

I came up with an answer which gave me some solace and helps me a lot. I learned it from a woman by the name of Patricia Sun. I believe she coined the term "matching energy". And I keep that in front of me as some solace of some sense of how it works and how to play my energy in life. I have tried it on and it feels true. I find it empowering to look at conflict that way.

But its not about right and wrong, or that's the shift that's happened, is that those two variables don't even relate anymore. It's about matching energy, anger meeting anger, victim meeting perpetrator. You know whatever the matching part is, the other part people will play, you know? And if I can get that I don't have to do it.

That is one awareness I have come to and on a deeper level, I have come to an awareness that is a little more complicated than that. That is something that I am exploring now within the context of a trans-generational family hologram. It is a little bit complicated to go into however, but there is a quote which captures the essence of it in an excerpt from [Stanislov Grof's](#) book .

*Many individuals who have experienced negative karmic experiences were able to analyze the nature of the destructive bond between the protagonist of such sequences. They realized that all these seemingly different emotional qualities -- such as*



*murderous passion, insatiable desire, consuming jealousy, or mortal anguish--- were intensified beyond a certain point, actually begin to resemble each other. There seems to exist a state of high biological and emotional arousal in which all the extreme affective qualities converge and attain metaphysical dimensions. When two or more individuals reach this universal 'melting pot' of passions and instincts, they get imprinted on the situation that caused them, irrespective of the role which they played.*

*In situations of extreme experiential intensity, the sadistic arousal of the torturer and the inhuman pain of the victim increasingly resemble each other, and the rage of the murderer merges at a certain point with the anguish and suffering of the dying victim. It seems that it is this emotional fusion that is instrumental in karmic imprinting, rather than a specific role in the experiential sequence. Whenever two or more individuals get involved in a situation where their emotions reach the state described above, they will have to repeat in subsequent lives in alternating roles the same pattern until they reach the level of awareness which is necessary for the resolution of a karmic bond.*

From the *Adventure of Self-Discovery*  
by Stanislav Grof, M.D.  
State University of NY Press, 1988

### **A curious visionary**

In that really intense spiritual crisis time . . . it was hard. I didn't want to keep going. To be quite honest, I spent a lot of down time, in a depression. What kept me going? There's a big piece of me that's a visionary. I am curious. I want to understand things and that keeps me going. Even when it's awful, that's what keeps me going. I want to figure it out. I know you're not supposed to be in your head and all that stuff but the gears are already too well oiled and I'm curious.

### **Epiphanies**

There were epiphanies: the multi-dimensional experience was. The ah-ha with the connection to my mother's ambivalence and the ambivalence in my love life...and others. And now even if I think some of those instances, I may doubt it, because sometimes those moments are ephemeral you know.

### **Stages of healing**

Since the 1980's on one of the things I've noticed is I used to be a social worker and I'm much less interested in helping people than I used to be before. And I'm starting to learn about the center of my energy and keeping it to myself. I'm drawing my boundaries and really putting up. . . I mean I can sit here and talk to you but I'm also out in the world and I have really started to have a sense of my boundaries on an energetic level.

And before, the energy was leaking a lot. Now, I feel like, it's kind of new for me actually, but I find that I really enjoy being alone. I'm a little bit more of a loner than I ever imagined myself to be and I enjoy that. I've gotten quieter. And I'm learning how to manage my energy better, and how in the subtlest way I can become depleted. I am challenged by the idea of being out in the world and keeping my center. And not having folks find me rude.

**Relationship challenges**

Right now, being, doing this with this relationship is a challenge. I respond to the challenge by putting one foot in front of the other and just keeping my stories out of my head. And being in truth, which is really hard.

And I find that once you get comfortable, it gets even harder. In the beginning you just tell each other, stuff--what I don't, what I like in the relationship, you know that kind of stuff. I've noticed how quick it is, it hasn't been that long, that you start to not talk like that. Say the negative stuff as quickly. Til you have a fight or something.

That and I want to continue to get to know my mother. She's old. And, I'm, you know, looking to develop myself as a body worker, and that's a challenge. The financial stuff. I'm having challenges with owning my value, valuing myself as far as marketing myself and putting myself out there.

**Sharing healing**

I just did a session with somebody last night and the little bit of sharing myself was probably more effective than anything I had done bodywork-wise. She told me that my sharing with her made the difference.

**The need of healing**

What needs healing is that people are afraid to just own their feelings and say them and just be real, and that's it. That's all there is, you know. Especially tenderness. Everybody's hungry for it and closeness. You know, tenderness and closeness and vulnerability is really it. And that's what everybody's missing. And, I think there is an opening in the world for this. I think things are changing and little by little people are getting what is missing. That's why Reiki became so popular so quickly. It's approaching a household word now. People are waking up to what they need.

Connection and tenderness, period. Community. Real community. Not just a social club, but a sense of one another and knowing that each of us is a piece in a link.

The following websites are provided as sources of information about resources mentioned.  
To order books referred to, click on them in the story or go to [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)

### **Annmarie**

Toastmasters	<a href="http://www.toastmasters.org/indexbk.htm">http://www.toastmasters.org/indexbk.htm</a>
Stanislav Grof	<a href="http://www.holotropic.com/">http://www.holotropic.com/</a>
A Course in Miracles	<a href="http://www.acim.org/">http://www.acim.org/</a>

### *books*

*A Course in Miracles*

Stanislav Grof, M.D., *Adventure of Self-Discovery*, State University of NY Press, 1988

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