

Decide!

Asking for Help and Helping Others

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 7

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Week 1: Spiritually wrong attitudes

Week 2: Steps in Working Through Indecisiveness

Week 3: Surround yourself with friends who strengthen you

Week 4: Faith and Doubt; Examples from the Q&A Section

Week 1: Spiritually wrong attitudes

There is only one way that leads to the safest and best success, and this is when the contact with the spirit world per se is **not** the ultimate goal!

When contact is pursued for (or serves as)

a means for a purpose (be it for curiosity or interest, etc.),

to perfect man's inner self

to recognize God's will in everything -- the major as well as the minor questions

to fulfill His will

Then man is living according to the spiritual laws, on the outer and the inner levels alike. When this is the purpose, then utmost help and support will be given by God's spirit world to establish this contact.

For you, each emotional reaction, each thought, each opinion and tendency -- and every minute facet of your personality -- are invisible ray-threads belonging to you and you alone. On the other hand, there are fixed, yet constantly vibrating spiritual laws, holding together (in a net of rays) infinite possibilities, and modifications of outer and inner reactions.

When man's personal rays match with those held in the net of rays of the spiritual laws, then he fulfills his life and thus is in harmony and happiness. Where they deviate, he is in disharmony and consequently encounters difficulties which you often (mistakenly) call fateful events.

The more man ignores the roots of such difficulties, covering up and pushing into them unconscious, the harder it will be to recognize the connections, and to then dissolve or dig out the faulty roots. If you want to be happy, you have to find these faulty roots within. This digging for faulty roots is the path of perfection, or purification, or healing of the soul -- whatever you may call it. If you desire the contact with God's spirit world for this purpose and this purpose alone, you will receive utmost help, support, and guidance. Then everything will develop and progress for the individual's best. Then he is in really good hands.

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Exercise 1a: Ask yourself, *"Why do I need to do this work? What do I want from my spiritual journey? What do I want? What is my purpose? What must I lend myself to (or what must I relinquish) when I walk this path? And What if I decide against it?"* PL 7

Material problems are the consequences of spiritually wrong attitudes

Man also needs outside help and advice when he starts this path to remove the first stones that are blocking the way to his contact with God's spirit world. The outer help should render possible the inner help; help must first be given by impressing the outer senses in order to rouse the inner senses to independent action. This help from the outside can be given by a human being who has reached one of the higher levels on this path, or through a spirit of God.

Not that this outer help is sufficient, and let it not be so. It is only the push. It is the seed which has to be embedded in the soul and take roots through your own work to bear fruit. The essential part is that you break through to your inner self.

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Exercise 1b: Look at a minor material issues. What spiritually wrong attitude might underly it, keep it moving in a destructive manner? What do you feel you have to give up to reverse it? Who do you resist giving in to? Practice on minor issues in order to develop this skill! Major ones represent deeply resistant attitudes that are able to dodge less skillful analysis.

Truth must be experienced personally in order to become genuine knowledge.

A human being never just accepts, even if it stands to reason, what somebody else tells him; especially not when an interplay of personal, inner, unconscious resistances is involved. All truths of creation, all spiritual laws, everything man is able to comprehend, therefore must be experienced personally in order to become genuine knowledge and to be personally and productively utilized.

Inner recognition of any truth can only then be received when the personal contact with God's spirit world, at least to a certain degree, has been established. This contact can be made when, somewhere in the soul, a breakthrough to the higher self has been achieved.

Many believe. and are of good will to a certain degree. Yet they think it is sufficient that they don't "sin." But, my friends, what is sin? Somehow every transgression of divine law is sin; whether you or the world recognize it as such is immaterial. The difficulties man encounters before he enters this door are the effects of such transgressions of certain divine laws; and the *"I cannot decide wholeheartedly"* is one. This firm decision must be made, *"yes"* or *"no."*

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Daily Review PL 28 <http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/028-DailyReview-Suggestions.pdf>

Keep a record of incidents that disturb you. Focusing upon subtleties may help us from becoming distracted by exaggerating or over-dramatizing a situation. Notice feelings of discomfort, where your suspect you may be uninformed, ignorant, unprepared, or unaware. Each week, see if you can relate with the sub-topic.

All you need is a ½ page of lined paper per day. Create 4 columns. At some point during each day, jot down brief notes about each incident (limit:10 per day). Eventually, this can become a thought process. The Guide refers to Daily Review as 'spiritual hygiene'.

1. Two to three words to identify each incident (no details)
2. What feelings or emotional reactions came up
3. The judgments or conclusions you came to at the time

At the end of each week, read through your entries and complete the last column:

4. What do you notice today that you did not notice at the time? Are there patterns?
5. Using your preferred form of meditation (sitting, walking, or while doing 'mindless' chores) reflect upon your early childhood experiences.

Week 2: Steps in Working Through Indecisiveness

You all know whether you have entered the door or stand before it. And those who stand before it should ask themselves, "*Did I make a firm decision?*" Make it, either way! To go with God halfway is to no avail. Your disharmonies will increase because, leaving a back door open, you will convince yourself that you are still closer to God than perhaps an atheist.

Belief in God is inner knowledge and sight, and such knowledge and sight are obligations! Only when you have made this decision -- and everybody has to search his own soul, to carefully consider and contemplate what is at stake here, what the earthly life means, what material problems are in relation to the great spiritual truth which is superior to material truth. Deeply reflect on all these questions and then decide. This first decision will bring some peace already.

Man is always trying hard to avoid an either/or decision. And they think they can get away with it. They cannot! We of God's spirit world, who want to help you, love you, are sad when we cannot give this help where, in principle, it would be possible, where the soul is mature enough to walk this path, and when we have to observe how difficult you make it for yourself, trying to cover your eyes. Even your "*no*" is better than no decision at all when you realize the consequences and the extent. It is, under such circumstances, more appropriate than indecision (back and forth, "*maybe*") trying to leave a back door open, persuading yourself that certain material problems prevent you from walking this spiritual path.

As much as man regrets his faults, somewhere he loves them. Somehow he does not want to part from them. It causes a certain pleasure to give in to them, and he, so to speak, surrenders to them. Although he knows that, on this path, he is supposed to overcome them, he does not want to say good-bye to them, at least not with his entire will force.

Therefore man needs to contemplate the truth. But you are so often indifferent. You cover these questions and push them aside. You are so occupied with your troubles and the little daily details that you forget the most important part. When you consider your personal affairs, you must admit that they are superficialities and trifles compared to the great totality of truth.

1st Meditation: Explore Any Negativity Underlying Your Indecision

Will the truth, and open yourself for it! Ask God for recognition! Then you will realize that the pleasure of giving in to your faults is insignificant in comparison to overcoming them. Victory over the lower self is not only a momentary, quickly passing well-being, it is more. It brings liberation from tight chains, and it brings lasting, growing happiness, true happiness, without the bad taste of a bad conscience. You cannot make the decision before you have reached into the depth of this recognition.

Halfhearted surrender to God gives the dark forces a leeway to break in somehow. I do not deny that God's grace will intervene when you have acquired credits from good deeds, etc. in a former or in the present life. But the dark forces are lurking in all directions. They are especially on the lookout for human beings who are just pondering the decision as to whether or not to walk the path to God, much more than for those who are not yet that far in their soul maturity. Look at the question from this angle too, my dear, dear friends. Then decide on your next move.

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Exercise 2a: Your first meditation: prayer that leads to the actual and complete decision: either/or.

If you ask God, "*Show me the truth*" and you open yourself to it, you will receive an answer -- always. To achieve this recognition is your first task; fight hard for it!

When you profoundly, not superficially, contemplate my words and ask yourself: "*Should I enter the gate? walk this path? should I subscribe to God and His truth wholeheartedly, unconditionally? yes? no?*" then you have accomplished a lot.

2nd Meditation: Explore any Lack of Commitment

The next decision that has to be made to establish this contact with God's spirit world -- after your decision was "yes" -- is to devote time daily. If you are not willing to do this, you cannot expect to accomplish much. Everybody will be able to take out the time, as busy as he may be. It is just a matter of will, attitude, and organization.

When you have made the decision, you know that you have to pay a price. The price for the happiness of this path is will power, patience, stamina, discipline, and a certain amount of time. That price is truly not too high!

Exercise 2b: Spend some time considering what real-world commitment you are willing to make towards your spiritual growth. Like any other endeavor, the key elements are time and focus. If you give your decision no time, your growth may stagnate and falter. If you give it no focus, it becomes vulnerable to distractions.

Focus on any underlying inner resistance. We are always willing to devote resources to what we truly want to accomplish. Label any excuses, rationalizations, or justifications as evidence of underlying resistance to the decision you have made.

You may need to re-visit the first mediation and repeat the process. Finding our NO is as important a spiritual journey as finding our YES.

Finding Help

When you have met these basic conditions, you have removed the principal obstacles. Now you can start building. When your desire to perfect your inner self and face your truth is sincere, then you will receive spiritual help, ever expanding as you go on

- (1) being guided to outside help and
- (2) through your own recognition and perception, which are answers and hints.

This connection with God's spirit world is commonly called mediumistic contact. But not every human being must necessarily become a medium like the one through whom I speak. But you all can establish a contact with God's spirit world in some way. Be open to it. Do not say, "*I want the contact in this way or that way.*" Just be open and follow the guidance you receive. Then it will manifest at the time and in the way that is best for the individual.

Many things will change in the life of a human being who walks this path, who has surrendered to God unconditionally, not only by mouth promise but also by action. But these changes will come slowly, step by step, gradually as a natural outcome. This is the magnificence! It seems to come of itself. In this attitude of complete surrender, nothing will happen that could be detrimental or disharmonious.

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Man must contribute

Man must contribute by being open and sensitizing the inner antenna. This faculty will also be awakened.

This is the only basis which is essential: the contemplative consideration of what is for and what is against the decision, the decision itself, the surrender, the meditation about all that is involved here.

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Surrender

You know by now that **all thoughts and feelings are forms of greatest reality** even if you cannot see them. These forms are of far-reaching effect that moves in circles, causes consequences and reactions, which in turn haul along their own consequences, altogether resulting in a long chain reaction. [*Happiness as a Link in the Chain of Life*](#) PL 5

The word is expression and creation. It is plan, knowledge, opinion, consciousness. The word is feeling, attitude, and intentionality. [*The Power of the Word*](#) PL 233

You often use the word surrender. You sense that in this word is contained an important aspect of spiritual completion. Yet there is also a great deal of confusion attached to this word which needs to be explored. [*Surrender*](#) PL 254

Language is not objective.

Words communicate subjective interpretations and cultural paradigms. For instance, today the word ‘surrender’ is most widely interpreted on military, material, or emotional levels. As defined on www.ahdictionary.com:

1. To relinquish possession or control of (something) to another because of demand or compulsion: surrendered the city to the enemy. See Synonyms at relinquish.

2. To give up in favor of another, especially voluntarily: surrendered her chair to her grandmother.

3. To give up or abandon: surrender all hope.

The use of ‘key’ words in the lectures tend to refer to the original use and meanings, which are usually closer to the etymology [= origins of a word]. These last two definitions reflect the kind of surrender referred to in PL 254.

4. To give over or resign (oneself) to something

5. To submit to the power of another, especially after resisting;

*[from Old French *surrendre* : *sur-*, *sur-* + *rendre*, to deliver]*

We tend to project human nature onto other living organisms. Watch any nature program! We anthropomorphize deities, i.e. “*God is angry*”. We even use emotional words to describe natural events and laws of nature – “*the skies became threatening*”, “*nature abhors a vacuum*”. After a lifetime of projecting human feelings and desires onto every aspect of creation, we may not realize how such imaginary models distort our ability to understand spiritual matters.

Notes by JR

“There’s nothing so absurd that if you repeat it often enough, people will believe it”

William James.

Exercise 2c: The Guide uses the word “surrender” as manifesting an allegiance to your own inner knowing vs. to an outer authority. Spend some time considering how you relate to the energy in the word ‘surrender’. What you believe (or fear) that you might lose? What might you gain?

Week 3: Surround yourself with friends who strengthen you

The more a human being advances, the more important it is for him to choose kindred spirits, i.e., friends and surroundings that are productive contributions to his soul search. It is necessary to help each other stimulate the soul. Thus it should be contacts that do not harm the soul, which is often the case with contacts that seem so uninvolved and innocent.

But this too should not be forced. Ask for guidance; will the guidance. Then it will be given to you, wiser and more magnificent than you can imagine. Only by your experience will you really be able to fathom the wisdom and magnificence of such guidance.

On the other hand, some human beings who have reached an even higher level, having sufficient strength, withdraw altogether from those on a lower level, due to the unpleasant experience they encountered with the wrong kind of association, which I just mentioned. **But they should not withdraw altogether.** It is right in many cases, and a human being who is trained in the contact with God's spirit world will be advised which contact to keep and which not. Of course, *it is required that such questions are asked.*

When you have grown strong, know that you are walking on safe spiritual ground on this path. There is less danger that the non-kindred spirits, less evolved human beings, will drag you down to their lower level. Instead, you may seek out *the possibility to help and influence them.*

But, strangely enough, man reacts in the opposite way, because the first reaction is giving in to what is easiest. If contacts with less evolved human beings harm you spiritually, you yourself are still on a level where you don't find them unpleasant. Thus **you** do not want to give them up in reality. Then you persuade yourself that you are able to help these less evolved souls with your recognition, **while in fact you are not yet capable of it, and you get weakened.**

You should **surround yourself with friends who strengthen you.** If you are really certain that such contacts can no longer harm you (they may constitute, in their disharmonious vibrations, tests to enforce your strength) then you have reached the point that such contact with less evolved beings is a sacrifice.

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Exercise 3a: Review your friends and acquaintances in all arenas of your life; school, work, hobbies, recreational activities, and home. Focus solely on those who strengthen you.

Consider how you might increase the amount of time you spend with them, and how you might improve the quality of that time, such as reducing distractions, creating more opportunities for sharing and discussion, or changing your focus from more superficial topics.

Paradoxes

Consider that man wants to surround himself with kindred spirits and shies away from unpleasant ones. [Yet] **there may be a mistake involved**; a task may have to be fulfilled with such a weaker human being, which, when turning away, is missed.

If a human being on such high level is not quite happy, when something makes the soul restless -- despite the many inner recognitions, he may find the cause in a contact which he has turned down, abandoned, while he was meant to help, fulfill, and learn from it.

You see, it is not always the same, depending on your level of development, that lower contacts harm your progress. Once you reach an advanced stage of development and are not entirely happy, think in this direction.

Something like this may be the cause, because the soul has then become a seismograph that registers the slightest lack of harmony, telling you that something is wrong.

Don't persuade yourselves that giving up this or that contact which you cherish is necessary per se. It applies to the other extreme (those who want withdrawal because it suits them better). It is an intricate question -- give yourself an answer. Don't act forcibly in anything, but be open for guidance in the right direction. Ask also for the guidance how to open yourself. This is all you need to do.

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Exercise 3b: What friends and acquaintances do you have that represent this paradox?

It is an act of the Higher Self to reveal the Lower Self. Have faith in your positive intention to find the truth.

Build on the foundation of truth

You must build on the foundation of truth. There is no building on lies or untruth. If you don't know yourself, or don't want to know yourself, or deceive yourself about yourself and your motives, and if you cannot face yourself as you are, with ease, you build on untruth. But viewing yourself in a relaxed way is genuine humility, which sets the beneficial forces in motion, enabling you to change from deep within, not superficially. Then there is constructiveness. This should be pictured and strived for.

When I again and again speak of this perfection, my dear ones, which you should attain, you vaguely think of gaining this perfection through outside influences or experiences, i.e., to acquire something that is not yet in you. But this is not so! It is slumbering within you hidden behind many crusts, as I have told you so often. It is covered by your lower self, but only covered. The perfection exists already within you. Just remove the crusts! To remove the crusts you have to realize first that they are there, and to accept the fact that they are as they are and have manifested in a certain form. Then they can be sufficiently "thinned out" to permit the breakthrough to the higher self, even where real blocks prevented the breakthrough.

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Exercise 3c: Say to yourself: *"This is me; I have these faults. I know it takes fighting, will power, patience to get rid of them. But I can and will do it."*

That is productive. If you follow this with your feelings and think, meditate about it, then you will thereby open more doors. It is always the "how."

Once you are able to see yourself with all your faults, without a feeling of disharmony or inner resistance, as an objective observer may see you, then you can build your positive house, but only then.

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QUESTION: ... you said we should face our faults and fight them. But in order to fight them, we have to think about them daily. There is a contradiction?

ANSWER: No, it is not a contradiction. The "how" counts.

There are many human beings who "bathe" in their faults, who have this kind of false repentance which I mentioned before. They moan about their faults. But these guilt feelings, in turn, cause other negative reactions, and thus a whole negative chain reaction sets in. Of course, this is the wrong approach. It not only attracts the negative currents, it also involves self-deceit. Such a human being thinks he is humble, while, in reality, he wants his own comfort by telling himself it is hopeless. You will find this attitude quite frequently. It is as extreme as the opposite attitude which pictures perfection.

On this path that man learns to know himself, faces his truth, and accept it **temporarily** as a fact, not meaning he should consider it unchangeable, doing nothing about it.

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Exercise 3d: Spend some time noticing any pleasure you feel when you are distracted from your spiritual work. Giving up such momentary pleasures (one at a time!) is a form of surrendering to God and strengthening your inner commitment.

Negativity vs. Negative Intentionality

The mere fact that you know it is you who wants isolation, loneliness, lovelessness, hate and spite, and not some fate that innocently befalls you, represents a major key, through which the next link in the chain of progressions and evolution can be established.

*Identification and Intentionality;
Identification with the Spiritual Self to overcome Negative Intentionality* PL 195

Negativity is a "protective" defense against pain.

"I won't" may cover up the fear that "I can't". Paradoxically, being afraid to fail represents our desire to succeed, and fearing being exposed as not good enough. This is an extension of child consciousness, our imperfect childhood experiences with punishing authority figures, and our life/death struggle to individuate = leave the 'nest'. It is based upon Positive Intentionality.

"I can't" can be an honest cry for help, a realization that we cannot do this alone. We fear that being honest means annihilation, a human misinterpretation of spiritual surrender.

Negativity covers up *our* lack of faith in *our* Positive Intentionality, and *our* doubts about the inevitability of the Positive Forces of Creation, Spiritual Law, Universal Truth, and God (however we envision an ultimate deity) – by blaming others, including God.

Negative Intentionality is the "deliberate will to be negative" and not contribute to life.

"I can't" may cover up the Negative Intention of "I won't" We deliberately pretend to be incapable, or to be victims, in order to avoid exposure of our Negative Intentionality -- because we want to act out our negativity without interference.

"I won't" is more honest. It represents our illusion that we can single-handedly negate life.

Negative Intentionality in Human Beings can never be 100% true, because there was a Positive Intentionality to transform, purify and transcend by *undergoing the incarnatory process*.

Exercise 3e: Explore areas in your life where you claim 'I can't'. See if you can sense how this may be a defense. Find your desire for power and negative pleasure in saying 'I won't'.

Week 4: Faith and Doubt; Examples from the Q&A Section

ANSWER to Q about Egoism: The ego in the spotlight makes man feel lonesome. It places man truly in a point of focus, but differently than man (unconsciously) intended. It separates him from his surroundings and makes him blind to all truth because sight can never be gained by violating a law. And here the law of brotherhood is violated. Such solitude must increase fear. When in your daily contemplation you think about actions and reactions in relation to this fault, you will experience step-by-step phases:

- First you can hardly recognize where you were egoistic.
- Then you will recollect events, more so when you ask for recognition of truth and open yourself to it, where you were previously unaware of the egoistic trend.
- There will then follow uneasiness, shock, and very bad conscience, paired with resistance against the recognition.
- Thus you must first battle any upcoming resistance, gain victory, and accept for the time being the fact of your egoism. This practice will bring along tremendous spiritual strength, which has many blessings in its trail. To make progress at this point, you have to tackle the problem from various sides.

This requires:

- prayer for strength and will force to see yourself as you are.
- meditation to become aware, deep within, how little humility there is when you are so overly shocked about every fault, how much pride and vanity it reveals, and how far removed from truth is such attitude of not being able to accept yourself as you are at that time.
- the desire to see interconnections with other faults, etc.

Exercise 4a: Slowly apply in daily life what you have recognized in your quiet hour and to react accordingly. Then, in turn, in your quiet hour, you will realize the progress in your actions. Don't give up! Continue fighting with courage for your inner truth. Then you will be able to prevent such inversion. The discrepancy between wrong emotion and right action will dissolve.

You will build, in meditation, the good and right forms by picturing yourself free from egoism (or some other trait), by feeling the joy of letting others have what you always desired just for yourself.

As time goes on, these forms will be powerful. They will surround you like trees, as the lower self lies before you like a foreign body. The discrepancy becomes more apparent, but you will not be horrified each time. Slowly but surely, the old and wrong currents will change, and the emotions will genuinely adapt themselves to the outer actions which have already been changed. That is the procedure.

Of course, it is always more convenient to leave all this alone because it is an inconvenience to face self honestly every day. Man is smart when it comes to finding subterfuges why he just does not want or need this or that. He is inclined to cling to that which is easy. But what is easily gained is not so very precious. Whatever is achieved through discipline (which is a decent price) brings lasting, greatest happiness. It just cannot be differently.

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Q: How can one dissolve fear when one is not in personal healing at the present time? How can it be done to dissolve a deeply embedded fear and insecurity?

A: You can do it on this spiritual path. You cannot do it alone. You can accomplish it only by two ways of help: **help from the outside, and help from within.**

Yet when you always want a **back door** (too cautious to be wholeheartedly for it, whether it is God, the important spiritual questions, or the minor and material details) then you steer into a current where fear will ever increase.

Then you are not standing on any solid ground, because you have chosen it that way. You don't belong anywhere. You have nothing to hold on to in the erroneous, often only unconscious, conviction that you risk not a thing by not confessing to anything.

Another factor is a lack of faith. The conditions were not met by which the grace of a living faith would follow. Thereby man has to rely upon himself exclusively. On the other hand, man feels that in many areas he must rely completely on God, but he cannot pinpoint this feeling, and thus his mind is inconstant because he just does not live up to the conditions of the divine laws to surrender to God. If man only knows intellectually about the great truths, it has to remain a vague, unreal, and ambiguous something -- nothing real to hold on to. Without the yardstick, these negative feelings will penetrate.

And the more he feeds his mind by negative thoughts, the farther he removes himself from the positive influence of God's spiritual forces, and with it his fear will increase. By his ignorance he violates more and more spiritual laws, and spiritual experience then cannot be had. Further, the fear may stem from clinging too tightly to the ego (self-pity, vanity, cowardice, pride, the little woes and aches, in short, everything that nurtures the ego) which is always on the lookout to be in the spotlight. Of course, this is mostly unconscious. But the less conscious man is of these proceedings, the less he can do to eliminate such unhealthy interplay.

Therefore it is so important on this path to become aware of the unconscious currents and to examine them in the light of truth.

Here I would like to mention that the development of the individual, man or spirit, is not only important to attain happiness, but it **has a tremendous effect on the entire plan of salvation which you cannot fathom, not even remotely.**

If you constantly activate these impure thoughts and feelings in you, there will be more consequences than you can ever foresee, more so for you on the path.

I once compared it with the stone that is thrown into a quiet water. Many circles form, and even if this water were a vast sea and the circles on the outside were very faint, they are still there whether they can be seen with the eye or not. It is the same with each action, each thought, each feeling, each deed, and each attitude of every being (positive or negative). All represent a little stone thrown into a vast water. The effect is there.

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