

# Clean Times

September/October 2015

[www.tampa-na.org](http://www.tampa-na.org)

## From The Inside

Dear Reaching Out,

My name is CW and I am an addict. I am 57 years old and I am currently serving a life term in the Florida Department of Corrections which began 23 August 1994. I was born in New York in 1957 and started using regularly at eight years old. At 13 I moved with my family to South Florida where my disease of addiction matured and flourished.

I was introduced to Narcotics Anonymous in 1982 when my wife and friend's wife "blackmailed" my friend and me into going to an NA meeting they heard about. We went, and even bought and brought dope with us to that first meeting. I thank God every day for that introduction to NA.

From then until 1994 when I entered the prison system, I had a

sponsor who, by the grace of my higher power, stayed with me the whole time. And I managed to stay clean a lot of the time, but never managed to put together more than two years clean. When it came to the program, I was a really slow learner. It's a miracle that I survived all the relapses until now. And I relapsed numerous times.

When I came to prison I immediately jumped into the drug scene because it's what I knew best. It was that old drug addict's adaptability. I used regularly for the first few years to help me get over the shock of catching a "life" sentence and to get acclimated to prison life. Let's be real-I was 36 years old, overweight, white, with a little bit of money, and I was scared silly with all the preconceived images of what prison was all about.

Remember that I also had twelve years of NA under my belt when I arrived. So, after a few years of numbing my fears, my program started to reassert itself and I came to see the powerlessness and unmanageability of the using lifestyle, even in prison.

I started to put together three years clean when I got my first transfer to a new facility, and immediately upon my hitting the new compound the old fears kicked in, and I relapsed for six months.

After all the years in Narcotics Anonymous, my cleantimes have gotten longer and longer and my relapses have gotten shorter and further apart. Now I have ten years and eight months clean (2 May 2004) and am very involved in the program of recovery with NA.

I am kind of an elder at our facility's meetings, like a group sponsor. We have very few people here who have experienced the love and learning of NA out there. I try my best to be an example for them by living the program. I also sponsor individuals whenever asked, and always reach out to the new comers.

I have more peace and serenity now and a close relationship with my higher power. All I have today is thanks to God and Narcotics Anonymous. Continue to hope; I do.  
CW, FL

## Reaching Out

Whether you are an NA member, a professional who works with recovering addicts, an incarcerated member, or a member who carries the message via service with Hospital and Institutions; the Reaching Out newsletter curated by NA World Services may be a resource for you. Reaching Out in its design helps incarcerated addicts connect to the NA program of recovery, enhances H&I efforts, and offers experience from members who have successfully transitioned from the 'inside' to be productive members of society. All are invited to share their experience, strength, and hope in the Reaching Out newsletter. The Reaching Out publication is seeking paid subscribers to assist in supporting our continued efforts to distribute the magazine to our members housed in state and federal facilities. Ask your home group to subscribe and help us carry the message. Contact Gilber O. at 813.245.5399 or via email at [gbs92101@hotmail.com](mailto:gbs92101@hotmail.com)

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# 2015 WSO Membership Survey Deadline October 4th, 2015

Every two years we attempt to gather information about our members, and the time to gather that information is now! Some may wonder why we want this information and how we use it. One of the aims of "A Vision for NA Service" is that NA is viewed as a "viable program of recovery." With members from several countries attending the world convention in Rio de Janeiro, and members around the world participating from their homes, we have an opportunity to demonstrate that we are, indeed, a viable and respected recovery community resource. Presenting ourselves in this way helps us offer hope to others that they, too, can recover.

We encourage each member to spread the word of the Membership Survey to their friends. We would like as many members throughout NA worldwide to participate.

Complete the survey online by the 4th of October 2015.

Go to:  
[www.na.org/survey](http://www.na.org/survey)

## Remaining Grateful

One of the most important things I do for my recovery on a daily basis is remain grateful.

I have a checklist (tenth step!) I go through in my head regularly. It goes something like this:

How many meetings have I been to this week?

Have I called my sponsor?

Have I reached out to my network?

Am I keeping a positive attitude?

Have I been talking to my higher power?

What am I grateful for today?

It's easy to be grateful when things are going well. How about when we are struggling and everything seems to be going wrong, and we are drowning in that old favorite defect, self-pity? How do we remain grateful on a daily basis in recovery?

I can start with the rest of that checklist. I have a sponsor, a network, and a higher power that all love me and are available and willing to help me, even when I feel I don't deserve it, or my mind tells me they don't want to be bothered with me. All I have to do is reach out. I can remain grateful by acting grateful even if I don't feel grateful. Going to a meeting, calling my sponsor and network, praying, and showing up for my service commitments are ways I show that I am grateful to be clean by taking responsibility for my recovery. Once I do those things, it's amazing how I start feeling grateful again. Sometimes all it takes is to hear another addict struggling in a

meeting. I can't express how many meetings I've walked into feeling sorry for myself only to hear someone share about an illness, the death of a loved one, or struggling to stay clean.

Sometimes I wonder how I can be so ungrateful some days. I remember that I am human and that it passes. By working the steps and being a part of this program, I no longer have the desire to use. I forget what it was like sometimes to be consumed every waking moment by a wicked craving for narcotics. I make gratitude lists regularly, and these are much better on a written list than a mental one for some reason. I can talk, I can read, I can smile, I can walk, I can feed myself. I have clean water, air to breathe, I am free to live and enjoy life with the rest of the world. Recovery has given me so much more than I ever dreamed possible. Today I am grateful.

-Anonymous

**Hello my name is Maggie and I am an addict. I just wanted to share my gratitude for the recovery I have. For many years I was angry and sad. I thought that I would just be this way forever. However, through working the steps, especially my last fourth step I have found so much relief in my life. Looking at my past it felt like I would crumble into a million little pieces, but that's not what happened at all. What I received was freedom from my anger and sadness. So my message is be patient, keep working, freedom is just around the corner if you do the work.**

-Maggie R

## Writing Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)

Our vision is to carry the message that any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life.

The Florida Region of Narcotics Anonymous has now helped introduce 23 self-sufficient NA meetings in FL and beyond; including, Coleman Federal Penn, Alabama, NW FL, Georgia, and South Carolina. The process began 6 years ago with the 'Pen Pal' project and developed into free-standing meetings; for inmates and by inmates. Many of these men and women are eager to work the steps and become involved in Narcotics Anonymous prior to release. The Florida Region of Narcotics Anonymous is working to realize our primary purpose by further implementing the "Writing Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)" initiative.

How can I help? Join the "Writing The Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)" project. This can be your next step in further carrying the message. Through "Writing The Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)", you have another opportunity to share your experience, strength, and hope; give back to an addict seeking recovery what NA has given to you.

If you are interested in gaining a State or Federal clearance or for more information and guidelines on the program, contact Gilbert O. at 813.245.5399.

# Poetry Page

## NEVER ALONE

I met this guy at a coffee shop  
His hands were shaking. Beaten down  
Said he couldn't stop  
Couldn't keep his eyes from off the  
clock

I used to be that man, not long ago  
Hidden voices whisper but never show  
Death can creep so very slow

But now the mask is gone  
The lie is dead  
There's only one voice in my head  
And that voice is me  
I'm powerless, I'm free!

My conscience slept in vain,  
Living lies that I believed  
There must have been an angel  
That was watching over me  
Because I never heard the sound  
Of my mother as she wept  
A higher power lifting, guiding  
Brought me to my home  
And whispered in my ear  
That I'm never alone

I didn't need those back rooms any-  
more  
So I tore this house down to its core  
Let the broken glass lay on the floor

But the thought that seemed to cross  
my mind  
That in those shattered dreams, I left  
behind  
Were all the missing pieces I could  
never find

I'm human now. Not insane  
A resurrection beyond name  
Only to find me, surrendering  
To be

I was full of shame,  
Brought down to my knees  
There must have been an angel  
That was watching over me,  
Cuz I never hit the ground  
From the building when I leaped  
A higher power lifting, guiding  
Brought me to my home  
And whispered in my ear  
That I'm never alone

I met this guy at a coffee shop  
His hands were shaking. Beaten down  
Said he couldn't stop  
Couldn't keep his eyes from off the  
clock  
-Anonymous

Today no one will know my name

Because the world is dying

And so am I

Who am I but a bystander, just like the rest.

I'm no pretty girl or boy

Not rich by your standards

Just a person; Normal like the world.

I lied. Are you ready

For the truth.

The world; have you really looked at it?

It's beauty, simple yet detached.

Its rustic and raw.

The mountain, the storms, the rain; too wet.

Too bitter. Too dry. Too cold.

That is me in all my glory and splendid wonder

Like the world I am always changing

I take the wear and tear of life and make it look

Undoubtedly beautiful

Like the world; I too am subject to all of this.  
-Anonymous

*I feel like a flower garden that never got to bloom..*

*I feel just like a spaceship falling without the sonic boom.*

*I feel like times an hour glass that's empty with no sand.*

*I feel like pouring out my soul into dangers hands.*

*But like a wolf in sheep's clothing even the devil was an angel.*

*And even the earth changes its rotation in angle.*

-cassy mae suggs

### A BOX OF WISDOM

One day I went shopping,  
for something nice to buy,  
And came across a little shop I  
thought I'd give it a try.

The shop was quite dim and  
just a bit creepy; the clerk in  
the back seemed grumpy and  
sleepy.

So I turned and made my way  
back to the door and tripped  
over something down on the  
floor.

A small wooden box so aged  
from time. At last a discovery,  
I'd claim it as mine.

I raised the box up into light,  
and then I beheld a wondrous  
sight.

The word "WISDOM" was  
engraved deep in the lid, how  
long had this treasure in this  
shop been hid?

I grew more excited and  
firmed my grip; and a smile of  
great pleasure formed on my  
lips.

I called to the clerk "yo dude  
what's this". He said "for you  
my good friend it's just fifty  
cents".

I tossed out some coins, and  
dashed for the door, clutching  
my prize, I raced from the store.

I rushed down the street, and  
sat on a bench, beside an old  
bum with a powerful stench.

I examined the box with  
great patience and care, and  
grew quite perplexed by what  
was NOT there.

No hinges or handles, no  
latch did I see, I started to ques-  
tion what this thing could be.

I asked the old bum if a lid he  
did see. He studied the box and  
then looked up at me.

He pulled out some snuff,  
and took a great dip, with the  
back of his hand he then wiped  
off his lips. He coughed and he  
belched and it near burned my  
hair. Then deep into my eyes  
did the old bum stare.

"You ask what I think so I'll  
speak my mind, inside of that  
box not a thing will you find.

Wisdoms not something  
that's bought and then sold,  
though it's rarer than dia-  
monds, more precious gold.

It comes from great patience,  
and experiencing pain, by  
living and loving that's how it's  
gained.

Forget that old box boy now  
heed what I say. Don't waste  
your time, just throw it away".  
He scratched at his chin and  
stomped both his feet, He  
pulled up his collar, and snug-  
gled down deep, and before I  
could thank him, he dozed off  
to sleep.

-Barry K, Haynes

# Upcoming Events



**10/04/2015**

**FRCNA 35 Support Committee Meeting**

Starts: 10/04/2015 - 10:00 am

Ends: 10/04/2015 - 12:00 pm

Duration: 2 hours

Location: Rosen Shingle Creek, 9939 Universal Blvd, Orlando, FL 32819

The committee will continue to meet on the first Sunday of every even month up until the convention, please refer to future posts for upcoming support committee meeting locations.

**10/23/2015-10/25/2015**

**All Day River Coast Area 27th Annual Campout**

Location: 7360 Erin Rd, Spring Hill, FL 34607

27th Annual River Coast Area Campout will be held Friday morning through Sunday at noon at the Weeki Wachee Christian Campground. VERY limited availability, with only 150 attendees being allowed. You MUST register to attend. Register online: <http://rivercoastareana.org/campout-registration>

*Join Us for the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual River Coast Area Campout  
Weeki Wachee Christian Campground  
October 23 noon - to - October 25 noon*

Camping  
Swimming - BYO Floats

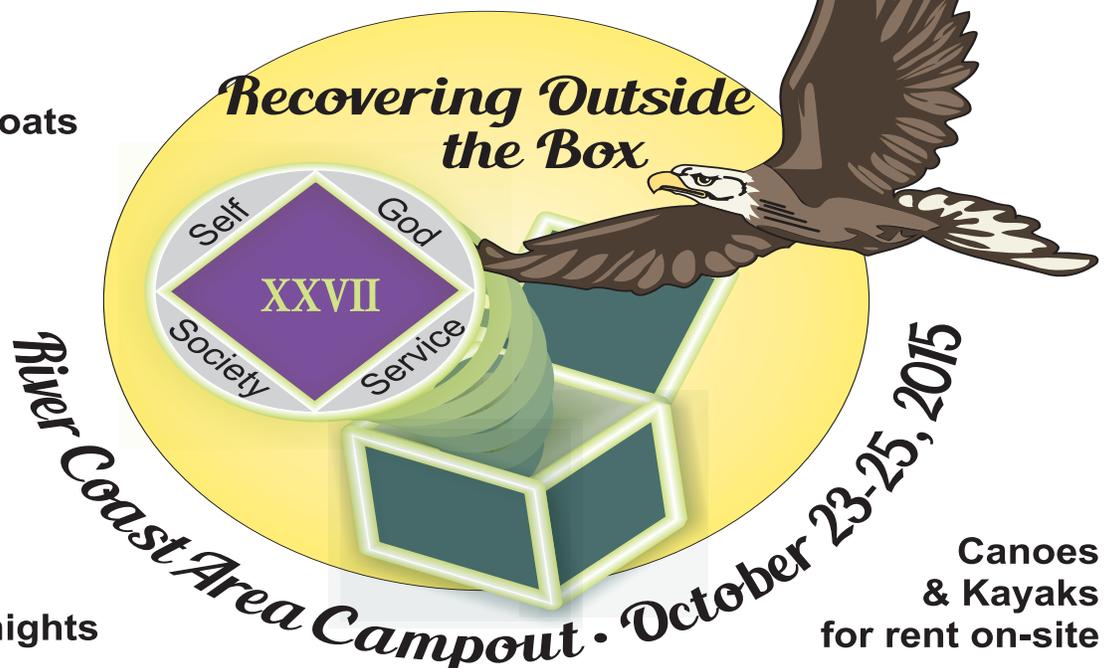
BBQ Dinner  
Saturday afternoon

Games

Workshops

Campfire

Speaker Meetings  
Friday & Saturday nights



*Limited to the 1<sup>st</sup> 150 Paid Registrations - No Day Passes*

CMZRJXLGDZCRUQGUKUHFO  
OLFCGEMNTTBPLWCIYKNQ  
GRIEFRDVQGFGVFMSDZUK  
CICRNVEUNITYWSJNENRK  
OCYNAKOMTOUTRTHOCPXJ  
STSURTPNOIQOQTNIISZW  
YGORDRRHSCTAIAARTVJCY  
OQPSOEEANWWAEZEORENU  
ICYCLGVPDUFERZDMEADR  
GREAKUEPWILINGNESSTK  
LSPYGYNIJNTOORECCZSW  
SSOHGMTNC SBIVSREVPRO  
EFLUYUIEWALTOERKEORV  
VCUCVGO SXNGWINUTRCNV  
XHYZJVNSPIVOETS SCZHW  
SGIZCXENVTURREAKQUPB  
NCDPHYWBLYNKXJNGCRKV  
DUVVVHETKQHSWAIBRNKP  
TNHDL SUIELAXJDTZPZRA  
OMARQWLWES EBNCYONJUQ

# Recovery Word Search

EMOTIONS  
FAITH  
GRATITUDE  
GRIEF  
HAPPINESS  
INSANITY  
ITWORKS

LOVE  
NEWCOMER  
PREVENTION  
PROCESS  
RELAPSE  
SANITY  
SERVICE

STEPS  
SURRENDER  
TRADITIONS  
TRUST  
UNITY  
WILINGNESS

# Anniversaries - May, June, July, August, September, & October

<b>A New Way</b>		Eric K 9/9/2006	9	<b>New Bite of Serenity</b>		<b>Stepping Up</b>	
Art B 5/15/1997	18	Ed Mc 9/13/2012	3	Romano W 5/3/2012	3	Michael J 5/1/1999	16
Russ N 6/23/2003	12	Bob F 9/15/1995	20	Joe F 5/5/1992	23	Renee C 5/5/1988	27
Josie C 7/10/2010	5	Zemmie J 9/23/1996	19	Joyce 5/16/2005	10	Robert I 6/26/2011	4
Beth D 9/6/2012	3	<b>Hope In Recovery</b>		Wade W 6/2/2010	5	Mildred M 7/8/2007	8
Alex L 9/7/1998	17	Joan W 6/27/2004	11	Farie S 6/14/2013	2	Larry W 7/13/1992	23
<b>Brandon at Noon</b>		Ira J 9/7/2010	5	Barbara R 6/19/2012	3	<b>Sunset Solutions</b>	
Charlene D 6/2/2011	4	<b>How It Works</b>		Valencia N 6/24/2012	3	Carole K 5/20/1986	29
Lisa S 6/24/2012	3	Diane B 5/1/1981	34	Yuly S. 7/2/2012	3	Craig K 6/14/1989	26
Wendy J 8/8/2014	1	Wanda L 8/29/2005	10	<b>New Life</b>		Frank V 6/21/1988	27
Monica M 8/28/2014	1	Alan A 10/11/1988	27	Marlon R 5/22/2006	9	Deb C 9/1/1984	31
Nicole S 9/19/2013	2	Norman P 10/24/1996	19	Jason L 8/7/2007	8	Marina W 9/5/1991	24
Elizabeth T 9/19/2013	2	<b>Hyde Park NA</b>		Connie W 10/6/2001	14	Lydia B 9/18/1988	27
Josh M 9/28/2009	6	Kaylyn O 5/19/2013	2	Valeria J 10/9/1992	23	Judy N 10/17/1984	31
Ben S 9/30/2012	3	Lauren C 5/23/2014	1	<b>New Tampa NA</b>		<b>The Sanctuary</b>	
Matt L 10/3/2013	2	Andrew L 7/14/2013	2	Joshua M 8/9/2013	2	George B 7/5/1997	18
Jason V 10/9/2009	6	Jill B 8/14/2010	5	Timothy L 8/18/2013	2	Dave R 7/11/2006	9
Chris F 10/10/2014	1	Reggie R 8/19/2011	4	<b>Oldtimers</b>		Will O 7/17/2014	1
Wes C 10/15/2010	5	Jan B 9/3/2010	5	Charles 8/9/1989	26	Roy A 8/18/2011	4
Luis G 10/29/2013	2	<b>In The Middle</b>		Yahya 8/30/1979	36	<b>The Truth</b>	
<b>Breakfast Club</b>		Andy S 5/22/2008	7	<b>Quest For Serenity</b>		Chris M 7/2/1987	28
Rick R 5/11/2013	2	Chris B 5/24/2014	1	Aida S 5/7/1995	20	Jason L 8/7/2007	8
<b>Freedom Friday</b>		Randy M 6/17/2004	11	Darwin S 5/23/2007	8	Gill G 9/5/2013	2
Dutch S 7/5/2013	2	Tom W 6/21/2011	4	Aloha B 7/5/2005	10	<b>The War Is Over</b>	
<b>Grow or Go</b>		Mike G 7/23/2009	6	Cheryl H 7/13/2006	9	Kurt W 5/22/2009	6
Amy M 6/4/2013	2	Buck B 9/10/1986	29	Dave S 10/16/2010	5	Jackie M 5/24/1999	16
Robert A 6/8/2005	10	Kelly C 9/25/2006	9	<b>Radical Recovery</b>		Matt P 5/25/2005	10
Kirk K 6/14/1988	27	Paul B 10/24/2007	8	Carlos N 5/23/1991	24	Lee C 5/25/2005	10
Derek B 6/22/2012	3	<b>Keep The Faith</b>		Deb E 6/5/2013	2	Matt S 6/10/2010	5
Andy C 6/25/2012	3	Roger A 5/6/2006	9	Joe D 10/5/20001	5	Brendon C 6/16/2013	2
David L 8/13/2005	10	Steve S 5/15/2002	13	Nate M 10/11/1996	19	Russ G 7/10/2003	12
Deborah N 8/23/2010	5	Toby C 6/12/2006	9	Don D 10/31/2007	8	Brian B 7/11/2013	2
Elvin S 9/2/2014	1	Willie M 10/3/2007	8	<b>Recovery Central</b>		Bill M 7/20/2012	3
Rolando S 9/11/2008	7	<b>Monday Meditation</b>		Deborah N 5/2/2006	9	John M 8/13/1984	31
Brittany M 10/3/2014	1	Michael 5/7/2014	1	Carolyn H 5/10/2014	1	Amanda B 8/25/2012	3
Jessica J 10/5/2010	5	Cat 5/17/2012	3	Nicole P 5/23/2013	2	Derek T9/8/2008	7
Sarah C 10/11/2014	1	Savannah D 6/5/2011	4	Richard W 6/18/1997	18	John N 9/16/2013	2
<b>Heights of NA</b>		TJ 9/4/2012	3	Amanda S 7/5/2008	7	T.C. 10/9/1992	23
Frank M 6/1/2011	4	Shaun B 9/12/2013	2	Christina G 7/24/2012	3	Heather Q10/13/2012	3
<b>High Lie</b>		<b>NA 180</b>		R.C. H 8/20/2012	3	<b>Together We Can</b>	
Pete M 5/2/1995	20	Norma 5/2/1988	27	Alejandro A 8/22/2000	15	Lillian 5/18/1994	21
Jill M 5/13/2011	4	Ira B 5/3/2010	5	Valerie B 9/15/1989	26	Valarie A 7/2/2000	15
Carl C 5/22/2011	4	Jim M 5/6/2000	15	Lisa C 10/4/1986	29	Marie R7/18/1989	26
Heather L 5/23/2013	2	Samantha M 5/20/2013	2	<b>Recovery in Riverview</b>		<b>Triple M Group</b>	
Bryan T 7/3/2006	9	Teresa K 6/1/2006	9	Estelle S 5/6/2012	3	Frederick "Boe" 6/3/2008	7
Leslie M 7/4/2005	10	Chris M 7/2/1987	28	Shawna B 7/25/2010	5	Joe Nathan 7/26/1988	27
Jackie M 7/10/2010	5	Julie S 7/10/1993	22	Cheryl C 8/10/1990	25	Reggie A 8/22/1998	17
Chris Mc 7/18/2010	5	Ed S 7/22/2014	1	<b>Recovery In The Hood</b>		<b>TTNA</b>	
Craig C 7/23/200312		Garrett B 8/3/1990	25	Diane 7/14/2001	14	Cathy V5/25/1984	31
Mary S 7/31/20087		Channing L 8/31/2011	4	Mary P 8/8/2011	4	<b>Women Do Recover</b>	
John Y 8/8/1988	27	Norman P 10/24/1996	19	<b>Squeaky Clean</b>		Norma C 5/2/1988	27
Jill B 8/14/2010 5		<b>Never Too Young</b>		Tino M 5/7/2012	3	Irma C 5/10/2006	9
Hope In Lutz		<b>To Recover</b>		Robert A 6/8/2004	11	Elvieta K 8/2/2007	8
Jay W 5/1/2006	9	Clinton W 5/1/2010	5	Ben S 6/18/1990	25	Pam S 8/5/2010	5
Nicholle M 5/10/2014	1	Michele O 6/2/2009	6	Eric J 7/10/1974	41	<b>Women's Hope</b>	
Matthew J 6/19/2013	2	Shawn B 6/6/2006	9	Tom C 7/26/1986	29	Jill M 5/1/2007	8
Chris D 7/10/2002	13	Garrett P 6/19/2013	2	Dave C 7/27/2000	15	Emily C5/14/1984	31
Greg T 7/11/2012	3	Jennifer M 6/24/2011	4	Fernando S 9/20/2006	9	Theresa K 6/1/2006	9
John B 7/21/2008	7	Kevin C 7/11/2013	2	Lorraine J 10/14/2013	2	Anna M 7/20/2005	10
Tom 7/26/2014	1	Mark N 9/5/2012	3	Gary K 10/20/1983	32	Susan H 7/23/2008	7
Mark A 8/13/1997	18	Amber D 9/10/2013	2	Dave H 10/20/1994	21	Deb C 9/1/1984	31
Eric O 8/18/1984	31	Jereme B 9/25/2009	6	Jimmy F 10/27/2010	5	Amanda K 9/11/2012	3
Talia B 9/7/2013	2	John M 10/15/2012	3	John A 10/30/2012	3	Tabitha M 9/23/1989	26

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