

Along the Way

IU Health Hospice Bereavement Services Newsletter | Bloomington, Muncie

Fall 2020

Resources

BOOKS:

- *The Group: Seven Widowed Fathers Reimagine Life* by Widowed Fathers
- *When Children Grieve* by John W. James and Russell Friedman

TV SHOWS:

- *This is Us* (NBC)
- *After Life* (Netflix)

WEBSITES:

- Centerforloss.com
- Childrengrieve.org

PHONE:

- AARP Friendly Voices – connecting people to people especially when isolated: 888.281.0145
- Mental Health America: 800.969.6642
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800.273.TALK (8255) (Always available)



Grieving during the Holidays

By Marcy Hintzman, Bereavement Coordinator

It's safe to say 2020 has been a rough year for all of us for multiple reasons. However, for individuals that are grieving a death loss, this holiday season more than likely seems dismal at best as it will be overshadowed by COVID-19. Those that have lost a loved one, or two, this year, are more than likely dealing with multiple non-death losses, too, such as loss of income, unemployment, loss of housing, and loss of childcare, which can turn 'normal' grief into complicated grief. In our pre-pandemic world, the bereaved had access to several healthy ways of coping that involved social connectedness such as visiting their local gym, working in an office surrounded by co-workers, having lunch with friends and family, and traveling out-of-state to visit family and friends to get a break and change of scenery, and HUGS. With ever changing COVID-19 precautions, previous ways of managing the holiday season will not be an option. So, how does one get through the Fall and winter holidays this year, especially Thanksgiving and Christmas?

Remember that our loved ones lived, not just that they died, and their light gave birth to our happiness. Once we acknowledge the darkness, the light can begin to peek through. So, in this season of waning light...

- **Be Patient with Yourself:** Know that hardly anyone is as happy as you think they might be. Do what you can this season and let it be enough. Be realistic. It will hurt, don't try to block bad moments. Be ready for them. Let those moments come, deal with them and let them go.
- **Leave the Word "Ought" out of this Holiday Season.**

(Cont'd on page 2...)



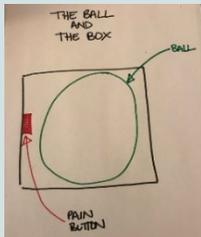
Visit: iuhealth.org/patient-family-support/bereavement or call your local IU Health Hospice

Office, pgs. 3–8. For support for loss of a child visit:

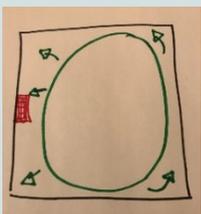
RileyChildrens.org/support-services/grief-bereavement-services.

Ball in the Box

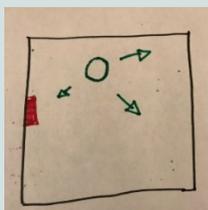
Picture grief as a ball in a box. When grief is new, the ball takes up most of the box and hits the pain button over and over again, so the pain is fairly constant and seems unrelenting and completely overwhelming.



Over time the ball shrinks a bit, but a song or a memory can trigger the ball and as it bounces against the pain button it still hurts just as much. The ball will shrink at different rates for each person experiencing grief.



As the ball continues to get smaller over time, one can function day to day more easily and you have more time to recover between hits. However, the ball can still hit the button randomly and it may be surprising how much it still hurts.



- **Be Kind and Gentle with Yourself:** Figure out what you should do, balance it with what you are capable of doing and then compromise. Forgive yourself for living.
- **Plan Ahead:** Grieving people often experience a lack of concentration. Make lists. Prioritize everything. Decide what is really important to you.
- **Listen to Yourself:** As you become aware of your needs, tell family members and friends and ask for their support in this.
- **Hold on to Your Wallet and Charge Cards:** You can't buy away grief, but you might be tempted to try.
- **Sleep:** Without adequate restful sleep on a regular basis, one is going about their life in a constant state of sleep deprivation which makes life on the whole more challenging to manage. To improve sleep, follow a regular sleep schedule and establish a relaxing bedtime routine.
- **Take Time for Self-Care:** Give yourself permission to take breaks from the stress to engage in a healthy distraction. Eating a balanced diet and exercising can help you approach life with more energy. Self-care isn't selfish—it's necessary maintenance and self-preservation.
- **Change Something:** Everything has already changed so don't be afraid to change some traditions. Try whatever pops into your head. You can always stop it if it doesn't feel quite right or doesn't work. But don't toss out everything this year. Keep some traditions. You choose which ones.
- **Understand...:** that heartaches will be unpacked as you sift through the decorations, but so, too, are the warm loving memories of each piece. Don't deny yourself the gift of healing tears.
- **Focus on the Things that Bring Joy and Hope Too:** We hardly need to be reminded of the things that aren't going well in the world, but we could use a little refresher on the things that make life worthwhile. Take notice of the things (however big or small) that bring some levity to your day such as the sounds of migrating geese or the smell of fall leaves.
- **Light a Special Candle:** Not in memory of a death, but in celebration of a life.
- **Find the Gifts of Your Loved One's Life:** Think of all the 'gifts' that your loved one gave to you such as joy, safety, laughter, companionship, etc. List these "gifts" on strips of paper and keep them somewhere close to you (e.g., gift box, stocking, memory book, etc.). Know that these small strips of paper hold treasures far beyond our capacity to understand. It is a reminder that we did exchange gifts and that we still have those gifts, even if the giver is gone.
- **Live through your Hurt...:** so that joy can return to warm your heart! This is a Season of Light...for it is the season we remember that once we loved and were loved. And that is the greatest light and memory of all!

2020 Fall Hospice Bereavement Support

The following support is offered free of charge to hospice families and the community. Since many people feel alone in their grief, it can be reassuring to talk with others experiencing a similar loss.

As precautions remain in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19, IU Health Hospice events and groups will be held online through the end of the year. In addition, listed below are in-person and online community offerings.

Bloomington:

For more information and to express interest, please contact the Bloomington office at 812.353.9818 or 800.206.5200.

Online Adult Monthly Bereavement Support Group

This online group is for adults who have lost a spouse, parent, friend, sibling, grandparent or other special person. Email Cindy at cmolthan@iuhealth.org to reserve your spot.

- **Dates:** First Wednesday of each month
- **Time:** 5:30 – 6:45 pm

Online Parents Support Meeting: Loss of a Child of Any Age

The death of a child is always unthinkable and untimely. Adjusting to such a loss is ongoing and challenging. Talking with others who are experiencing similar grief, can be very helpful, no matter how the child's death occurred. This online group is co-led by bereaved parents. Call or email Cindy at cmolthan@iuhealth.org with questions and to register.

- **Dates:** Second Wednesday of each month
- **Time:** 5:30 – 6:45 pm

Online Spouse Loss: Monthly Group

The death of a long-time partner stirs strong emotions about one's identity and future. This group provides a safe place to talk about your own experience and learn how others are coping. For more information and to register for this online group, contact Pat at pmuyskens@iuhealth.org.

- **Dates:** Third Tuesday of each month
- **Time:** 5 – 6:15 pm

Online Healing Hearts: Children's Grief Support

Held monthly on a virtual platform this group for children ages six through fourteen offers the opportunity to process the loss of any special person. Participants share their stories, ask questions, or just listen. Please contact Pat by phone, 812.353.9818, or email at pmuyskens@iuhealth.org if a child in your life might be interested.

Online Six Week Spouse Loss Support Group

Offered throughout the year, this group for those whose spouse has died in the last year will meet online weekly. Topics include normal reactions to loss, self-care and ideas for coping. Registration is necessary to participate and a commitment to all six sessions is important to receive the most benefit from the experience. Unlike our monthly groups, enrollment is closed after the second session. To find out more and to sign up, contact Pat at 812.353.9818 or at pmuyskens@iuhealth.org.

Online Parents without Partners Group

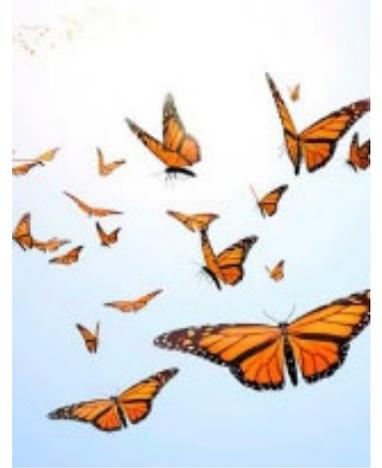
This group is specifically for those whose spouse or co-parent has died and they are left with children in the home to raise on their own. Please contact Pat at 812.353.9818 or at pmuyskens@iuhealth.org if you would like to meet online monthly with others who are grappling with supporting grieving children while trying to find their own way on the grief journey.

Online Fall Service of Remembrance and Hope

This inter-faith service is open to anyone in our community who is grieving the loss of a loved one. Through words, prayer, and music the Spiritual Care staff offer consolation and encouragement. During the service, there will be a slide show displaying pictures of your loved ones. If you would like a picture of your loved one included in the slide show, please email a digital copy to sgerber4@iuhealth.org or mail a copy of your picture to Spiritual Care at IU Health, 601 W. Second Street, P.O. Box 1149, Bloomington, IN 47402. The deadline to submit photos is Friday, October 16. Further information about which virtual platform will be used will be available on the IU Health Face Book page.

- **Date:** Sunday, November 1, 2019
- **Location and Time:** 1 hour virtual celebration beginning at 2 pm

**Note: clocks need to be turned back 1-hour early Sunday morning on November 1, 2020!*



Other Bereavement Support in Bloomington and Online

Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide (Loss Support Group)

Michelle Martin Colman is a LOSS support group Facilitator for Survivors of Suicide, a SafeTALK trainer for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and Founder/Catalyst for Project STAY in Bloomington, Indiana with a mission to create peer-to-peer support networks to engage and educate about Suicide Awareness and Prevention. Loss Support groups are confidential and safe havens for all survivors who have lost a loved one and friend to suicide and need a time to connect with people who share a common loss. LOSS groups meet in person with masks and social distancing in place. Please call 812.322.1500 for more information.

- **Dates:** Second Monday of each month
- **Time:** 7 pm

Grief in Common- Online Community

Grief in Common is an online community designed to connect those who are grieving based on background and similar experiences. By creating a profile that outlines who you are, who you've lost and the circumstances surrounding that loss, the goal is that you will find a connection with someone who understands. To learn more visit griefincommon.com.

GriefShare

A Christian-based grief group. To learn more about GriefShare and to find current groups (in-person and online) in your location, please visit griefshare.org.



Mental Health America (MHA): Monroe County

For a listing of resources and support groups please visit MHA's website at mha-monroe.com/support-groups-1. For additional information contact MHA at info@mha-monroe.com or visit mha-monroe.com/.

Muncie:

For more information, please contact the Muncie office at 765.747.42.73 or 800.458.2255.

Bereavement Support in Muncie & Online

Adult Grief Support Group:

Facilitated by Andrea Duckworth, MSW, LCSW. For more information, please call Loose Funeral Home at 765.649.5255.

- **Dates:** Every Tuesday
- **Times:** 6 – 7:30 pm
- **Location:** Loose Funeral Home, Carriage House, 200 W. 53rd St., Anderson

GriefShare

A Christian-based grief group. To learn more about GriefShare and to find current groups (in-person and online) in your location, please visit griefshare.org.



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Mental Health America (MHA): North Central Indiana

For a listing of resources and support groups please visit MHA's website at screening.mhanational.org/content/mental-health-america-north-central-indiana or at mhanci.org/. For additional information contact MHA at 765.459.0309.



GRATITUDE JAR
thankful family activity

Tips for starting a gratitude jar with your family:

- **Be Consistent:** Choose a consistent time of day to share gratitude with each other. When you have your jar sitting in a prominent spot of your home, like your kitchen table it's a subtle message to everyone that gratitude is an important foundation of your family and serves as a gentle reminder to be thankful.
- **Think about What You are Grateful For:** It doesn't have to be something big. Don't judge whatever comes up. Giving gratitude for anything, no matter how silly or small you think it may be, is powerful.
- **Write it Down:** Starting with: "I'm thankful for _____ today because _____." and fill in the blanks. If your child is too young to write, you can fill out the paper for him/her or have them draw a picture.
- **Put it in a Container:** Using a clear container allows you to see the slips of paper pile up - another visual reminder of how much you have to be grateful for. Kids love to see their jar getting filled higher and higher each day with their gratitude notes. They also love to reach into the jar and pull out their gratitudes and read them out loud.

2020 Fall Hospice Bereavement Support

The following support is offered free of charge to hospice families and the community. Since many people feel alone in their grief, it can be reassuring to talk with others experiencing a similar loss.

As precautions remain in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19, IU Health Hospice events and groups will be held online through the end of the year. In addition, listed below are in-person and online community offerings.

Lafayette:

For more information and to express interest, please contact Marcy Hintzman, Bereavement Coordinator, at 765.404.5875 or mhintzman@iuhealth.org.

Online Adult Grief Support Group

This is an online biweekly 1-hour informal grief support group for adults who have experienced the death of a loved one. To register and for more information, contact Marcy Hintzman at mhintzman@iuhealth.org or at 765.404.5875. Please share your availability. Once we have enough interest, we will start the group.

Online Understanding Your Grief Group: Fall Session

During this weekly 1 – 1 ½ hr. online structured group, we will utilize **Understanding Your Grief: Ten Essential Touchstones of Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart** by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. to discuss how to help yourself heal and better understand grief. Participants will receive a copy of Wolfelt's book and accompanying journal prior to first meeting. Additionally, participants will be asked to read a chapter each week and complete the corresponding journal chapter. To register and for more information, contact Marcy Hintzman at 765.404.5875 or at mhintzman@iuhealth.org. Please share your availability. Once we have enough interest, we will start the group.

Online Cooking for One Grief Group

One of the most overlooked aspects of grief is cooking and mealtime and even more overlooked is how often individuals are faced with finding the strength to prepare a meal or set a table for one. During this online biweekly 60 to 90-minute grief group our talented hospice volunteers will demonstrate how to cook a particular recipe for one while bereavement coordinator Marcy Hintzman will review grief exercises and healthy grieving techniques. To register and for more information contact Marcy Hintzman at mhintzman@iuhealth.org or at 765.404.5875. Please share your availability. Once we have enough interest, we will start the group.

Online Music for Your Soul Grief Group

During this monthly 1-hour group participants will listen to pre-recorded music performed by our talented hospice volunteers while bereavement coordinator Marcy Hintzman guides participants through writing and/or drawing activities. To register and for more information contact Marcy Hintzman at mhintzman@iuhealth.org or at 765.404.5875. Once we have enough interest, we will start the group.

IU Health Hospice & IU Health Arnett Hospital Virtual Remembrance Celebration

Please join us as we honor your loved ones and celebrate their life lived. In order to receive the link to join this virtual celebration, RSVP to Marcy Hintzman, at mhintzman@iuhealth.org by Sunday, October 25, 2020. Include a photo and a few comments of your loved one in your email to be shared by staff in the celebration presentation.

- **Date:** Tuesday, October 27 (An invitation will be mailed out in September)
- **Location and Time:** 1 hour virtual celebration beginning at 12 pm



Other Bereavement Support in Lafayette & Surrounding Areas

River of Hope: For a Time of Grief

River of Hope is a grief support program for children (age 4 & up), teens, and adults who have experienced the death of a significant person free of charge. Childcare is available (4 and under). For more information email RiverofHope@RiverCity.info, call Jeanne Siva at 765.421.6339, or visit cc.rivercity.info/riverofhope.

- **Dates:** Second and fourth Monday of each month
- **Time:** 7 – 8:30 pm
- **Location:** River City Community Center, 2842 Old US 231 S., Lafayette

Open Arms: Miscarriage and Infant Loss Support Group

The goal of this informal support group, facilitated by Sarah Norkus and Jen Hittle, is to help parents cope with this immense loss. Sarah and Jen are not trained counselors, just people who themselves have survived this awful experience. For more information, contact Jen at 765.418.5500 or Sarah at 219.730.9486.

- **Date:** First Wednesday of each month: October 7, November 4, December 2, January 6, February 3
- **Time:** 6 – 8 pm
- **Location:** 2600 Greenbush St., Lafayette, Lounge – entrance located at the back of building

GriefShare

A Christian-based grief group. To learn more about GriefShare and to find current groups (in-person and online) in your location, please visit griefshare.org.

Faith Church is offering an in-person class with a virtual option. There is a \$20 fee. To register visit faithlafayette.org/faith-community-institute/griefshare.

- **Date:** Wednesday's, Sept. 16 – Dec. 16
- **Time:** 6:30 – 8 pm
- **Location:** Faith East Community Center, 5572 Mercy Way, Lafayette



Grief in Common - Online Community

Grief in Common is an online community to connect those who are grieving. By creating a profile that outlines who you are, who you've lost and the circumstances surrounding that loss, the goal is that you will find a connection with someone who understands. To learn more visit griefincommon.com.

Mental Health America (MHA): Wabash Valley Region

For a listing of resources and support groups please visit MHA's website at mhawv.org/support-groups. For additional information contact MHA at 765.742.1800 or at mha@mhawv.org.

Indianapolis:

For more information, please contact Bonita Stone, Bereavement Coordinator, at 317.962.1797 or bstone2@iuhealth.org.

Westside Evening Grief Support Group:

You are invited to an on-going informal grief support group for adults who have experienced the death of a loved one. Please call Bonita Stone at 317.962.1797 to register for this group.

- **Date:** First and third Wednesday of each month
- **Time:** 7 pm
- **Location:** Lakeview Church located at 47 Beachway Drive (near I-465 and West 10th Street), Room #101

Westside Morning Grief Support Group

You are invited to an on-going grief support group for older adults who have experienced the death of a loved one. Please call Bonita Stone at 317.962.1797, if you would like to register for this group.

- **Date:** Third Thursday of each month
- **Time:** 10:30 am
- **Location:** The Bridge at Westside Garden Plaza, 8816 West 10th Street

Southside Afternoon Grief Support Group

You are invited to an on-going grief support group for adults who have experienced the death of a loved one. Please call Bonita Stone at 317.962.1797, if you would like to register for this group.

- **Date:** Second Thursday of each month
- **Time:** 2 pm
- **Location:** Greenwood Public Library, 310 S. Meridian Street, Greenwood

Other Bereavement Support in Indy & Surrounding Areas

Eastside and Northside Grief Support Groups:

Community Home Health is offering many bereavement drop-in groups as well as six-week sessions at various locations throughout their service area. For more information, call InTouch Bereavement and Grief Services at 317.621.4646 or toll free at 800.404.4852. You can also reach out via e-mail at InTouch@eCommunity.com.

Adult Grief Groups

An open-ended adult grief group facilitated by IU Health Chaplain Michael Gilbert. Parking is free and there is no fee for being part of the group. For additional information, please contact Chaplain Michael Gilbert at 317.217.3195 or mgilbert1@iuhealth.org. If you will be attending your first meeting and have trouble finding the right place, you may text Chaplain Gilbert at 317.432.4135. He will be glad to guide you to the right place.

- **Date:** Held twice on Thursdays weekly
- **Time:** 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm and 7 pm – 9 pm
- **Location:** IU Health West Medical Center, Cancer Center, 1111 Ronald Reagan Parkway, Building B1600 Avon
- **Directions:** From I-465, go west on 10th Street crossing Raceway Road. Within 1 mile or less, IU Health West Medical Center will be on the right side. Turn right into entrance; turn right again into parking lot in front.

The Thing Is

By Ellen Bass

To love life,
to love it even when you have no
stomach for it
and everything you've held dear
crumbles like burnt paper in your
hands, your throat filled with the
silt of it.

When grief sits with you,
its tropical heat
thickening the air,
heavy as water
more fit for gills than lungs;

when grief weights you down like
your own flesh
only more of it,
an obesity of grief,
you think,
How can a body withstand this?

Then you hold life like a face
between your palms,
a plain face,
no charming smile,
no violet eyes,
and you say, yes,
I will take you
I will love you, again.



From *Poetry of Presence: An
Anthology of Mindfulness
Poems*, Grayson Books 2017

Remember the Children

By Pat Muyskens, Bereavement Coordinator

With all the hustle and
bustle of the holidays,
children are often the
forgotten grievers.
While learning to live
without a beloved
family member, they're
likely to worry about



how the holidays will go: Will we still go to Grandma's for Thanksgiving? Will we put up decorations this year? How can we celebrate when everyone's so sad? And now with COVID restrictions, we as adults, along with children may be doubly sad about how the holidays may be different this year.

We know that children grieve differently than adults. They grieve in "spurts," crying for a lost loved one and then, the next minute, returning to energetic play. Because kids don't show their grief like adults, we sometimes assume they aren't grieving and don't need support. What's really going on is that most children can only endure intense feelings of grief for brief periods of time. It's not uncommon for kids to seem to be doing pretty well with a death and then have a hard time months after the loss. It's possible that it takes a child longer to realize the meaning and impact of the loss, or the child waits to express their grief until their environment seems more stable and safe.

Children sometimes act out their feelings because they aren't able to talk about them. When they do, they aren't behaving badly on purpose; they simply may not have the words for what they are feeling. This might look like moodiness, irritability, whining, clinging, being demanding or throwing tantrums.

Try to find a way to understand your children's thought process about the holidays. Because you seem sad, they may think they should feel the same way and may be worried when they don't. They may feel guilty about looking forward to a holiday. It's important that kids have the opportunity to experience and express all their feelings of grief – sadness, anger, relief, confusion, etc. Particularly during holidays, they need support in understanding what happened and remembering their loved one.

Suggestions to consider include:

- Stay physically close to your children to reassure them that they're still loved and safe. Extra hugs and cuddling may help.
- If you can, spend extra time with your children. If you can't, ask someone else in the family that has been part of your "social bubble" to do so.
- Watch for unusual behavior or physical symptoms and make time to talk and monitor what they are thinking and feeling.
- Give them outlets for talking about their grief, fears, and anything else without judging. Allow feelings to be expressed and accepted.
- Make sure your children are getting adequate sleep, exercise, and nutrition.
- This may also be a great time to make a "Gratitude Jar" with your young ones, like the one on page 5.

Real Men Do Cry

By Marcy Hintzman, Bereavement Coordinator



Are you a man grieving a loss and want to cry all the time; yet feel embarrassed because men are not supposed to be that way? Have you ever been told that, “Real men don’t cry?” I think the idea of “boys/men are not supposed to cry” is overrated. I don’t know who came up with that idea anyway. Boys/men have hearts, emotions and tear ducts too.

There are many things that can bring one more embarrassment than crying. After all, grief impacts us all and we feel better when we cry because it seems as though something is bottled up inside. We want things to be different, but death has a power that no person can conquer or escape. By choosing to hold in our emotions, we can develop stress related health issues. However, crying can help us release our emotions and decrease our stress levels. Don’t take my word for it, consider the studies that show the many benefits to crying including:

- **Detoxifies the body** - Emotional tears contain stress hormones and other toxins. Researchers have theorized that crying flushes these things out of your system.
- **Helps self-soothe** - Researchers have found that crying activates the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS). The PNS helps your body rest and digest. It may take several minutes of shedding tears before you feel the soothing effects.
- **Dulls pain** - Crying for long periods of time releases oxytocin and endogenous opioids, otherwise known as endorphins. These feel-good chemicals can help ease both physical and emotional pain. Once the endorphins are released, your body may go into somewhat of a numb stage. Oxytocin can give you a sense of calm or well-being.
- **Improves mood** - When you sob, you take in many quick breaths of cool air. Breathing in cooler air can help regulate and even lower the temperature of your brain. A cool brain is more pleasurable to your body and mind than a warm brain. As a result, your mood may improve after a sobbing episode.
- **Helps you recover from grief** - Grieving is a process. It involves periods of sorrow, numbness, guilt, and anger. And crying may even help you process and accept the loss of a loved one. Everyone goes through the grieving process in different ways. If you find that your crying is extreme or starting to interfere with your everyday life, it might be a good idea to check in with your doctor or speak with a counselor.
- **Restores emotional balance** - Sometimes you may cry when you are extremely happy, scared, or stressed. Researchers believe crying in this way may help to restore emotional equilibrium. When you’re incredibly happy or scared about something and cry, it may be your body’s way to recover from experiencing such a strong emotion.

So, men and women, I believe we have permission to cry. You may cry silently, publicly, or bothbut cry. It’s healthy for you and for those around you.

Reference source: *Healthline – 9 ways Crying May Benefit Your Health*



Indiana University Health

IU Health Hospice Bereavement Services

Along the Way, Fall 2020

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