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# Joyful Living

Winter 2016-2017

Inside:



04

### Who's That Strong Dad

BY DEBORAH PEEL



05

### Good Eats: Jenna's Favorite Winter Pot Pie

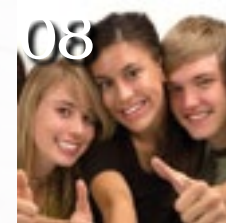
BY JENNA INGEBRETSEN



07

### The Making of A Modern Day Mermaid Goddess

BY ALEXIS ASBE



08

### Empowering Teens to Self-Manage in High Risk Situations

BY YVONNE MARTINEZ



10

### The Role of Titles in Validation

BY SUZANNE LUIS



11

### Success Found In Your Yes!

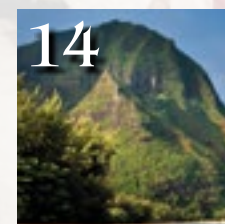
BY LONNIE JULIUS



12

### Developing Life-Long Healthy Friendships

BY CYNDI BARBER



14

### Beauty For Ashes

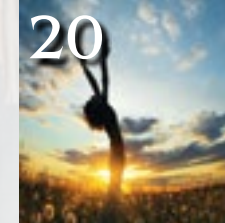
BY SHARON HAUGHTON



15

### Dear Yvonne

BY YVONNE MARTINEZ



20

### Opportunity Mindset

BY CHRISTY LARGENT



21

### Visit Redding Wine Venues

BY KALLIE MARKEL



24

### Self-Compassion for Successful Transformation

BY TIFFANY GRIMES



25

### In A Theatre Near You

BY MIKE MAESHIRO



27

### Weak Moments

BY DAWN DANELLE FRANKHOUSER



28

### What's In Your Garden

BY HAVILAH CUNNINGTON



30

### How Bad Do I Want It

BY MICHELLE MBOKS

*Joyful Living Magazine* is committed to embracing a lifestyle of joy and abundance. We are platform for beauty, goodness and grace. We value inspired thinking and embrace changing seasons. We honor your legacy and where you are from. Our desire is to serve and respect our community.

Our intention is to bring valuable resources as our diverse natural surroundings. We devote this magazine to you and bless your journey today, tomorrow and always. Grateful is our foundation. Love is where we live. We are Joy. We are Full. We are Living.

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*Mothers and fathers make powerful contributions to their child's optimal early development. Although all fathers aren't living in the same residence with their children*

# WHO'S THAT Strong Dad



BY DEBORAH PEEL

Deborah Peel is a writer, marketer, mother, lover of big trees and isolated mountain tops. She is a marketing coordinator and blogger for First 5 Shasta in Redding, California.

**Who's that guy with the carefully shaved head and the armload of tattoos talking so infectiously with another parent in line at Starbucks? Or at the motorcycle shop? Or at a Parent Café gathering?**

That's Justin Margolis of Chico, California, coordinator of Butte Parent Cafes and the InsideOut Dad program for incarcerated fathers. Margolis is passionate about parenting, passionate about being a strong dad, and never misses an opportunity to encourage other parents to be even better parents. What makes him uniquely qualified to lead programs that help other parents? A powerful combination of life experience and parenting experience; he successfully raised two sons as a single father after doing time in prison, twice.

A tumultuous childhood and increasing involvement in crime and violence eventually led Margolis to prison. After serving his second sentence, he vowed to make dramatic, positive changes in his life. Upon his release at age 28, he quickly became the custodial parent to his then fifteen-month-old son. Several years later, his oldest son also came to live with him. He acknowledges he initially had no idea how to handle fatherhood!

"Fatherhood isn't something that came naturally to me," he reveals. "I had to learn how to be a dad."

Connecting with Valley Oak Children's Services, he found the resources he needed to care for his children and build his parenting knowledge and skills. He took his fatherhood role seriously

and made such an impression on Valley Oak that they eventually asked him to join their staff. Today, he's guiding other parents in becoming strong, engaged parents, introducing them to 5 Protective Factors that can help strengthen families.

Margolis says, "Strength is about making your child a priority, having fun together, teaching him or her things, singing, laughing, and talking together." He wants other dads to know that "strength comes in giving your child a loving, stable home environment, in being encouraging and present, and in both parents valuing the roles each of you plays in your child's life."

Mothers and fathers make powerful contributions to their child's optimal early development. Although all fathers aren't living in the same residence with their children, Margolis urges dads to "stay connected with your child. Make sure you're a firm, positive part of his life."

And what's one more thing that Justin Margolis really wants dads to know? "A big thing to learn is to be soft and nurture your child. More than anything, do the best you can as a parent and keep learning along the way."

Today, Margolis considers himself "a light post" and he's helping to shine a light for others. He says, "I hope I'm helping to change some perceptions. No matter what happens in your life, you can do good things. You have to choose to make that happen."

Free Parent Café: [www.shastacapcc.org](http://www.shastacapcc.org)

[www.butteparentcafe.com/](http://www.butteparentcafe.com/) JL

## good eats

### Jenna's Favorite Winter Pot Pie

Prep time: 10 minutes  
Cook time: 45 minutes  
Rest time: 5 minutes

#### Ingredients

2 Chicken breasts, skinless boneless, cubed  
1 Shallot, large, minced  
1 ½ cup Baby Bella Mushrooms, sliced  
1 lb Brussels Sprouts  
½ cup Dry white wine  
1 cup Chicken broth (or 1 bouillon cube)  
1 cup Heavy Whipping Cream  
½ stick Butter  
2 tbsp Olive Oil  
¼ tsp Salt • 1/8 tsp Pepper  
1 tbsp Flour  
1 Can refrigerated crescent rolls (or dough of your choice)  
6 Fresh Sage leaves, optional  
1/8 tsp Parsley, dried, optional  
4-6 Individual sized ramekins, or 1 large pie/casserole dish

#### Directions

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. In a large sauce pan, bring 4 or 5 cups of salted water to a boil. Add clean Brussels sprouts, and boil for 12-15 minutes, depending on size. They have a bad rep, but you can't go wrong with fresh Brussels sprouts in winter. When done, remove and cool them quickly by rinsing under cold water. Meanwhile...

In a large skillet on medium-high, heat 1 Tbsp of butter and 1 Tbsp of olive oil, then add the raw cubed chicken. Season well with salt and pepper, and brown until cooked. Transfer cooked chicken to a bowl and cover.

Leaving the remains from the chicken in the skillet, melt an additional 1 Tbsp of butter and olive oil. Toss in the mushrooms, then the minced shallot, and sauté for 3-4 minutes. To deglaze, gently drizzle in your white wine, and stir, scraping the brown bits off the bottom. Reduce for about 5 minutes, then bring the chicken broth and heavy cream to the party. Let them simmer and build for about 10 minutes, while stirring frequently.

In a small pan (or microwave dish), melt the remaining butter. If you're including sage (which I recom-



RECIPE BY JENNA INGEBRETSEN

Working wife, mother of two tiny tots, cultural explorer, and story enthusiast.

mend - it's an amazing splash of savory flavor), add the whole leaves to the butter now and cook for 2 minutes, then remove. Slowly add flour, stirring non-stop until smooth, and almost a paste. Stir this mixture into the cream sauce to make it more of a gravy. Let it all thicken on med-low while you tend to your sprouts.

Quarter the sprouts, and line your ramekin dishes with the wedges. Grab the chicken, and layer evenly over the veggies. Stir, then ladle, your aromatic mushrooms and cream sauce to fill. Sprinkle salt and pepper to taste.

Unroll the crescent dough on a clean surface, pinch the perforated lines together, and cut evenly into squares. Take each square, and gently tuck your pies into bed, draping the dough over the top of the ramekin. If you like your dough crunchy, leave the corners hanging over the edges - otherwise, fold them back over, as shown in the photo. Slice in the middle to allow steam. I added a pinch of dried parsley for aesthetics.

Bake for 12-15 minutes at 375 degrees, or until golden brown and bubbly.

Let cool and settle for 5 minutes, then dive your fork into the best chicken pot pie you'll have this winter. JL

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THE MAKING OF A MODERN DAY

# Mermaid Goddess

**Alexis Asbe wasn't always a mystical creature. She started out as a self-contained goody two shoes. Her youth was spent reading, playing alone, and basically, being the "easy" kid. The Gidget persona that defined her childhood was wholesome and nerdy, certainly not a bad-ass business leader, and definitely not a legacy building siren.**



BY ALEXIS ASBE

**Alexis Asbe:** wife, mother, best-selling author, serial entrepreneur, self-care junkie, women's coach and business consultant. Find her @alexisasbe on Facebook; Instagram; Twitter. For information on self-care, coaching, upcoming events please call 415-375-0188 or visit [AlexisAsbe.com](http://AlexisAsbe.com)

While this label served Alexis well as a child, it held her back when she dove into shark-infested corporate waters during her twenties. Being the shy and quirky character that Alexis adhered to didn't work when it came to launching a competitive company. Gidget had to get in the back of the boat, and Alexis the Ambitious Ninja took control.

By 24, Alexis created and founded one of the country's most celebrated event and design companies. Her work was featured on CBS's Evening Magazine, Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, and noted in national publications. She had the privilege of working for the Vice President of the United States, and the Duchess of York. Alexis even wrote a best-selling book, *At the Altar in Your Underwear*.

While navigating the waves of the business realm, Alexis fell head first into the deep end when she met Kelly Asbe. She married her Aquaman and has two beautifully independent babies. All the while Alexis journeyed ahead in full ninja mode taking on several entrepreneurial endeavors. She co-founded, and currently co-leads as the CFO of, Aztec Construction.

However, it wasn't always calm waters... Eventually, playing captain left Alexis exhausted and legitimately seasick. When the doctors told Alexis that they didn't know how to fix her, Alexis decided to jump ship and learn how to restore her inner mermaid. After a journey to the underworld – including extreme self-care, alternative healing research, and fastidious effort – Alexis returned to health naturally. Breaking free of the expectations of society, she refuses to swim in the same muddy water, void of work/life balance.

**And that's how the Goddess emerges.**

Through this experience, Alexis learned that the most majestic thing a woman can do is to become her true self and embrace the divine power of what makes women magical. She quit hiding the sparkling side of her soul and learned to listen to it instead. When women attend to their desires, their immediate environment and the people they love, are all ultimately blessed. It is for this reason that Alexis is a champion of females as they pursue prosperity and completeness.

As a graduate and a committed lifelong student of Womanly Arts, it is this "brave self-love" journey that anchors her passion to radically call women forward into their full splendor. As the Brave Love Tribe Leader, Alexis provides personal improvement coaching and business development mentorship, with 25 years of experience. Globally, she is an awe-inspiring advocate for women. Come join the tribe, find your internal goddess guide, learn to lead with your divine femininity and create a life you love. **JL**

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BY YVONNE MARTINEZ

**Yvonne Martinez:** has nearly 30 years experience ministering God's power, healing and freedom. She is an ordained minister and serves as director, pastoral counselor and addictions specialist in the Transformation Center at Bethel Church in Redding, CA. Yvonne is the author of 18 books and educational director of CARE-EDU, an approved drug and alcohol certification program, [www.care-edu.com](http://www.care-edu.com). For a personal ministry appointment with Yvonne, call Transformation Center (530)229-7909.

# EMPOWERING Teens

## To Self-Manage In High Risk Situations

*This is the last article in a series addressing teens at risk and resourced from Empowering Teens to Self-Manage in High Risk Situations, authored by Yvonne Martinez and Heather Wright.*

**Empowering teens through motivational conversation is an important part of creating an inspiration for change. Motivational communication intentionally chooses language and posture to elicit what the youth wants to do with what they learn about themselves. Motivational conversation helps in expressing empathy, developing discrepancy, and rolling with resistance. It furthers rapport, gathers information and increases understanding without judgment or telling a teen what to do.**



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### OARS GUIDE THE CONVERSATION IN A POSITIVE AND PRODUCTIVE MANNER

- ✓ ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS
- ✓ USING AFFIRMATIONS

- ✓ FORMING REFLECTIVE STATEMENTS
- ✓ PROVIDING SUMMARIES

#### OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Open-ended questions communicate genuine interest and respect as they provoke deeper thought. This type of question provides an opportunity for teens to hear their own voice and be heard.

Open questions generally start with who, what, how, or tell me.

- "How are things going?"
- "What is most important to you right now?"
- "Hmm... Interesting... Tell me more..."
- "How did you manage that in the past?"
- "How would you like things to be different?"
- "What do you want to do next?"

#### AFFIRMATIONS:

Helpers can also empower teens by using language that affirms the teen's strengths.

- "I'm really glad you brought that up."
- "I think what you are doing is really difficult. I'm really proud to be working with you on this."
- "It says a lot about you that you are willing to take this step."
- "What have you noticed good about yourself in the past few months since you started coming here?" (This question is de-



signed to prompt self-affirmation.)

#### REFLECTIVE STATEMENTS

Helpers can show teens that they are listening and understand issues from their perspective by using reflective statements that allow the teen to hear their own words. It is usually enough to just repeat key words or the last few words spoken. This shows you are trying to understand the teen's terminology and reference.

#### SUMMARIES

Summaries are a way to recap the essential highlights of a conversation such as:

- Highlight both sides of an individual's ambivalence about change.
  - Communicate interest and understanding of a individual's perspective.
  - Shift the direction of conversations that become "stuck."
- A simple way to summarize would be to repeat the general concept without using the same words verbatim and ask for confirmation. "So, what I heard you saying was that you are overwhelmed at school and you don't see any way to get your grades up. Is that correct?" Often, this is a cue for the teen to embellish on it further. **JL**





BY SUZANNE LUIS

Suzanne is a counselor at Bethel's Transformation Center, I have a Lay Christian Counseling Certificate from Regent University, I also am licensed with the State of California as a Drug and Alcohol Counselor and I teach and do dream interpretation.

# THE ROLE OF Titles in Validation

## DIRECTOR

**Why do people like Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, and yes Jesus, stand out to us? Perhaps it because they were known for what they did for others and whatever titles were bestowed on them were an expression of who they were and no something they relied on for validation and approval.**

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**T**he rule of social validation recognizes and builds on our innate desire to belong. It is the theory that we want to be part of the popular group. Even if we don't admit it we care about what people think.

Anytime we find ourselves part of a group, we feel some susceptibility to group pressure this is called social validation or groupthink. The more respect we feel for the group, the more their opinions matters to us and therefore the more pressured to align our own opinions with those of the group.

Some men use their position as the head of the household in place of emotional intimacy and rules for Christian living in the place of relating and working through conflict. People may love titles whether it is VP, CEO or Elder because it can give a sense of importance that causes instant validation and respect and replaces the need to be emotionally present with others. Titles are necessary for description of role function but when they replace the need to know and be known by others it can become a way of escaping accountability within community. If it comes out of a desire to serve something bigger than the individual the chances it will remain healthy increases. Titles can also mean respect irregardless of character but I will never forget what a man by the name of Rick Joyner said years ago, "authority is given not taken" no-one has authority in our lives unless we give them that authority at least when it comes to the heart.

If we do not know who we are, do not have a strong sense of identity then validation becomes the way we identify ourselves rather than an affirmation of what we already know to be true about ourselves. Titles are a result of function not a definition of who we are irregardless of what we do. If we lose our core values and forget to live for something bigger than ourselves we lose purpose and truth. Nothing is worth losing your self-respect. If you lose self-respect you lose self, if you lose self you are in danger of losing direction and purpose.

The greatest difficulty is that men do not think enough of themselves, do not consider what it is they are sacrificing when they follow a herd. Ralph Waldo Emerson. **JL**



Women in Business

# SUCCESS FOUND IN YOUR Yes!



BY LONNIE JULIUS

**As I stand here today with two feet firmly planted in my late thirties, an engagement ring on my finger, and an active 7-year-old running circles around me, a mortgage tugging at my bank account, and career continuing to catapult, I can't help but smile. When the great author of our existence began to write the story of my life I could never imagine the nuances of experience and opportunity mixed with lessons of love.**

**W**hen I glance in the rear-view mirror I cannot believe the terrain of the road I've traveled. I am overwhelmed by the immense favor I have been shown, none of it deserved, but all of it humbly accepted. The secret to success is picking up pebbles of knowledge along life's path and using them to create stepping stones instead of stumbling blocks. We all look at life through a certain lens framed with the influence of our convictions and context and I have learned that it's not the experience itself, but how I allow my experiences to shape my perspective that really matters.

I have always been an eager learner in the IV league of life where people are the best teachers. The lives, legacies and wisdom of those who have gone before has inspired me. Perhaps that is why I began my career in Assisted Living over a decade ago. Over the course of the past three decades I have had the privilege of working with so many unique people of all ages, in all stages of life. From my first job as a Support Counselor in the foster care system in 1999 to accepting my current role as Community Relations Director at The Vistas Assisted Living in 2009, I have had so many incredible opportunities to be stretched and to grow.

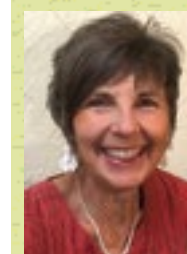
I have always had a heart for people. I remember watching Feed the Children infomercials at 6 years old. I'll never forget watching intently as a woman was handing out porridge. How I desired to be that lady! It wasn't just thinking, it was dreaming it, breathing it and really feeling this passion begin to develop in my six-year-old heart. I never would have thought that I would be able to say, 22 countries and 16 states later, I have stood in that passion and have become that lady. I have visited some of the poorest places in the world and loved on and learned from some of the most inspirational people. From the most remote places of Africa to the most populated city of Bangkok, I have learned so much from so many.

In my current role as mother, soon to be wife, speaker, preacher and career professional I continue to feel the passion that was birthed inside of me so long ago. I have chosen to live as if anything is possible from adopting my son as a single mom, to obtaining a Masters in Psychology proceeded by a TEFL (Teach-

ing English as a Foreign Language) certificate to most recently receiving

The California Assisted Living Association Director of the Year Award. I have chosen to put all my heart, soul and passion into the people I love and the things I do. I live a life of transparency and vulnerability. I have learned to YES to simply gain experience knowing that I may triumph or I may fail but at least I know I tried.

I like many others who wear a multitude of hats can become tired and disenchanted with duties and obligations. It is in these moments I must shift my focus from obligation to opportunity. All too often we are told we have to start saying "no" to things, and though wisdom must rule, when saying no to one thing we must say YES to something else. Something that stirs our passion and reminds us of those little girl dreams, something that teaches us to taste and touch and look and listen and slow and even stop to embrace and experience all that God has for us. **JL**



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# DEVELOPING LIFE-LONG Healthy Friendships

**We've all experienced friendships that began with the joy of sharing and camaraderie just to see them later crash and burn leaving us struggling to trust again. It can feel like it isn't safe to risk giving anyone else access to your heart. But your heart longs for deep connection . We weren't created for isolation and shallow relationships.**



BY CYNDI BARBER

**Cyndi Barber:** is a Pastoral Counselor at Bethel Church Transformation Center where she specializes in relationships and inner healing. She also writes monthly for iMom.com, a parenting website. Her own blog is upandover-comers.com

**H**aving life-long friendships is an invaluable prize. It's a deep connection built over time and deepened through the ups and downs of life. But you ask yourself, "How are these kinds of relationships developed? How can I risk my heart to let people in and minimize the potential damage of unhealthy connections?" Here are a few tips to developing friendships that stand the test of time.

## DON'T GO IN TOO FAST TOO SOON.

Until you really know someone you don't really know someone. Just like it isn't healthy to be wary and resistant to letting people close it equally isn't healthy to pull someone in too close too soon. Until you know a person for awhile you really don't know their capacity for relationship. You can share the evolution of your life story without discussing the pain, fear, and depth of its effect on you. Discussing those details draws someone in to a place of emotional intimacy the new relationship isn't able to bear. As you get to know each other over a span of time you can share more and more deeply.

## BE EQUALLY YOKED.

Years ago farmers plowed fields with oxen who were connected side by side by a yoke around their necks. The success of the task was dependent on the equality of strength of the oxen. Otherwise, the plow would turn in a circle instead of in a straight line. The same principle applies with friendships. Your deepest friendships need to be with people of equal emotional and spiritual strength. This en-

ures you both challenge and encourage each other proportionally without depleting the other.

## DON'T EXPECT THEM TO FILL A VACUUM IN YOUR OWN HEART.

When our heart has been abandoned or abused we may look for someone to fill the void to ease the pain. Deep wounds from our past need to be healed through inner healing, counseling, and connection with God. Treating a gunshot wound with the contents of a first aid kit only stops the bleeding. But the patient requires the removal of the bullet in surgery in order to truly heal. Likewise, plugging a person into the void doesn't heal the wound. True and lasting healing happens through the surgery of the heart. Healthy relationships with people are like the rehab that follows. They push you to recover with full mobility.

## DON'T LOSE YOURSELF IN THE RELATIONSHIP.

Make sure you aren't sacrificing all of your own needs for the sake of the relationship. It's important that you are equally giving and receiving time and energy. Don't volunteer to problem solve for each other before the relationship has more fully developed. It's tempting, as a giving person, to push your way in to the other person's life before you really have a chance to develop the friendship. Continue to get to know each other and to understand how the other person deals with issues in their own life. As the relationship grows you can become more and more involved in each other's lives. **JL**



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BY SHARON HAUGHTON

**Sharon Haughton:** is a writer, motivational speaker, preacher, youth leader, and the list goes on. She has a passion for people, especially young people, and a desire to help those who are in need in any way that she can. She loves the word of Yahweh and she loves using the Word to help others grow to know our Heavenly Father more closely and intimately.

# Beauty FOR ASHES

To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning,  
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness

Some of the most serene islands in the world were formed by volcanic eruptions. Think of the Hawaiian Islands – beautiful landscapes, rich, fertile soil, producing bountiful fruit and breath-taking flowers. Once they were uninhabited, burnt and scarred from the flow of molten rocks, overcome by the blazing heat of an eruption so forceful that nothing could stand in its path. Now a place of bounty, showing very little signs of its past experiences, in fact, using the eruptions to its advantage, creating a soil so rich that only beauty prevails in the place of former desolation.

Volcanic eruptions are usually unexpected. Although people who live in their shadow may have heard of them and felt the tremor of their muted rumblings for a long time, the explosions usually come with a shock and fury of the lava spewing, first up, up, up in the air, then a shower of white, black and red – smoke, dust and fire, falling at great speed and spreading to cover too much ground.

There are some incidents in our lives that are just as explosive. Unexpected, although not unheard of, devastating in their results, leaving emptiness where once there was joy. Events such as the death of a loved one, heartbreak, diagnosis of chronic illness, terror attacks, or a natural disaster – earthquake, hurricane, etc. change the landscape of our lives, erasing the greenery (contentment and success) and leaving only charred

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surfaces and ash (a dull ache and a grey cloud over our days) as we come to terms with the devastation, attempt to redefine ourselves and adjust our perspectives in the context of our new normal.

Remember that the story of the island does not end with the eruption; it is in fact, a continuous creative process. After the burns and scars, after the dust settles, and the rain comes, a new layer is created and the island actually grows – higher and wider, richer for its experience, ready to produce again and to be covered in fresh life.

So it is with our lives, the disruptions were never meant to destroy us. While we may have suffered loss and pain, there is also a work of renewal – an expansion of our previously defined limits and developing strength, which could never have been otherwise uncovered. The result is the creation of a soul so rich, that only bounty will come from it in due time. A bounty grounded in the discovery of our Creator and a trust developed only through experience; an abundance of peace, joy and love that allows us to have compassion for others as they experience eruptions.

In place of the ashes, He gives beauty. Be encouraged. In memory of Keno and Kirk

Beauty for Ashes is something I wrote during a time when our loved one experi-

enced a loss of a friend and family member back in Jamaica from a sudden and tragic car accident. **JL**



## Dear Yvonne

### Q. How can I avoid emotionally unsafe conversations?

When we are aware that a conversation is headed downhill, that is often the Holy Spirit's prompt to initiate appropriate boundaries or, if necessary, to disengage. Other times, there is no warning that another's words would pierce our heart. If you can take a few moments with the Holy Spirit before you react, you have an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to guide your response to remain powerful. Sometimes, no response is necessary, since wisdom shows us that unsafe conversations usually come from unsafe people.

### Q. How do you help someone overwhelmed by worry and anxiety?

A familiar verse (1 Peter 5:7) tells us to give all our worries and cares to God, for He cares about us. Worry and anxiety often challenges our own understanding to solve a dilemma believing the solution rests within our own strength to figure out, rather than trusting that the God who cares for us can be trusted to guide and protect us through the storm. Often times there has been a

history of disappointment and failures that has left someone feeling alone and on their own without support or help. Forgiving those who failed us and healing the wounds and lies believed about God leads us back into a trusted relationship with God, who is the ultimate source of provision and protection.

### Q. My spouse struggles with an addiction and I need some direction.

You must already know something about addiction and feeling the struggle within your marriage. It can be intimidating and scary to think about beginning a conversation with your spouse about how his/her addiction is hurting you or about seeking help. If you want change in your marriage, some discomfort is inevitable – since you're already uncomfortable, why not speak the truth? It would be important for you to get help as well to identify unhealthy patterns and learn positive ways to get your needs met. Recovery can deepen the bonds of marriage. If you both take care of yourself and each other.

*Dear Yvonne is a ministry to those needing help resolving issues of conflict.* Questions may be confidentially emailed to **yvonnem@ibethel.org**. The Joyful Living editorial staff reserves the right to select questions for publication.

Yvonne Martinez has nearly 30 years of experience ministering God's power, healing and freedom. She is an ordained minister and serves as director, pastoral counselor and addictions specialist in the Transformation Center at Bethel Church in Redding, CA. Yvonne is the author of 18 books and educational director of CARE-EDU, a CCAPP/CAADAC approved drug and alcohol certification program, [www.care-edu.com](http://www.care-edu.com). For a personal ministry appointment with Yvonne, call Transformation Center (530)229-7909.



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BY CHRISTY LARGENT

**Christy Largent:** is a professional speaker, writer and TV-Host based in Redding. She is the mother of 2 school aged children and 1 long suffering husband. You can find more of Christy's work at [www.christylargent.com](http://www.christylargent.com) or on Facebook.

# OPPORTUNITY MINDSET

**Final school projects, holiday parties, New Years resolutions and more time together signal the holiday season in our house. My kids are running around like chickens with their heads cut off. In the mornings, my husband can't get out of the chaos fast enough and I'm circling the wagons trying to wring a tiny bit of joy out of all of it.**

Sound familiar? If you have school-aged children, my guess is you have your own winter stories. I find sometimes it's difficult to stay positive and keep living with an Opportunity Mindset™ when there's just so much happening.

What's the Opportunity Mindset™ you ask? It's a simple framework I've found makes everything better. When you live with an Opportunity Mindset, you:

- Stay positive and optimistic
- Overcome obstacles
- Increase your opportunities

Yet when things go crazy and life becomes a struggle, you probably think, but HOW do I do these things? Read on for a few suggestions.

**1. Reframing our thinking will help us stay positive.** Instead of saying "I only have a little bit of money to do all the holiday and New Year shopping," reframe that into "I get to be creative in the way I find all the fun things I need for the people I love." Instead of saying, "My kids are driving me crazy with all the cut paper scraps they leave on the floor after their craft projects," say, "I'm so thankful my kids are creative and find ways to entertain themselves." I think you can see the focus. Intentionally telling yourself a positive story no matter what the circumstances will help you stay in a positive frame of mind.

**2. Take Positive Action.** So often we get stuck talking and thinking about all the difficulties in our life, but the magic happens when we start moving. I've found the best way to overcome obstacles is by taking positive action. Proverbs 14:23 says "All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty." Make a plan around the obstacles and get busy!

**3. Create a focused environment and you'll increase your opportunities.**

I'm laughing as I write this because, as any mother

**4. Knows, focus is something that's sorely lacking in most of our lives.**

But we must get crystal clear on our purpose and goals. When there's a vision for what you are working towards, you will be much more alert for opportunities to get you towards that goal. Proverbs 29:18 says "Without a vision the people perish," and I think whether we're talking about laws to live by or a monthly plan of action, the statement holds true. Get clear on your vision to help you create a focused environment.

So as you move forward during this exciting time of year - take a moment and put yourself into the Opportunity Mindset™. I guarantee it will make that last minute trip to Target much more enjoyable! **JL**

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## VISIT REDDING

# Wine Venues & MANY WINTER ACTIVITIES

BY KALLIE MARKEL

**Redding and the surrounding areas are becoming more and more popular with wine lovers! Shasta County is home to diverse grape varietals of exceptional quality. Thriving vines, combined with determined winemakers, make for award-winning wines and beautiful afternoons spent escaping the valley heat and enjoying unparalleled views.**

Whether you want a pairing recommendation with your meal, a weekend day trip for some tasting, or just a glass with a few friends, Redding and its neighbors have it by the glassful.

In downtown Redding, enjoy a glass while listening to live music at Vintage Wine Bar & Restaurant or across the street at The Grape Escape. Try a pairing at Moonstone Bistro, enjoy a full bodied red with your steak at Market St Steakhouse, or take a date to Moseley's Family Cellars for a tasting.

If you want to get out into the country and see the grapes themselves, there are several wineries in and near Redding. In fact, the Inwood Valley is one of the newest American Viticultural Areas! Anselmo Vineyards & Restaurant is about 30 minutes east of Redding, and Dakaro Cellars is in nearby Whitmore. Alger Vineyards and Cedar Crest are both further into the hills in the Manton area. If you'd rather head west, try Alpen Cellars or One Maple Winery, in Trinity Center and Lewiston, respectively.

Heading south will bring you to Burnsini Vineyards in Cottonwood or Tehama Oaks Winery in Red Bluff. The winemak-

ing monks at New Clairvaux are tucked away in Vina, which is about an hour's drive from Redding. Of course, you can always map out a weekend to see them all!

Redding also celebrates its wine lovers with events like the Beer and Wine Festival, Taste of Redding, and many more! If you came to Redding to stroll the Sundial Bridge or paddle the Sacramento, a great glass of wine if the perfect way to close out a fun day. Cheers!

**A Holiday Experience** (behind Kent's Market, 8080 Airport Rd.) runs from November 25th- December 22nd.

Come select your Christmas tree while enjoying the spirit of Christmas and supporting a local charity by raising awareness and money for Exodus Farms Ministry. Come and enjoy hot cocoa, cider and sweets. Children can come visit with Santa, enjoy pony rides and Christmas carolers. Also:

**The Spirit of Christmas to Library** Park on Saturday, December 17th 1-5pm! We will be celebrating around a Christmas tree, caroling and enjoying hot cocoa. Santa will arrive at the park to help us celebrate. Please bring an unwrapped toy for our toy drive that is being sponsored. **JL**

## VISIT REDDING WINTER ACTIVITIES

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### Dec 16 Classic Film Party: It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

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### Dec 18 Rivercity Jazz Society

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### Dec 21 A Celtic Christmas

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### Jan 21 Vicki Lawrence and Mama

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### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cut raw almonds
- 1 cut unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cut pecans, chopped



### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
2. Spread almonds in an even layer on the prepared baking sheet. Place into oven and bake until toasted, about 10 min. Set aside.
3. In a medium saucepan, combine butter, sugar, vanilla and salt over medium heat. Cook, whisking constantly, until butter has melted and mixture is almond brown in color, about 10-15 minutes.
4. Immediately spread the hot caramel mixture evenly over the almonds. Sprinkle with chocolate chips. After 1-2 minutes spread the chocolate chips in an even layer until smooth. Sprinkle with pecans.
5. Let cool completely, about 2 hours. Break into pieces.

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BY TIFFANY GRIMES

**Tiffany Grimes:** is Founder and Lead Certified Professional Coach with Evolutionary Consulting. She has a rich history of providing powerful trainings to both the private and public sector. Training topics include workplace coaching, emotional intelligence, thriving during organizational change, and intentional leadership. Her focus is to influence human behavior through creating an understanding of modern neuroscience and ancient practices. She holds a Master in Management with a focus on Organizational Leadership. Additionally, she is a Certified Professional Coach.

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# Self-Compassion for Successful Transformation

**According to research most people find self-criticism easier to believe than our own words of self-compassion. Most of us believe that true motivation consists of making ourselves feel so bad that we have no other option but to comply with our goals. If we guilt and shame ourselves enough we'll just have to feel motivated to actually do the thing we strive to do. Right?**

Actually, not only is this line of thinking wrong, it's completely sabotaging our path to true and lasting change. According to research, not only are self-critical people less likely to succeed, we experience larger set backs and are more likely to give up all together. **So just to make that really clear: When I use self-criticism as my motivating factor to influence my behavior in making positive change, I am actually more likely to not just fail, but fail big time, and give up all together.**

When we move from self-criticism, a natural default system of the brain, to self-compassion, we shift brain states and set ourselves up to succeed.

So what is self-compassion? It's NOT not holding ourselves accountable. **We can have self-accountability AND treat ourselves with kindness.** "Self-compassion is extending compassion to one's self in instances of perceived inadequacy, failure, or general suffering" (Neff, 2011). Kristin Neff, a pioneer in the field of self-compassion research suggests that self-compassion is composed of three main elements: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness.

- **Self-Kindness:** See a failure for what it is – a poor choice of behavior. This poor choice of behavior isn't concrete proof that you are stupid and bound for a life of misery. Breathing deeply, remind yourself that you are resilient, loved, and able.

- **Common Humanity:** Every human being on this plant knows what failure and disappointment

feel like. Your setbacks do not make you unique - they make you human.

- **Mindfulness:** Feel failure and stay present with it. By accepting failure you disable its ability to fester into shame and blame. This acceptance allows your brain to stay in thinking mode. In this place you can better accept feedback, brainstorm different choices, and problem-solve new behaviors.

Shifting from self-criticism to self-compassion can be learned.

Here are two activities to get you started:

- **Build Self-Awareness:** Start with simply being aware. Listen to those voices in your head that speak to you. Are they more criticizing or compassionate? When you have a stressor during the day, who (the self-critic or the voice of self-compassion) steps in to "motivate" you? To guide you? To correct your course? What feelings to you feel when you experience failure?

- **Be your own friend:** Consider a failure you've had or one you fear. Write down your own internal dialogue about this failure. What would you say to yourself? Then, pretending a dear friend, a child, or a parent had this same failure, write down how you would approach them about the failure. What would you say to them? Compare the two conversations. Reread what you wrote to your dear friend but replace your name with theirs.

Neff, K. (2011). Self-Compassion: Stop Beating Yourself Up and Leave Insecurity Behind. New York, New York, USA: Harper Collins. JL

# IN A THEATRE NEAR YOU



BY MIKE MAESHIRO

**I've always been sensitive to spiritual atmospheres. In my community, people with this type of spiritual sensitivity are called "feelers."**

Last year, my mom and I went to see the new Star Wars movie, "The Force Awakens." Ugly emotions and desires swirled in the room. As the credits rolled, I became aware of the aftermath weighing on me and I shut down emotionally.

"That was fun!" my mom exclaimed. "Yeah...!" I tried.

If I carelessly express myself in the presence of unwanted spiritual influences, I can accidentally agree with them (like fear, rejection, insignificance, etc..) and give them access to my influence.

I went to the bathroom. When I got out, I found my mom in the lobby talking to a storm trooper.

"Take our picture!" She cheered, handing me her phone.

"Okay..." I agreed.

I just wanted to leave, to get away from people. My mom's delight was keeping me in this unwanted predicament. The resentment was

evident in my voice and body language. I was aware that my attitude was poor but I also felt trapped.

Through years of wrestling with my mother, countless occasions of being embarrassed by her, feeling threatened by her jubilant disposition, feeling resentful for her perceived carelessness and lack of regard for my feelings, I came across broody and angsty because of the clash of our experiences.

Her celebration continued in the car ride home. At a stop light, I looked out the window and confessed, "Mom, I'm sor-

ry, I'm not going to be able to talk about the movie right now. There was a lot going on in that room..."

"Oh, okay." She said, surprised. "What did you feel?"

"All of this fantasy and then disappointment, it was intense. People are supposed to be inspired by the hero's journey but a lot of guys in there were fantasizing about BEING a character in the movie rather than allowing the story to inspire hope and faith in their own stories. There was a violation in the air, they were disconnecting from their own

lives, wishing they were someone else. When the movie ended, their "ordinary, insignificant lives" were coming back into focus. It felt like something was clawing at my soul, trying to get in, something I didn't even want to touch me."

"Wow, our giftings are very different."

"Hahaha!!! THAT'S your response to me right now?"

"Yeah, I just had a good time!"

In this moment, I realized a very specif-

ic dynamic in my relationship with my mom that I never understood before. She couldn't feel all of the swarming emotions and desires, she was just watching a movie. So many times, I felt like she was pushing me into a spotlight I wasn't ready to be under. She would try to connect emotionally and I would interpret her pursuit as selfish, careless and unsafe. Perhaps my mom wasn't as delinquent as I had thought growing up.

I didn't realize the extent our spiritual gifts impacted the way we experienced each other.JL

*People are supposed to be inspired by the hero's journey but alot of guys in there were fantasizing about BEING a character in the movie rather than allowing the story to inspire hope and faith in their own stories.*







# Weak MOMENTS

**It is normal to have weak moments or seasons and that although our society expects perfection, God does not and neither should you. You don't have to expect perfection from yourself and you don't have to expect it from those closest to you. You are not alone.**

**I**t's absolutely okay to go through trials such as mental health issues or addictions or dependency. And these journeys are meant to be part of our stories because it is meant to teach us something very important about ourselves, about those in our circle, and about our loving God. It is meant to shape us and hopefully gently but not always as nicely as hoped for mold us into who we are as a person.

My strength, my passion, my sensitivity, my empathy, my tenacious drive to fight, my kindness, my sincere and genuine heart has been a direct result of things I've been required to experience to make me this exact woman I am today. In this moment of peace and feeling such love and confidence it's easier to speak from a place of security but this wisdom has not been achieved with any ease or level of comfort that I'd ever want to trudge through again or wish anyone to encounter. But I can sit here and tell you with all of my heart that in order for us to be whom we are called to be and achieve not only our wildest dreams but ultimate capabilities, we have to



BY DAWN DANELLE FRANKHOUSER

**DAWN DANELLE FRANKHOUSER, 31,:** has overcome addiction and alcoholism, her mental health illness symptoms, PTSD, and is a survivor of domestic violence. She lives to glorify God, loves spending quality time with her family laughing with deep meaningful conversations, passionate and filled with Love and light resonating and touching everyone around her with peace, comfort, and leaving them knowing they are chosen and deserving of all things good. She advocates for those unaware of their strength and courage to fight against evil and ignorance.

get through some very tough times when we least expect it or feel as if we are able to make it one more day.

My word to you is to trust. Please find the faith inside of you, reach down deep within and grasp that fight you have deep down inside. You are already equipped with everything you will need to make it through the next storm. If you feel like your drowning please know that your lifeline will be immediately available to you when the timing is right for you to reach out and grab it.

You are never alone. I'm here for you. Your family member, spouse, best friend, quiet neighbor is right there for you waiting to you to ask for help. It's totally acceptable and ok for you to ask for assistance. The greatest and strongest people or even physical structures have support. And God is your strongest of allies, Reach out.

I'm not a fan of loneliness. But sometimes when we experience those scary places we can feel like we're all alone. We sit at the end of the bed, or the kitchen counter, or alone at the traffic light and we wonder why no one else understands. We wish for someone, anyone who could.

Sometimes loneliness in this world is the key that opens the door to togetherness with God. When we have no one on earth to turn to, Heaven opens up.

Recently I went to a place of depression and anxiety. Initially, I tried to keep a smile on my face and say all the right things. But God doesn't ask us to get ourselves straight before we run to Him. He wants our honest thoughts and true feelings.

In a moment of transparency I dropped to my knees and said out loud, I hate this place, and I don't want to be here anymore. I found myself all alone on my

*Sometimes loneliness in this world is the key that opens the door to togetherness with God. When we have no one on earth to turn to. Heaven opens up.*

knees before our mighty God, desperate and honest ... and God met me. If loneliness is what brings us to Heaven's door, honesty is the hand that turns the knob. How honest can you be with God? Gut honest. Ugly honest. Every, single thought honest.

We have plenty of options of where to spill our hearts these days. God's throne is the surest place. You can shout or mumble. Cry or grit your teeth. You can even shake your head and with the little strength you have left utter, I don't even know what to pray.

When I cried out to God in my lonely place, He didn't change my assignment. But for the first time in my wrestling and constant struggle I felt a moment of peace.

And now, I'm even a little excited about it ... but let's not get carried away.

Though I may not have immediately experienced a heart shift, I gained confidence that God would go with me. And we can count on that. He will always go with us. JL





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BY HAVILAH CUNNINGTON

# What's In Your Yard?

Children & Parenting, Dating, Identity, Marriage

**For a while I thought being a good follower of Jesus meant saying yes to everyone. I thought I was supposed to help out every time someone asked and take every opportunity to serve. Isn't this what Jesus meant when He said for us to lay our lives down? Wasn't it mean to say "no"?**

This didn't work out well for me though because in the end, it's incredibly stressful and overwhelming to say yes to everyone. I'm going to tell you what I've learned that helps me protect what God holds me responsible for in my own life.

## Cleaning Up Your Yard

A couple years ago, we bought a house with a beautiful yard. Unfortunately, this yard doesn't look beautiful all by itself. There's work that goes into it, and it's our job to make sure it's taken care of. We may try to convince the neighbors to come over and do some yard work, but it probably won't work. What happens in our yard is our responsibility, no one else's.

I'm going to let you in on something: you have a yard too. It's inside of you. Self-control is knowing how to manage your yard. It's having a say in what happens around you.

Now some of us may have crazy yards. It looks like we have no boundaries and all sorts of people and things are in our yard. It may be our mom's feelings, husband's choices, or kids attitudes. You know someone else is in your yard when you feel responsible for their happiness. If they're unhappy, you start running around trying to figure out how to make them happy. You might say, "Ah!! I have to make you happy for things to be okay in my yard!" This is dangerous. We start to sacrifice our bodies, our minds, our wants, and our needs because we're trying to make sure that other person is happy. Instead of stressing over their emotions, a better option would be to recognize that their feelings are not actually in your yard. They have to take ownership for their well-being, just like you have to take ownership for yours.

## Setting Boundaries

So how do we help people out of our yard? By setting boundaries. Prov. 25:8 says, "Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control."

It's our job to have boundaries, to have walls that are healthy around our lives. What does this look like? People are adults, and they can act however they choose, so we can't actually set limits on them. We can set limits on our exposure to people. We can give ourselves space from people who act or react in destructive or unhealthy ways.

Part of being kind to yourself is not giving people full access to you all the time. It's okay to pull back, and say, "I love you, but I need some space here. I'll catch you later." Start to set those boundaries so they don't have access to everything in your life.

When you first start to set boundaries with people, they may not like it. They may even accuse you of not caring or being unloving. When this happens to me, I have to remind myself that I have done nothing wrong. How they choose to respond to me is up to them. How I choose to respond is up to me. I still care about them, but I'm choosing not to give them access to what I hold most precious to me which is the core of who I am. I have to protect that.

*Part of being kind to yourself is not allowing people to have unlimited access to you all the time.*

## Taking Care of Your Emotions

The other way you steward your yard is taking responsibility for your own feelings. You may feel mad, sad, or frustrated, but you have to realize that those emotions are in your yard. No one else is powerful enough to make you feel a certain way. Pull it back, keep it in your yard, and work through it. Ask yourself, "Why am I feeling frustrated? Why am I feeling angry? Why am I feeling like I want to give up?" Figure it out. Sometimes it's just a one day thing that you'll feel better about tomorrow. Other times it might be an unmet need that you have to take care of. Part of stewarding your yard is figuring out how to express your

*We set boundaries in our relationships to protect what God's given us to steward.*

wants and needs and get them met in a "healthy" way.

If your kids are under eighteen and aren't adults, they are supposed to be in your yard. They're

your responsibility to take care of until they grow up and get to have their own yard. The moment you take ownership of the fact that you're a parent is the moment you get the power to do what you're called to do. When I thank God for giving me four healthy boys, He comes in to help me parent them well. In the moment you take ownership, you receive the grace to raise your children and take care of what's in your yard.

We set boundaries in our relationships to protect what God's given us to steward. Taking responsibility for other people's emotions is exhausting. If you feel overwhelmed, you may have some people things in your yard that don't belong there. Loving yourself well is making sure you do what you need to keep yourself healthy and whole. You may get a little resistance from people at first, but in the end you will be able to give your best to people in the times they do have access to you because you valued yourself enough to make sure you're healthy, rested, and whole. JL



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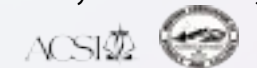
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# HOW BAD DO I WANT IT?



**As a young woman who is passionate about her life in Christ. I aspire to live well and I want to inspire other people to do same.**

BY MICHELLE MBOKS

I have always dreamed of being a whole woman (heart, soul, and mind). As a woman who fears the Lord, I am responsible for the way I live my life. The more I desire God the more I realize I cannot keep entertaining bad habits. Limitations have held me back and have caused me to live without awareness of my purpose for a long time.

After many disappointments, I knew something had to happen in my life. I needed to change. The desire to create a better lifestyle has led me to a journey of discovery. Since I said YES to this journey, I became aware of the person I was created to be and the purpose I had been given on earth.

Choosing to live well is great but learning to take ownership of our lives is what bring fulfillment.

In a few practical steps, this is how I am growing into a whole woman:

#### 1. I connect with God

I start my day by talking to God, journaling and praying. I speak positively about myself by making great declarations of who I am. What I believe about myself affects how I live my life.

#### 2. I connect with myself

There is something about being grateful for who we are. It brings to joy and fulfillment to our souls. Daily heart checks are also a great to stay healthy emotionally.

#### 3. I love myself

There is only one me. I discover my uniqueness and I embrace it

#### 4. I live my own life

I embrace the life God has giving me and I make the most out of it.

#### 4. I embrace my power

I refuse to be a victim. I don't sell myself short. I stand for what I believe and I am responsible for my actions.

#### 5. I own my mistakes

#### 6. I grow into my passions and hobbies

#### 5. I connect with community.

Taking interest into other people is important. I love interacting with other passionate women, sharing experiences and working toward a common goal.

#### 6. I remain graceful

I remind myself daily that it is okay not to have it all together. I don't worry about my shortcomings. I focus on what I have.

Becoming whole is an ongoing process. It's not about being perfect. It is about learning to be who I was designed to be. Viewing my life from God's perspective is important. That is where I find freedom to become fully me. The more my soul prospers, the more my life prospers.

We were all created to be purposeful. We have called to be the best version of ourselves.

Living as a whole woman is not magical! It is a choice. Each one of us has been given the permission to experience wholeness. How badly do you want to it? JL

*I remind myself daily that it is okay not to have it all together. I don't worry about my shortcomings process.*

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