

**Bonni:** [00:00:00] Enough with the theoretical. Let's talk about how we really do personal knowledge management. This is episode 8 of Teaching in Higher Ed.

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**Bonni:** [00:00:24] Welcome to this episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. This is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to increase our personal productivity approaches, so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

**Bonni:** [00:00:47] Hello this is Bonni Stachowiak and I am once again joined by Dave Stachowiak.

**Dave:** [00:00:53] Hello. I'm glad to be back.

**Bonni:** [00:00:54] Today we are continuing on the theme of personal knowledge mastery or management. However if you did not listen to the last episode we will not leave you high and dry.

**Dave:** [00:01:05] We would never do that.

**Bonni:** [00:01:07] Absolutely not. So a quick reminder personal knowledge mastery or management is all about the way that we construct individualized processes to help collect knowledge. At that point it's really usually called information because it doesn't have any meaning to us.

**Bonni:** [00:01:25] Then we curate it so that we're able to find it in the future and it has some meaning for us. And then we create or we share it with others. And so we're going to talk today not about the theory behind that because that was in the last episode but today we're going to look at the practices that Dave and I each use and while we use some of the same tools we also think about this

process different and it meets our needs in different ways so that's why I'm glad to have him back.

**Bonni:** [00:01:52] We're both committed to having lifelong learning and really love the idea of the powerful connections that are out there to be had. And the way that we can really continue to learn and gain access to important ideas and information to each of us.

**Dave:** [00:02:10] Yeah I think it's something that I've thought a lot about in the last year and I feel so much better about my systems now Bonni than I ever did before. I feel like the tools also really align now much more with the strategy I have for this than they used to. So I'm really excited to talk more about it.

**Bonni:** [00:02:29] So let's talk first about "Seek" which this is again Harold Jarche's definition is: seek, sense, and share. Those are the processes that he has defined in the way that he describes personal knowledge mastery. And I use three Cs I use: capture (going out and capturing information). I use curate and I use create.

**Bonni:** [00:02:50] And so let's talk first about how do we go out and seek. Or how do we capture information that's out there. And first I'd like to start by saying there are two broad ways this can be done, so we can go out and we can subscribe to sources of information. And when we subscribe to sources of information what happens then is it gets identified. What we've seen or read since or at least skimmed since the last time we checked in.

**Bonni:** [00:03:22] That's that's one approach to going out and seeking information. Then the other approach is just more of it in the moment. What's happening now I don't necessarily know what's happened since the last time I have gone out and gone through this process and.

**Bonni:** [00:03:40] And so in that particular instance if you happened to be doing this process on a Monday afternoon that's going to look entirely different. What's there then if you look on Tuesday afternoon for example if you subscribe you're going to know if the last time you checked in was Monday afternoon and it's Wednesday afternoon you'll know what's happened since the last time that you checked in.

**Bonni:** [00:03:59] So those are the two broad things I will also mention of course a third is that we can go and search so we could use if we were doing research around a paper we were writing. We could go and search databases for

example and our upcoming guests are actually going to be talking to us more about that.

**Bonni:** [00:04:18] So Dave and I aren't going to discuss that aspect of it too much. I will say one downside to that aspect though to that approach is that you have to know what you're searching for at least to a certain extent versus what Dave and I are going to be describing is a lot more emphasis placed on the sources of what we're connected to what we're either subscribed to or what's called following.

**Bonni:** [00:04:44] And so it's going to be about the relationships and the network of people and sources of knowledge and what they bring to us versus knowing that we were looking for it.

**Dave:** [00:04:56] And one thing that when I was writing down the ways that I seek or capture information Bonni that really came out as a theme with all of them is that I like to have someone have done some curation for me before I go look at something. So the days where I just go click on CNN or go to the New York Times just see what's going on in the world are pretty much gone.

**Dave:** [00:05:21] I really do very little of that. Anything that I have coming in is because I've either identified an individual or a source that has already done some of that work for me as far as curating things and I trust that person or that source already to have found some information and to have done some of that initial leg work for me so that I can take that second step to then decide if this is something that I want to bring into my personal knowledge management system.

**Bonni:** [00:05:48] And even sources like The New York Times for example have ways where you can subscribe just to small pieces of it. So if one thing I liked the topic of psychology on the New York Times. And so I have subscribed just to the psychology feed from the New York Times so I'm not getting the wedding announcements and I'm not getting the sports.

**Bonni:** [00:06:11] I can just get access to that. But what Dave's describing is more from another person who regularly reads The New York Times and has identified some of the best stories out there and you could think about. There are certainly advantages and disadvantages to that. And so Dave and I are both continually over time changing slight tweaks to our system that help really make it even that much more effective for us.

**Bonni:** [00:06:39] And so it's really a nice thing to be able to do. We've shared in the past about some of the sources we've used. But today we're really getting to depth. So let's talk a little bit about how we do this so for me I tend more toward subscription based methods of seeking. So I use a service called Feedly.

**Bonni:** [00:07:01] Feedly and we'll have all of these links by the way Dave and I are going to talk about a lot of different services. So if one of them sounds good to you or you want to follow up you're going to have that in the show notes for you. So Feedly is a way of subscribing to different feeds. We used to subscribe to newspapers they'd show up at our door.

**Bonni:** [00:07:22] In this case we subscribe to specific sections of a newspaper for example that we might want to get and instead of showing up to our front porch it shows up inside of Feedly. Now Feedly is also a service that will track things like what I have read since the last time I was there.

**Bonni:** [00:07:44] And so as an example in a recent class that I taught I assigned blogs as one of their assignments. And so I subscribed to each student's blog and every time they posted something new to their blog I would be able to see I had a feed category inside of Feedly a category that was the name of that class. And so every time they posted I would see 2, 9, 12.

**Bonni:** [00:08:12] You could sort of see it got it got close to when the due date was like. So there was a little bit of procrastination going on there because the numbers will start to get pretty big and I could go when I could click and I could read each one and make comments and then sort of reset that because after I've read it it's marked as read unless I go back and manually say mark it as unread.

**Bonni:** [00:08:34] But it's tracking that and I mentioned Feedly as the main source that's tracking what I am subscribed to so I want to subscribe to something new. I go back to Feedly.com. I log in and I say I want to subscribe to this or I recently unsubscribed from things that we've talked about that in the last episode me and subscribing from some of the top news stories that were redundant to other sources so that's where I do that.

**Bonni:** [00:09:00] But where I do my reading is in a program an app called Newsify. That's where I do all of my actual reading. Feedly is working in the background but I just like the reading experience of Newsify there also is an app by the way for Feedly I like Newsify originally Feedly didn't have a night time reading that had that dark black screen with the white letters I could really

lower the light that was admitting when I read at night. So I just have I've gotten used to Newsify and it meets my needs.

**Dave:** [00:09:35] Yeah and I also use Feedly as my back end system just like you do Bonni, even though use some other apps and I do it is the system that I subscribe to RSS feeds real simple syndication and the one difference I do with RSS feeds than you do with Feedly is I probably subscribe to less know how many you- I probably have 20 or 30 subscriptions at most and I don't usually subscribe to anything that's like a major publication or even a section like the New York Times psychology section or anything like that.

**Dave:** [00:10:07] I kind of go on the philosophy that if there's something good that's in that I still read The New York Times but it's because someone else already recommended it or someone else found it. So my subscriptions tend to be individual blogs people that I trust and I like and I know are finding good content out there and those are generally the ways I'll end up reading a New York Times article or something like that because someone else passed it along.

**Dave:** [00:10:28] But I really try to keep those those limited and I also try to limit things I subscribe to to people who only post once or twice a day. I can't handle the 30 or 40 things in a feed in a day I just never I'd never keep up so I to not subscribe to those pretty quickly if there there's a feed that's really busy.

**Bonni:** [00:10:45] Dave mentioned RSS which is really simple syndication and on almost any website you visit today you'll see the orange icon with what looks like sound amplifying out and so when you see that orange icon you will have this in the show notes so you can see a graphic if you can't quite picture what I'm talking about.

**Bonni:** [00:11:06] But when you go when you click on one of those icons that takes you to a page that is oftentimes looks like a bunch of coding text that won't make a lot of sense to you. But if you copied the URL or the link to that page and then pasted it into Feedly when you went to add content it would then subscribe you to that blog. And then allows you to as I mentioned organize it into categories in that type of thing

**Dave:** [00:11:35] And you can search directly on it. You go to the Feedly website and search for a blog and oftentimes it'll pop up right there. Don't even have to do that piece of it. And I should mention to Bonni the apps I use for reading RSS. I use an app on the iPad called Mr Reader which is fabulous. It has tons of

options and integrations for how you read and how you connect with other sources which will become important a moment

**Dave:** [00:11:56] And then on the iPhone I use an app called Unread which is a really simple reading app that makes it look really easy and nice to read and they all sync back to Feedly so if I read something in one place it syncs it everywhere else.

**Bonni:** [00:12:07] That's what makes it so nice as you can find the service that works best for you and Feedly talks to all of those services and in fact than whatever the services that you're using often talks to other tools as well for when you want to save whatever it is you're reading when you want to read it later or when you want to share it with others

**Bonni:** [00:12:26] So it's a great way of integrating. If this is all sounding overwhelming to you just get started with Feedly don't worry about these other services. You can get really comfortable setting up your system for seeking for capturing what's out there inside of Feedly doing some reading doing some saving and then as you get more comfortable with it. Add in some of the ancillary services. But but Feedly's going to get the job done for you well.

**Dave:** [00:12:52] I think we talked on a previous episode about Dave Pell's NextDraft subscription. Did we mention that?

**Bonni:** [00:12:57] Yes that was my recommendation.

**Dave:** [00:12:59] Yeah. So this is a fabulous newsletter comes out just about every day. I think we mentioned on the last episode or previous that is one that I've read that's a guy who does this curation everyday of all the stuff that's going on online and that's what I always read every single line of almost.

**Dave:** [00:13:15] So that's that's one way I get information and then another way that I get information going back to trusting single sources is podcasts. So I tend to look at. I love listening on the road and listening by audio. Some people don't like listening by audio so podcasts aren't aren't your thing.

**Dave:** [00:13:36] But for those who do like listening for podcasts I mean I'm biased obviously I have a podcast and when we do podcasting you're listening to a podcast. But but even long before that I've probably listened for 10 years and it's a great way to get access to information and the app, There's a new

app out called Overcast which I think is really cool I've been messing around with

**Dave:** [00:13:58] But Instacast and Downcast are also great. And then Apple has its own free app just called podcasts that you can get on the App Store as well. So that's those are things to check out if you're into podcasts a great way to get information from someone who's spent some time thinking through putting together really good content there are some great podcasts out there. Almost all of them are free

**Bonni:** [00:14:19] And I will put in the show notes I've written a blog post about what podcasts that I most enjoy listening to in case you're looking for other shows that you might want to start subscribing to. So that was a little look at things that Dave and I subscribe to and that if we go in on a Monday afternoon and we might have 500 stories or a thousand stars it just depends on how long it's been since the last time we were up there checking.

**Bonni:** [00:14:46] There are some times that either of us will need to hit the reset button. What does that mean. We just mark everything as read and start over again. There's nothing wrong with doing that we are not going to miss out on something important that's happened if it's that important we'll be able to see it

**Bonni:** [00:15:00] And so that that is an option. I don't find myself doing that that often. Although for example I have a category in my feeds called marketing. And so in the fall I'm actually not teaching a principles of marketing class. Not until the spring.

**Bonni:** [00:15:16] That tends to be one that if especially because I have been on maternity leave in the spring and only taught a technology and leadership class over the summer so it's going to be awhile before I teach principles it is not going to be till January I don't need to have current current current examples of what's happening.

**Bonni:** [00:15:32] That tends to be a category that I will go and mark all as read if it gets over 100 I just don't want to go in there it's not that relevant to me right now. But there are especially since I refined my news category that now I feel like I really have tweaked it enough to just have the top stories that I want to be aware of and I don't find myself going and marking as many as read.

**Bonni:** [00:15:57] I think I may need to go revisit my business category because it gets a little overwhelming too and the better we are at thinking about doing less

that we're subscribe to. But but then the ones that you see they stand out more to you.

**Dave:** [00:16:12] Can I mention a couple of other ways that I find information I know we want to get on to talking about the next steps here toward what you just said. As far as kind of more the informal ways Twitter is great for me and I only follow about 70 people on Twitter are a lot more people follow me but I really I find that I can manage just watching a small number of folks and they get those are people I trust. I know they're talking about things that are generally interesting to me.

**Bonni:** [00:16:36] So Twitter is a little bit different than Twitter. We don't we follow people but when you go up and look at Twitter it doesn't tell you here's what you've what's happened since the last time you were here because you'd be reading all day. So a lot more frequency of posts happens on a tool like Twitter and even if you're only following a low number like Dave mentioned 70 it isn't like Dave is reading every single tweet from all 70 of those people he's saying he does.

**Dave:** [00:17:03] Well I actually do most of the time if someone if one of those 70 people does because my might I use a tweet bot and it does track where I last watched. So I don't always do that but but most of the time most of the week I actually do see everything from those people that fall and that's why I keep my followers pretty low because those are people I'm actually really interested in what they're talking about.

**Bonni:** [00:17:23] I'm following about 190 and I am not able to follow that.

**Dave:** [00:17:26] You can't tell without 190.

**Bonni:** [00:17:27] And I will also say that one of the things that I am really enjoying is instead of just the on off switch of following people or not. I have that approximately 190 but I'm also beginning to curate what are called lists and a list could be a group of people that I want to follow for example when they teach the doctoral class on education and technology they they're all expected to tweet and to blog.

**Bonni:** [00:17:54] And so I have just for that given class so I can make sure and see what's going on. And there there's I do read every single tweet that they do during those classes. But then I also can I'm really a big fan of Profhacker on the

Chronicle of Higher Ed. I love what they have to say so I have a list just of the writers that write for that particular blog

**Bonni:** [00:18:18] And then you could also subscribe to other people's list so there's a guy out there I can't remember who he is but he created a list of all of the major centers for teaching and learning at institutions of higher ed across the U.S. so I can go out and follow what those conversations are happening there with regards to faculty development.

**Dave:** [00:18:38] Oh cool we should find that and put in the show notes too because some of the folks would really be interested.

**Bonni:** [00:18:44] Definitely put the lists up there that I have both created as well as ones I've just subscribed to.

**Dave:** [00:18:49] There are so many creative things you can do with Twitter I use it really simply. I just follow my 70 people and I'm done. But you can create lists you can do all that kind of stuff and really think strategically about how you're using it. My minds just not complicated enough to do that I don't know maybe just my mind's too simple. I like to keep it simple.

**Bonni:** [00:19:06] So we also have another service that is for when you get to one of those stories and you really want to read it but just don't have time to read it right now called Pocket. And we've talked about Pocket in previous episodes and Pocket is great. It's one of the many Read it later services.

**Bonni:** [00:19:22] And so it's a way of just having a manila folder of stuff you want to read later on. You can categorize it with tags you can save things there too. But I tend to save things in the bookmark service that I've talked about in previous episodes and just have it as a ongoing list of stuff to read.

**Bonni:** [00:19:39] And we've talked about it previously so I won't spend too much time there

**Dave:** [00:19:43] And I'm not sure if this is a a seek or a sense item, Bonni. But one thing that I do - and I'm starting to do more and more religiously - I did at church this morning (Hehe. Get it? Religiously?). I use an app called Drafts and I know you use to, and the way I use drafts is any time I hear something someone says something to me something comes up in conversation and I'm sitting in a lecture or whatever.

**Dave:** [00:20:13] And I'm like oh that would be good to follow up on or that gave me an idea that I should go read this book or that gave me an idea of an article I mentioned I used the church morning I was being serious because our pastor gave this great sermon this morning and is halfway through the sermon I was like, "Oh that gives me a great idea to write a blog post on something related to this."

**Dave:** [00:20:32] And I pulled out my phone which you're probably not supposed to church, but I did. And in the Drafts app I put a quick note to myself and put it right away because I wanted to remember and I knew if I didn't write it down right at that moment I would forget it. And so I've disciplined myself any time during the day someone says something really smart or insightful or I think about something and I don't have the time right Then that process said or put it in another system I just put it all in Drafts

**Dave:** [00:20:56] And then twice a week I've got a reminder in my task management system to go into drafts and they'll look at everything and usually about a third of the things each week I file for you know in my task management system about a third of them I put into my to write or podcast about at some point in the future and then usually about a third of them I delete and I say you know wasn't actually really that great thought after all.

**Bonni:** [00:21:18] After we have gone to the seek process, it's now time to sense to make meaning of what has been collected and we want to curate it so that it doesn't only make sense now but in the future we'll have a way to be able to revisit it and to look more holistically at that which we have gathered.

**Bonni:** [00:21:37] So we have a couple of options here we can actually archive the content itself. So you go and you find a New York Times article that's really of interest and you don't just want to link back to it on the web but you actually want the text and the images to be stored somewhere that's not on the New York Times website.

**Bonni:** [00:21:59] That's when you're going to want a a program that will actually save it. And Dave has mentioned that his bookmark system does both it bookmarks the link but it also copies the article and the and the graphics and all of that to a separate place in case the New York Times changes their link or one day goes out of business. That type of thing.

**Bonni:** [00:22:19] So Dave has mentioned this in previous shows we're not going to spend a lot of time on his services called Pinboard and does archive it. My

service is called Delicious.com. It just bookmarks the link does not archive it but if I ever want to archive it I use a notebook program called Evernote

**Bonni:** [00:22:38] And we will actually be doing entire shows on Evernote because it's a wonderful resource for people who teach in higher ed but just know that it will allow me to from inside of my web browser as I'm looking at that New York Times article just click a button and it automatically save it in whatever format I want just the words of the words and the graphic or the actual page and I can tag it and categorize it All right From there.

**Dave:** [00:23:02] And one thing that's true of both of our systems is that we both use tagging extensively. So when we put something either in Delicious or Pinboard we tag it. So if we're going to use it for future class we tag it with that class code.

**Dave:** [00:23:13] For me, I tag specific topics if there is an article that has a research research articles as a part of it. I'd use the tag research so I can pull up something by topic and then I know that there's research links in there too so I can search by those if I'm looking for something that's more academic based.

**Dave:** [00:23:29] So there's there's lots of great ways to do that to really have a library where you can get that go and you've got access to that information at the time that you need it.

**Bonni:** [00:23:39] And whenever I am reading I also might tag something if it bridges onto a blog idea that I have I can save it under a tag that I have just for those types of topics

**Dave:** [00:23:50] And that's where I use Evernote, Bonni. It's a either an idea from an article or from drafts or something that comes up in conversation. I have a running list in Evernote that says blog ideas and then there's a list that says podcast ideas. So I just add those in.

**Bonni:** [00:24:05] The next phase that we go through is the actual sharing of what we have and it's not sharing exactly what we found because otherwise we're adding no value to it but it's us adding our own value. Maybe we're blogging and linking back to the original source. Maybe we are sending a tweet but we are saying wow number 8 really stood out for me on this list, or this is something really important to think about.

**Bonni:** [00:24:30] We're adding our own twist to it. And so this is when we either share or create both Dave and I blog when it comes to blogging. The the most widely used blogging platform is called WordPress. Anyone listening could go to WordPress.com and set up your own free Wordpress blog if you got serious about it. You're going to want what's called a self-hosted Wordpress blog.

**Bonni:** [00:24:55] And that is where you get a little bit more sophisticated and have your own domain name where it's in my case teachinginhighered.com instead of teachinginhighered.WordPress.com and has a lot more options for you to be able to customize. And so I will link in the show notes to the easiest way to get started if you're interested in doing your own self-hosted WordPress and it is a guy by the name of Michael Hyatt. He has a 20 minute free tutorial how to get started with WordPress.

**Bonni:** [00:25:27] Dave and I have both mentioned Twitter we're both up there I'll link to both of our Twitter accounts up there in case you're interested in following us and seeing what we have to share and an emerging method of sharing is really happening on LinkedIn as well they've started their own publishing engine and so you can apply to publish within LinkedIn and have access to a really hungry pretty darned big audience there

**Bonni:** [00:25:49] I just recently subscribed to a group which is different than the publishing platform. But there's a group on LinkedIn for technology using professors which are linked to in the show notes and if you are actually a professor not a vendor but someone who teaches in the higher ed either as an adjunct or a resident faculty member you can join the group. And there are over 12,000 people that are on that group the last time I looked.

**Bonni:** [00:26:12] So lots happening there with abilities for us to share what we're learning with each other

**Dave:** [00:26:17] And I think the key is is adding something unique when you do go out and share content like you said not just passing it along. Although there are times certainly both of us will do that but if it's a list of 7 or 8 things here's the one that really spoke to me as a comment like if I share an article on our Facebook fan page for coaching for leaders I usually write something before it I'll say this article really made me think about this

**Dave:** [00:26:40] And something that really A makes people realize actually read it because there's so much sharing that goes on that people There has been

some interesting studies of this how much more you share the less likely it is that you've actually read the things you're sharing.

**Dave:** [00:26:53] There's all these correlations which is interesting. So I want to demonstrate trust that I've actually read what I'm sharing but also it gives people my unique perspective on this article even though I didn't write it. Here's what I think about it and here's what it got me. Here's where I thought it was going to be of value to my audience. So I try to do that too. Same thing with blogging and podcasting of having to way that in different venues where people are comfortable of engaging with me in that way.

**Bonni:** [00:27:20] Anything else to add on how you share?

**Dave:** [00:27:23] I think the only other thing I'd mention is there's some real passive voice I share too so my Pinboard account for example is for is completely off of open and available to anyone. Lookout so it's at [coachingforleaders.com/Pinboard](http://coachingforleaders.com/Pinboard) and I know you make your Delicious account open Bonni, so someone can go and look in my Pinboard library and look up a tag.

**Dave:** [00:27:45] Anything I've tagged on leadership for example and see all the 40 articles or whatever I've got there. So they've they can essentially tap into my own personal knowledge management system and see what it is that I'm tagging. I mean you can control how much people have access to that but I just I think it's really valuable for people to have that access and there's nothing up there that I put there that's insensitive or if it was I wouldn't post it up there.

**Dave:** [00:28:09] But I think that's a really nice way just in a passive way for people to be able to get access to what I'm thinking and what's of value to to them.

**Bonni:** [00:28:18] So this is the time in the show when we each share a recommendation. And Dave you have a recommendation for listeners today.

**Dave:** [00:28:24] I do I use an app called TextExpander and this is a app that is going to be Mac only Mac and iOS devices only. But if you do use a Mac or an IRS device TextExpander is a fantastic program and the best way to describe it is it allows you to create a short what they would call a snippet of of keyboard strokes that expanded to something larger.

**Dave:** [00:28:47] So for example when I am signing an email I have a number of different things that I do in the professional world. So I have a where for a trainee business I do some consulting work I run a podcast I do some teaching part time so my signature looks different depending on who I'm emailed to and from what account.

**Dave:** [00:29:08] So when I'm emailing something for my Dale Carnegie work I just type at the bottom of the email D S I G as in Dale Carnegie signature DSI G and that expands into it says Dave Stachowiak Dale Carnegie all the contact information that I would have and my signature line

**Dave:** [00:29:26] When I am responding to a client request for information about how to register for a course. I've already written that email once and I just type in Z register request or something like that. I can't remember exactly which one I do and it populates the entire email with all of that in there so it basically allows you to create things. Anything you do on a regular basis or you write on a regular basis.

**Dave:** [00:29:49] You can create a small keyboard stroke for it and it works across all of your programs and apps and when you type that in it automatically puts in that information there so it saves a ton of time and I'm using it more and more everyday. And it's also available on iOS devices too so check it out TextExpander it's called.

**Bonni:** [00:30:07] I will do my recommendation for all of our PC listening friends and that is you won't be looking for TextExpander but look for Breevy I'll put it in the show notes and you can have access to the same kind of tool Dave just described above for our PC users and the show notes by the way are going to be at [teachinginhighered.com/8](http://teachinginhighered.com/8) because we are on Episode 8

**Dave:** [00:30:32] And only will take a probably about an hour and half for you to write all of the links we've talked about here today.

**Bonni:** [00:30:38] It's going to be fun though it.

**Dave:** [00:30:40] Will be fun.

**Bonni:** [00:30:42] Thanks so much for joining us today. And if you haven't already subscribe to our weekly update. That's how you can get our free EdTech essentials guide 19 tools that will help you be more efficient and effective in your teaching. So get to a little bit using technology some more.

**Bonni:** [00:30:59] So please sign up for the weekly update because it also sends a weekly article and this shows so you don't have to remember to go check them out right into your inbox.

**Dave:** [00:31:09] It's almost like you have a system for sharing with people like we talked about.

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