

am i bipolar or waking up

Am I Bipolar or Waking Up? Understanding Emotional Shifts and Mental Health

am i bipolar or waking up—this question might cross your mind during moments when your emotions feel intense, unpredictable, or unusually heightened. It's a deeply personal and often confusing experience to navigate the boundary between mental health conditions like bipolar disorder and natural shifts in awareness or personal growth, sometimes described as "waking up." Understanding the difference can be challenging but incredibly important for your well-being.

In this article, we'll explore what it means to experience mood fluctuations, how to distinguish between bipolar disorder and personal awakening, and practical insights to help you make sense of your emotional landscape. Along the way, we'll touch on related topics such as mood swings, mental health awareness, emotional regulation, and self-discovery.

What Does It Mean to "Wake Up" Emotionally or Spiritually?

Before diving into the clinical aspects, it's helpful to clarify what people often mean by "waking up." This term can refer to a variety of experiences, including spiritual awakening, increased self-awareness, or a profound shift in perspective about life and oneself.

Signs of Waking Up

When someone feels like they are waking up, they might notice:

- Heightened sensitivity to emotions and surroundings
- Increased empathy and compassion
- A strong desire for authenticity and meaningful connections
- Periods of intense reflection or questioning of old beliefs
- Feeling more connected to a purpose or inner truth

These experiences can sometimes feel overwhelming or confusing, especially if they come on suddenly. However, they tend to be accompanied by a sense of

growth or positive transformation, even if it feels uncomfortable at first.

Understanding Bipolar Disorder: Symptoms and Patterns

Bipolar disorder is a mental health condition characterized by significant mood swings that include emotional highs (mania or hypomania) and lows (depression). It affects millions of people worldwide and can vary in severity and presentation.

Recognizing the Symptoms of Bipolar Disorder

Some common signs of bipolar disorder include:

- Manic episodes: feeling euphoric, overly energetic, needing less sleep, racing thoughts, impulsive behavior
- Depressive episodes: persistent sadness, fatigue, feelings of hopelessness, loss of interest in activities
- Rapid mood changes that interfere with daily functioning
- Difficulty maintaining relationships or work due to mood instability

Unlike the emotional shifts during a spiritual or personal awakening, bipolar disorder symptoms are more cyclic and can cause significant distress and impairment.

Types of Bipolar Disorder

It's useful to know there are different types of bipolar disorder:

1. **Bipolar I Disorder:** Characterized by full manic episodes that last at least seven days or are severe enough to require hospitalization, often alternating with depressive episodes.
2. **Bipolar II Disorder:** Involves hypomanic episodes (less severe mania) and depressive episodes.
3. **Cyclothymic Disorder:** Milder mood swings that don't meet full criteria for mania or depression but persist for at least two years.

If you suspect you or someone you know might have bipolar disorder, seeking professional evaluation is crucial for accurate diagnosis and treatment.

Am I Bipolar or Waking Up? How to Tell the Difference

This question often stems from the confusion between intense emotional or mental experiences and clinical symptoms. Here are some considerations to help differentiate:

Duration and Pattern

- Bipolar mood episodes tend to last days to weeks and follow recognizable patterns.
- Awakening or spiritual experiences may come in waves but are less likely to follow a strict cycle.

Impact on Daily Life

- Bipolar disorder often disrupts daily functioning, relationships, and work.
- Waking up might cause discomfort but usually leads toward growth and improved life satisfaction.

Nature of Experiences

- Mania includes risky behaviors, grandiosity, and sometimes psychosis.
- Spiritual or personal awakening usually involves increased mindfulness, self-awareness, and clarity.

Emotional Stability Over Time

- Bipolar disorder involves extreme highs and lows.
- Waking up might cause emotional sensitivity but generally promotes increased emotional regulation over time.

Why Is It Important to Understand These

Differences?

Misinterpreting mood changes can lead to unnecessary fear or neglect of important mental health needs. For example, assuming mood swings are just part of “waking up” might delay seeking treatment for bipolar disorder, which can worsen outcomes.

Conversely, labeling profound personal growth as bipolar disorder might cause undue stress and reliance on medical interventions that aren’t needed.

When to Seek Professional Help

If you experience:

- Persistent mood swings that impair your functioning
- Episodes of mania or depression lasting more than a few days
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- Confusion about your reality or psychotic symptoms

It’s essential to consult a mental health professional for assessment and guidance.

Supporting Your Mental Health During Emotional Shifts

Whether you’re navigating bipolar disorder, waking up, or both, some strategies can promote well-being:

Maintain a Routine

Sticking to regular sleep, eating, and activity patterns helps stabilize mood and energy levels.

Practice Mindfulness and Meditation

These practices foster present-moment awareness and can ease emotional

intensity.

Connect with Supportive People

Talking with trusted friends, family, or support groups can provide perspective and reduce isolation.

Educate Yourself

Understanding bipolar disorder, spiritual awakening, and mental health empowers you to recognize signs and seek help when necessary.

Seek Professional Guidance

Therapists, psychiatrists, or counselors can offer tools and treatments tailored to your experience.

Embracing Your Journey: Balance Between Awareness and Care

The path of self-discovery and mental health awareness is rarely linear. You might find that your experiences incorporate elements of both waking up and bipolar disorder, or that clarity emerges gradually.

Remember, asking “am i bipolar or waking up” is a brave and important step toward understanding your inner world. Taking time to observe your feelings with compassion and curiosity, and reaching out for support when needed, can help you navigate this journey with resilience.

Whether you are embracing a new level of consciousness or managing a mental health condition, your experience is valid and deserving of attention. Finding balance, meaning, and peace in your emotional life is possible—and you don’t have to do it alone.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I tell if I am bipolar or just experiencing

normal mood swings after waking up?

Bipolar disorder involves distinct periods of mania or hypomania and depression that last for days or weeks, whereas normal mood swings after waking up are usually brief and situational. If your mood changes are severe, persistent, and impact your daily life, it may be worth consulting a mental health professional.

Is feeling very energetic and happy right after waking up a sign of bipolar disorder?

Feeling energetic and happy upon waking can be normal, but in bipolar disorder, such elevated moods (mania or hypomania) are typically more intense, last longer, and may include risky behavior or irritability. Occasional good moods alone do not indicate bipolar disorder.

Can bipolar disorder symptoms be mistaken for just feeling groggy or disoriented when waking up?

Yes, some bipolar symptoms like irritability or mood changes can be confused with grogginess or sleep inertia. However, bipolar symptoms are more pervasive and affect your mood and behavior throughout the day, not just upon waking.

Should I track my mood throughout the day to differentiate between bipolar disorder and normal mood changes after waking?

Yes, keeping a detailed mood diary that tracks your emotions, energy levels, and behaviors throughout the day can help identify patterns consistent with bipolar disorder. Sharing this information with a healthcare provider can aid in accurate diagnosis.

Can sleep patterns help determine if I am bipolar or just experiencing mood changes when waking?

Sleep disturbances are common in bipolar disorder, including reduced need for sleep during manic phases or excessive sleep during depressive phases. If your sleep patterns fluctuate significantly along with mood changes, it could indicate bipolar disorder.

Is it normal to feel depressed or anxious immediately after waking, and how is this different from bipolar disorder?

Many people experience temporary feelings of depression or anxiety upon waking, often due to stress or poor sleep. In bipolar disorder, depressive

episodes are more severe, last longer, and are accompanied by other symptoms like changes in appetite, energy, and concentration.

When should I seek professional help to determine if I am bipolar or just experiencing waking-related mood changes?

If your mood changes are intense, last more than a few days, disrupt your daily functioning, or include symptoms like extreme highs and lows, impulsivity, or suicidal thoughts, you should seek professional evaluation promptly to get an accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

Additional Resources

Am I Bipolar or Waking Up? Exploring Emotional Shifts and Mental Health Awareness

am i bipolar or waking up – this question often emerges from a place of confusion and introspection when individuals experience intense shifts in mood, energy, and perspective. Understanding whether these changes signal a mental health condition like bipolar disorder or represent a profound personal awakening is crucial for seeking appropriate support and fostering self-awareness.

In recent years, the conversation around mental health has expanded, encouraging people to explore their emotional states more openly. However, distinguishing between psychiatric conditions and transformative life experiences remains a complex process that requires careful examination. This article delves into the nuances of bipolar disorder symptoms, the psychological concept of “waking up,” and how to navigate the blurred lines between them.

Understanding Bipolar Disorder: Key Features and Diagnostic Criteria

Bipolar disorder is a mood disorder characterized by significant fluctuations in mood, energy, and activity levels. These fluctuations manifest in episodes of mania or hypomania and periods of depression. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), outlines criteria for bipolar I and bipolar II disorders, emphasizing the intensity and duration of mood episodes.

Manic and Hypomanic Episodes

Manic episodes involve elevated or irritable mood lasting at least one week, accompanied by symptoms such as:

- Increased self-esteem or grandiosity
- Decreased need for sleep
- More talkative than usual
- Flight of ideas or racing thoughts
- Distractibility
- Increased goal-directed activity or psychomotor agitation
- Engagement in risky behaviors

Hypomanic episodes are similar but less severe and last at least four days. These symptoms can cause noticeable changes but typically do not lead to severe impairment or hospitalization.

Depressive Episodes

Depressive episodes in bipolar disorder include:

- Depressed mood most of the day
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities
- Significant weight change or appetite disturbance
- Sleep disturbances
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- Diminished ability to think or concentrate
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

The cyclical nature of bipolar disorder—shifting between manic/hypomanic and depressive episodes—is a hallmark of the condition and differentiates it from other mood disorders.

“Waking Up”: A Psychological and Spiritual Perspective

The phrase “waking up” often describes an awakening process characterized by heightened awareness, personal growth, or spiritual enlightenment. Unlike bipolar disorder, which is a clinically recognized mental health condition, waking up is more subjective and can manifest differently depending on individual experiences.

Signs of Waking Up

People undergoing a personal awakening might notice:

- Increased mindfulness and presence
- Shift in values and priorities
- Heightened emotional sensitivity and empathy
- Questioning previously held beliefs and assumptions
- A sense of interconnectedness with others and the world
- Periods of intense emotional release or catharsis
- Desire for authenticity and self-expression

These experiences can sometimes involve emotional intensity, which may superficially resemble mood swings but typically lack the disruptive patterns seen in bipolar disorder.

The Overlap: Emotional Intensity vs. Clinical Symptoms

One reason people ask themselves, “am i bipolar or waking up” stems from overlapping experiences of emotional highs and lows. Both bipolar disorder and awakening processes can involve mood fluctuations, but the underlying

causes and implications differ significantly.

- **Duration and Pattern:** Bipolar mood episodes have defined durations and recurrent cyclical patterns, whereas waking up is more fluid and progressive without predictable mood cycles.
- **Functional Impact:** Bipolar disorder often impairs social, occupational, or personal functioning; awakening tends to enhance self-awareness and life satisfaction, despite temporary discomfort.
- **Response to Treatment:** Bipolar disorder typically requires medical intervention, including mood stabilizers and therapy, while waking up may benefit from practices like meditation, journaling, or spiritual counseling.
- **Triggers:** Bipolar episodes can be triggered by biological, genetic, or neurochemical factors, whereas waking up is frequently catalyzed by life events, trauma, or intentional self-reflection.

When to Seek Professional Help

Navigating the distinction between bipolar disorder and a psychological awakening can be challenging without expert guidance. If mood swings interfere with daily functioning, relationships, or safety, consulting a mental health professional is essential.

Indicators Suggesting Bipolar Disorder

- Extreme mood changes lasting days or weeks
- Periods of high energy accompanied by impulsive or risky behavior
- Persistent depressive symptoms with suicidal thoughts
- Family history of bipolar disorder or other mood disorders
- Difficulty maintaining employment or social relationships due to mood instability

Signs of a Non-Clinical Awakening Process

- Gradual shifts in perspective and emotional depth
- Increased motivation for self-improvement and spiritual growth
- Temporary emotional discomfort that resolves with coping strategies
- Enhanced sense of meaning and purpose
- Interest in mindfulness and holistic wellness practices

The Role of Self-Reflection and Support Networks

Whether grappling with bipolar disorder or experiencing a profound awakening, self-reflection and supportive communities play a vital role. Journaling emotions, tracking mood patterns, and discussing experiences with trusted individuals can provide clarity.

Support groups, mental health professionals, spiritual mentors, and trusted friends can offer insight, validation, and guidance. The journey toward understanding oneself is rarely linear, and having a network encourages resilience and informed decision-making.

Emerging Research and Future Directions

Recent studies highlight the importance of personalized assessment in differentiating mood disorders from spiritual or psychological growth phenomena. Researchers are exploring biomarkers for bipolar disorder and developing more nuanced diagnostic tools to reduce misdiagnosis.

On the other hand, the field of transpersonal psychology seeks to understand awakening experiences within a scientific framework, emphasizing integrative approaches to mental health that respect both clinical and existential dimensions.

As awareness grows, the conversation around “am i bipolar or waking up” encourages a more compassionate and comprehensive understanding of human emotional complexity.

In this evolving landscape, individuals are empowered to approach their

experiences with curiosity rather than fear, seeking professional help when necessary while honoring the transformative potential of emotional and spiritual growth.

[Am I Bipolar Or Waking Up](#)

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am i bipolar or waking up: [The Body of Chris](#) Chris Cole, 2015-09-01 Finalist in Religious Non-Fiction and Spirituality for 2016 Next Generation Indie Book Awards Struggling with lifelong disordered eating and adolescent addiction, Chris Cole had his first psychotic episode at the age of eighteen, suddenly believing he was the Second Coming of Christ. He lost his identity and tried to perform miracles and was ultimately arrested in the lobby of his college dormitory—all while convinced he was being taken to his crucifixion. Even when sanity returned, he could not help but contemplate God's involvement. For years, Chris danced with delusion, but he eventually surrendered to his humanity and learned to embrace reality. [The Body of Chris](#) explores mental illness—from bipolar disorder to substance use to binge eating—in one man's search for salvation. From his oldest wounds to his renewed spirituality, author Chris Cole tells his story with unflinching honesty in hopes of reaching people who suffer from mental illness and those who love them.

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am i bipolar or waking up: Bipolar, Not So Much: Understanding Your Mood Swings and Depression Chris Aiken, James Phelps, 2017-01-17 Approaching depression as a complex disorder with many different facets rather than all-or-nothing. Now available in paperback with an updated preface. Depression confuses the mind, strips away hope, and causes people to blame themselves for an illness they never asked for. This book presents a revolutionary new understanding of the concept of depression and offers readers skills and strategies to manage it. No longer is this a one-size-fits-all diagnosis, and antidepressants are no longer the one-size-fits-all treatment. Mood disorders are now seen to form a spectrum of problems, from common depression on one end to full bipolar disorder on the other. In between these extremes are multitudes of people who are on the middle of the mood spectrum, and this book is for them. The first part of the book helps readers answer the question, "Where am I on the mood spectrum?" By laying the foundation for understanding this spectrum, Aiken and Phelps highlight the key distinctions that define unipolarity, bipolarity, hypomania, mania, and depression. Readers will be able to discern which definition best fits their experience, and use this understanding to learn which treatment methods will work best. The authors also empower readers to look beyond antidepressants. They walk readers through new medications for the mood spectrum, and offer a guide to non-medication treatments that anyone can use on their own, from diet and lifestyle changes to natural supplements. The book also discusses other innovative technologies that can aid in recovery, including dawn simulators, mood apps, and blue-light filters. This thoughtful and beneficial book will offer readers skills and strategies, as well as hope, in the face of debilitating mental challenges.

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am i bipolar or waking up: Inside the Insane Erica Loberg, 2011-06-01 Description Inside the Insane is a first hand account of life inside a psychiatric crisis ward in Los Angeles, California. From patients suffering from chronic paranoid schizophrenia to bipolar disorder disease, to major depressive disorder, Inside the Insane takes the reader inside the walls of the mentally insane and manifests the realities of the human condition. Erica provides detailed accounts of patients screaming in restraints, to being locked in seclusion, to suffering from over medication, in radical raw detail. She also takes a look at the mental health system in Los Angeles County and exposes the concealed world of how society treats the mentally ill. From locked institutions, to board and cares, to living on the streets in Skid Row, the horrific conditions surrounding the life of a person suffering from a mental illness is explicitly exposed. Told through the eyes of a person dealing with her own mental illness, Inside the Insane also takes the reader on a personal journey of Erica's manic self-destruction, deep depression, and the process of treatment, medication and recovery. Her authentic journal entries beginning in 1999 expose her mental illness before knowledge of its existence. Her accounts of flying through the streets of New York, to sitting solemn on a fire escape in lonely depression, call attention to her life before treatment. As a result, an in-depth analysis of her own writings, coupled with the writings of previous renowned writers who also suffered from manic depression, underscores the potential to discover a person suffering from a mental illness prior to a first mental break. Such a discovery offers the chance to anticipate a mental illness and can help an individual seek treatment before it results in a suicide attempt, or a hospitalization. In

2005, Erica was diagnosed with chronic hypomania, Bipolar II, which was a turning point in her life as she began the process of psychiatric treatment. True journal accounts of her ongoing attempt to find the right medication to balance her highs and lows reveal the struggles she endures and how she works to handle that condition on an ongoing basis. She also discloses how her condition affects family and friends, and how those relationships are defined and redefined before and after the discovery of her disease. This groundbreaking expose opens the door to a world that has traditionally been locked up and ignored, and exposes it with shocking detail as the hidden truths inside the minds of the insane are intensely uncovered. About the Author Erica Loberg was born in 1977 and raised in Los Angeles, California. She received her Bachelor's in English from Columbia University. Erica was diagnosed with chronic hypomania, Bipolar II, in 2005 and continues down the road of psychiatric treatment. Currently, she lives in downtown LA and works with the mentally ill, who inspired her to write this book. This is Erica's first book.

am i bipolar or waking up: Walking Shadows Tim Read, 2019-05-30 There are certain unusual mental states that have such an extraordinary intensity, that they are numinous; they involve the presence of an archetype. These states can be beautiful or utterly terrifying, they can predispose to illness but if carefully negotiated they carry enormous potential for accelerated development. This book is about these high intensity mental states as found in the psychiatric emergency room, in everyday life, in psychotherapy and in spiritual practice. How can we understand this archetypal layer of psyche and how can we work with its power to promote psycho-spiritual growth? The author weaves the archetypal perspective into the psychoanalytic and medical models of mind to show us how the different layers of the individual and collective psyche intertwine to give us our rich experience of being human. Using everyday language and using case studies from clinical work in psychiatry and psychotherapy, the author takes the reader on a journey from: * Breakdown to breakthrough * Plato's cave to Jung's archetypal crisis * Genetics to transpersonal psychology * Hearing voices to post traumatic stress disorder * Psychoanalysis to psychedelics * The mid life crisis to the encounter with death * Quantum physics to synchronicity * Shakespeare to shamanism * Transcendent nature to mindfulness

am i bipolar or waking up: Metamorphosis through Conscious Living Ingo B. Jahrsetz, Lindy McMullin, 2017-08-21 Metamorphosis, the theme of this book, derives from the Ancient Greek language and refers to a transformative process that often includes disintegration and reintegration, on the route to conscious living with self, community and the world. This collection proposes that engagement with the sacred is what makes research and practice transpersonal, the sacred 'other' that lives both within and beyond us as individuals and unique cultures. The transpersonal approach is distinctive in that it regards the potential metamorphosis of all those involved in research and professional practice a core value. This volume engages the audience in professional, practical, as well as inquiry-related topics that reflect the diverse nature of the transpersonal studies field, and extend an experience of metamorphosis to the reader. The book moves scholarship forward in an innovative and creative way with relevant themes that not only honour the sacred, but lend a transpersonal paradigm to scientific and professional methods and models.

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from mental illness, their family and friends and, indeed, all those who have an interest in exploring the deepest layers of what it really means to be human.

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am i bipolar or waking up: Completely Normal and Totally Fine Rosie Viva, 2025-05-08 'Unflinching' BIPOLAR UK 'Rosie is an inspiration' DUA LIPA "Raw, honest and surprisingly upbeat" SUNDAY TIMES 'Bursts with authenticity and warmth. A gift to anyone touched by bipolar.' LEANNE TOSHIKO SIMPSON, AUTHOR OF NEVER BEEN BETTER In 2018, model Rosie Viva was arrested after a psychotic episode at Stansted Airport led to a full evacuation. Hospitalised and diagnosed with bipolar disorder, her life changed overnight. In *Completely Normal and Totally Fine*, Rosie shares her powerful journey through mania, depression and recovery - navigating love, work, and identity while embracing a new normal. With honesty and heart, she sheds light on the realities of bipolar disorder and challenges the stigma around mental health, encouraging us all to speak more openly about our messy minds.

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healthcare workers and shift workers – as well as the presence of common comorbidities. They'll also discover: A thorough introduction to the disorder of insomnia, as well as the use of cognitive-behavioural therapy in the treatment of insomnia patients Comprehensive explorations of the influence of the lifespan and professional factors on the presentation and impact of insomnia on paediatric and adult patients In-depth discussions of frequently occurring comorbidities, including affective disorders, mental disorders, somatic disorders and chronic pain Fulsome treatments of the emotional processes associated with insomnia, including acceptance and commitment therapy and mindfulness training Perfect for psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and other clinicians engaged in the treatment of insomnia, Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) Across the Life Span: Guidelines and Clinical Protocols for Health Professionals will also earn a place in the libraries of medical researchers with a professional interest in CBT, insomnia and other sleep disorders.

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am i bipolar or waking up: Art and Social Interaction Judith Peck, 2025-10-15 This second edition expands upon a program that teaches expressive visual arts activities to college students to share with individuals in jails, nursing homes, psychiatric facilities, domestic abuse shelters and youth care centers. Creating expressive art through interaction with those affected, students gain an intimate awareness of crime; mental illness; substance, child, domestic abuse; and aging—critical issues of our time. Specially designed projects in drawing, painting, collage, sculpture and crafts are supplemented with student reflections on how the experience influenced their lives and future careers plus institutional evaluation on the effectiveness of the program on their clientele. Delivering everything needed to set up the course in any liberal arts college, the book covers planning, execution, projected outcomes and evaluation, offering students an education relevant to their lives and careers while giving institutions a dynamically effective program of self-enhancement through the arts. Colour versions of many projects can be viewed online at www.routledge.com/9781032972008.

am i bipolar or waking up: Health in the New Millennium Jeffrey Nevid, Spencer Rathus, Hannah R. Rubenstein, 1998-01-15 A popular one-semester/quarter course offered at both 2-year and 4-year schools and taught by either the Health Sciences division or the Physical Education department. This is a survey of various health-related topics, such as nutrition, exercise, sexuality, substance abuse, disease, etc., usually with an emphasis on applying the concepts to students' own lives.

am i bipolar or waking up: Kabbalah and Psychoanalysis Michael Eigen, 2018-03-08 Wilfred Bion once said, I use the Kabbalah as a framework for psychoanalysis. Both are preoccupied with catastrophe and faith, infinity and intensity of experience, shatter and growth of being that supports dimensions which sensitivity opens. Both are preoccupied with ontological implications of the Unknown and the importance of emotional life. This work is a psychospiritual adventure touching

the places Kabbalah and psychoanalysis give something to each other. Michael Eigen uses aspects of Bion, Winnicott, Akivah, Luria and Nachman (and many more) as colours on a palette to open realities for growth of experience. Bion called faith the psychoanalytic attitude and Eigen here explores creative, paradoxical, multidimensional aspects of faith. Eigen previously wrote of psychoanalysis as a form of prayer in *The Psychoanalytic Mystic*. In Kabbalah and Psychoanalysis he writes of creative faith. Sessions as crucibles in which diverse currents of personality mix in new ways, alchemy or soul chemistry perhaps, or simply homage to our embryonic nature which responds to the breath of feeling moment to moment.

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