

NO MORE



**90 Ways to Deal with
Change, Challenges, and
Chaos**

Marian Madonia

NoMoreGarbage

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Special Thanks to the folks who encouraged me write this book. Each of you in your own way kicked me in the seat of my pants and told me to do it. Without your kick in the pants...I wouldn't have a boot mark or a book. Thank you:

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Brad Snyder for asking questions that made me think,
Doug Stephenson for telling me to get out of my own way,
and Christie Ward because you were the first to believe in me and inspire me to speak and write.

Disclaimer

What is in this book is my opinion. It is based on my life experiences. The book is meant to make you think. Actions have consequences. Taking action means that you accept the consequences and the responsibility that goes along with it. What you do with what you read you accept as your responsibility.

To Kevin

Thank you for being you.

Introduction

Garbage happens. If you are a member of modern society, no doubt you've heard this phrase said with more colorful language. Though I've had my fair swing with colorful language, my grandmother once told me "no one will look down on you because you *didn't* use colorful language." The only problem with that is that sometimes I feel a need to be a bit irreverent. It helps me keep my sense of humor when I'm dealing with some of the toughest challenges in my life. **Garbage** is my chosen word. *Garbage* is the negative side of life; when life seems to give us something ugly.

Garbage has all different kinds of names:

- A *predicament, pickle, jam, or fix*
- Stuck in a *dilemma, quandary, gridlock, or deadlock*
- Encountering a *mess, challenge, delay or obstacle*
- Faced with *change, adversity, crisis, tragedy, disaster or catastrophe*
- In *trouble, a tight spot, or a hitch*
- Fell upon *hardship or hard times*
- Experiencing a *setback, blow, mishap, calamity, or misfortune*
- Maneuvering a *sticky situation or impasse*
- Overwhelmed by *chaos, confusion, upheaval, a fiasco, or uncertainty*
- Dealing with a *problem, nuisance, irritation, annoyance, aggravation, frustration, or difficulty*
- Caught by a *snag, obstacle, hurdle, stumbling block, or barrier*
- Devastated by *heartbreak, disappointment, failure, ruin, accident, or letdown*

All of these words apply and express varying degrees of hardship. This is how we describe our lives when something is going wrong. We may become frustrated (like when a flight is cancelled), or angry (like when someone does something that makes you feel threatened) or maybe even scared (like if you think your kids are in trouble with drugs/drinking/crime). We may feel victimized by something that someone else has done (like if you've been robbed). Regardless of what we've experienced, what we are looking for is answers. We need a direction to head in, goals to work towards, and steps to take, because if we knew what to do, we'd be doing it. What we often lack are solutions.

That's what this book is about, solutions. It contains 90 solutions for dealing with your *garbage*. 90 tips to help you get rid of your *garbage*. Use one or use them all. Use the ones that work for you.

NoMoreGarbage

1

Garbage Happens!

Bad things are going to happen. You are going to have good days and you are going to have bad days. The best thing that you can do for yourself is to accept that *garbage* happens. You are not going to be able to get rid of *garbage* or prevent garbage. Spend your energy learning how to move forward.

2

Stuck?

When you don't know what to do, you won't until you learn something new. Use a lack of answers as a trigger to go learn something new so that you can find the answers. Don't know how to pay for your kid's education? Learn everything you can about financing college. Having trouble with a relationship? Learn everything that you can about dealing with people and communicating. Having trouble with a boss? Learn how to deal with difficult people.

3

Analysis Paralysis

Watch out for “analysis paralysis.” Don’t spend too long trying to decide how to deal with the *garbage* that has come your way. Make a decision and move forward.

4

Stop Asking “Why?”

You may never get the answer to the question “why,” so stop asking it. Now, think about this: if you did get the answer to “why,” would you like the answer? Most of the time, when we ask “why” something has happened or someone has done something, we’ve already made up our mind that we don’t like what has happened. Knowing “why” won’t change our feelings about it. Save yourself the aggravation, don’t ask “why?”

5

Don't Create Garbage

Quit creating your own *garbage*. Leave on time for work, pay attention to how much time you spend on your cell phone/long distance, avoid procrastination, etc. You get the idea on this one. Reduce the amount of garbage in your life by ridding yourself of self-imposed *garbage*.

6

Want vs. Don't Want

Focus on what you want in life instead of what you don't want. Say "I want a new job" instead of "I hate this job." Say "I need help in the kitchen" instead of "Quit sitting on the couch." Think "I'll find a way to deal with this" instead of "I can't deal with this." Focusing on what you want moves your energy to actions in the present and actions that will improve your future.

7

You Have Choices

Remember, you always have a choice in life, you just may not like all of your options, but you always have a choice. You may have lost your job, but you have a choice of staying unemployed or looking for work. You may have gotten pulled over for speeding, but you have a choice of letting it ruin your day or moving on. Just because we don't like our choices doesn't mean that we don't have choices. And often, just knowing that we have choices can begin to free us to move on.

8

No Reversal

You have *no* options for reversing *garbage*. Once *garbage* has happened, it has happened. The past can't be changed; you can only deal with what has happened. Spending your energy trying to change the past will only create stress. It will not change the situation. You are wasting your time if you spend excessive energy trying to reverse the garbage situation. Learn from your mistakes. Prevent something from happening again. Do an analysis. In the end, recognize that *garbage* cannot be reversed.

9

Truth

Tell yourself the truth. The truth about what is happening and what isn't happening, what you do want and don't want, what you need and what you don't need. Being honest with ourselves is a great *garbage* eliminator. Are you doing something that you really don't want to? Are you socializing with someone that you really don't like? Are you in bad physical health and need to do something about it? Changing our actions to match our minds is a surefire *garbage* eliminator.

10

Disabling Moves

We are responsible to people but not for them. If you do something for someone that he should do for himself, then you disable him from being able to do it for himself. You are also disabling yourself from taking care of your own needs. This is not an excuse to avoid helping people who need it. It is recognizing that we sometimes add *garbage* to our lives by doing things for others when we should be doing for ourselves.

11

Brainstorm

When you get *garbage* dumped on you, immediately start brainstorming solutions. Don't worry about whether or not you like the solutions. To begin with, start with quantity. Get lots of possible solutions. You can eliminate for quality later once you feel like you have enough solutions to choose from.

12

What “will” Work?

Instead of identifying why something won't work, find ways to make things work.

13

Why Not?

The next time you think “why me” starting asking yourself “why not you.”

14

Invest

Know that to get rid of your *garbage*, sometimes you will have to make an investment of time (or energy, or resources, or money) in order to get a payoff in the long run.

15

No More Negativity!

If you can't be positive about a situation, at least try and have a neutral position. Negativity robs your problem solving energy. It is toxic.

16

Welcome Feedback

Learn to accept feedback with grace. Just because someone has offered criticism, doesn't mean that you've gotten more *garbage*. Look for something valuable in the criticism. You may learn something new about yourself, about people in general, or about the person that delivered the criticism.

17

Learn

Make learning a constant part of your life. Read books, attend seminars, or consult a mentor. Anything that you do to increase your level of knowledge and wisdom will help you get rid of *garbage* in your life.

18

It's All about You

Look to yourself to solve your problems and get rid of your *garbage*. It is not the responsibility of anyone else but you, and no one else but you will care enough to get rid of it.

19

The Law of Good Will

People have a much more keen awareness of being hurt than of hurting others. Before assuming sinister intentions from others when dealing with their *garbage*, first ask yourself if there's a possibility that they have good intentions. The good intentions may not be directed at you (they could be selfish in nature), but most often, people are trying to do the right thing. We just often end up innocent bystanders to their ignorance.

20

Admit You're Wrong

All kinds of *garbage* can be eliminated if we can admit when we are wrong.

21

Apologize

You'd be amazed how much *garbage* you can eliminate when you apologize for hurting/wronging someone.

22

Maintain Your Principles

Regardless of the principles of others, keep your principles. If you believe in being kind, remain kind even though others may not be. If you walk down the hall at work and say “hello” to a co-worker each time you pass and he/she doesn’t respond, keep saying “hello.” If you stop, it is like you are saying “I will only say hello if it is convenient for me and if I get a ‘hello’ back.” Versus, “I say ‘hello’ to people because I believe in greeting people in a friendly way. Regardless of how a person responds, I will continue to greet them.”

23

Keep Your Promises

If you gave a deadline, meet it. If you promised a return call, make it. If you said you'd do something, do it. Don't use "reasonable" excuses to keep you from keeping your word.

24

Get the Facts

Gather all your facts together before you react to *garbage*. Beware of reacting to rumor and gossip. Get the details first and make sure that your information is correct.

25

Be Open to Change

Change can be one of your best allies when dealing with *garbage*.

26

Remember Patience

Our lives have gone crazy and it is easy to forget to be patient with people. That patience may build an ally in someone that can help you solve *garbage* fast.

27

Let Go

Move on. Quit going over *garbage* again and again and again. Your friends are probably tired of hearing about it. Your family is rolling their eyes. And admit it, you're kind of tired of it yourself. Letting go, doesn't mean that something is now "o.k." What it means is that you're not going to let it hold you back anymore. It is not going to interfere with the rest of your life. What do you need to let go of?

28

I Can't Read Your Mind

Remember that people are not part of the psychic network hotline. They can not read your mind, or guess what you are thinking, or know what is important to you. Tell them. If the words “they should know” come out of your mouth, I can pretty much guarantee you that they “don't know.”

29

Good Happens Too!

Garbage happens, but when it happens, something good eventually follows. When we look back upon our lives then, we realize then that the good thing that happened could never have happened without us first experiencing a little *garbage*.

30

Reframe

Do more than think positive. Re-frame things that happen to you. Look at the big picture, not just one detail. Look for what is hard to see because your mind is filtering out the positive details because of the *garbage* being in the way.

31

Yin and Yang

A good day can be appreciated much more when you know what a *garbage* day feels like.

32

Control

You have no control over the *garbage* that happens to you. You can control what you think about the garbage and what you do about the garbage.

33

Beliefs = Attitude

Attitude is the culmination of everything that we believe. It's what we believe about life based on our personal experiences and the conclusions that we have drawn from those experiences. It's our beliefs about people, situations, and events. It's our value system, ethics, and morals. It is our mood, feelings, and opinion. Beliefs come from our learning style, personality type, birth order, gender, generation and our cultural, economic, and spiritual backgrounds and experiences. All of these things mix together to form our attitude and we filter everything we experience in life through this attitude. What beliefs about *garbage* do you need to challenge?

34

The Light Switch

It's always darkest right before you find the light switch.

35

Wishes

When you get to the end of your life and look back upon it, would you rather say “I wish I had” or “I wish I hadn’t?”

36

Scars Heal

If you take a risk when you deal with *garbage*, you may have great rewards (as well as the possibility for a few bumps, scrapes, or scars). But remember, scars can heal if we let them. They are a reminder of what happened, but need not be a hindrance to our future.

37

***Garbage* + Time = Laughter**

Can you recall one of your more stressful days? Do you remember telling people about your day, but when you retold the events you were laughing? It wasn't funny when it happened, but trying to describe the absurdity of your day can often lead to laughter. Time has given us the gift of perspective. The next time you are under stress, ask yourself "How will this appear to me later when I'm retelling this story?" You may be able to laugh sooner than you think. Stress is caused by an unexpected event. Laughter is caused by an unexpected ending. Stress and humor have more in common than many of us realize. Try looking for the laughter while under stress. You may surprise yourself with a good laugh.

38

Do the Right Thing

Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, not for what you are going to get back. When you do it for what you will get back, it is a form of manipulation.

39

Quit Fixing

It's not your job to fix other people. If you are around people that create a lot of *garbage*, though you may be able to influence them, it is unrealistic to try and change them. Though we don't like it, people have the right to live their life any way that they want. Our job is to live ours the way we want.

40

Law of Decision

Once you decide to get rid of your *garbage*...it begins to happen.

41

Optimist or Pessimist

The difference between an optimist and a pessimist is:

A pessimist has proof that *garbage* happens,

The optimist has hope that *garbage* doesn't always have to happen.

42

Deal with What Is

Deal with what is...not what you wish was.

Deal with the fact that you are late to work, not that you wish you were on time.

Deal with the fact that a boss asked you to work late, not that you wish he'd not asked.

Deal with the fact that a friend hurt you, not that you wish she hadn't.

Deal with the fact that you didn't get a (house, job, promotion, date), not that you wish you had.

Got the idea? Keep going with it.

43

Be Realistic

Be realistic about your expectations of yourself. When you set up unrealistic expectations, you are creating *garbage*. You run the risk of considering yourself to be a failure if you don't accomplish all of your expectations. Realistic expectations equal less *garbage*.

44

3 Things

A bride once asked me for advice on dealing with her wedding day. I told her 3 things.

1. Enjoy your day
2. Know that you're the only one that will know that things have gone wrong, and things will go wrong.
3. Know that if you learn to let go, the things that do go wrong will be the things nearest and dearest to your heart. These will be the things that bring tears of laughter to your eyes as you retell the stories again and again.

This doesn't just apply to brides.

45

Do Right

Focus on doing the right thing and spend less energy being right. Sometimes, you will never convince people that you are right (and sometimes, they will just never admit it). Sometimes, being right will do nothing for the situation or the relationship. Instead, it will create *garbage*. Sometimes it's o.k. for you to know that you are right without having to convince those around you.

46

What's Obvious?

To learn about some of your self imposed *garbage*, ask a mentor or boss that you trust this question: “Is there anything about me that I don't seem to see but is obvious to you?” Then learn from what they tell you.

47

Fix What's Wrong

Any of us can make a mistake...use your brilliance to fix what's wrong.

48

Is it Simple or Complex?

Is your *garbage* simple or complex? We often search for simple solutions to complex problems, when the solution must be as complex as the problem.

49

Go Ahead...Quit!

Quitting or giving up is sometimes the best thing to do, because otherwise, by forcing ourselves to do something that we don't want to do, we could be giving up on ourselves.

50

True or False

If you've experienced any one of the 5 major *garbage* events (death/birth, marriage/divorce, moving, changing jobs, or illness), then you have also experienced falseness becoming truth. False friends reveal themselves, true friends emerge. False values go by the wayside, true values come to life. False goals are released, true goals are established.

51

Act

Act now for who you want to be. Sometimes, when dealing with *garbage*, your emotions haven't caught up with you. Your mind wants to do the right things, but your emotions don't. When you "act" in the way that will give you the best results, you are doing the right thing and giving your emotions time to catch up. Yeah, every once in a while you'll be putting on an Oscar winning performance. But remember, Oscar winners were the one's we believed were real.

52

Be Curious

Ask questions. Get more information. Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? The more information that you have about the *garbage* that is happening to you, the better prepared you will be to deal with the *garbage*.

53

It's O.K. to Break Things

Break patterns. Break habits. Break traditions. Break rules even. If you keep doing the same thing and you keep getting the same results, you're just driving yourself crazy. You've got to do something different (break your pattern) in order to get different results.

If you think what you've always thought, you'll always do what you've always done, and you'll always get what you've always gotten.

54

Advice

Don't take advice from anyone you wouldn't trade places with. Lots of people offer advice, that doesn't mean that you have to use it. If someone is offering you advice about the *garbage* in your life, do they have a handle on their *garbage*? If your *garbage* is with your kids, do they have a good handle on dealing with theirs? If your *garbage* is with your boss, do they have a good handle on dealing with their boss? If your *garbage* is finances, do they have good control over their money? If you don't admire how a person is handling the aspect of their life in which they are offering advice, thank them for their thoughts and their time...then ignore everything they just told you.

55

You Get Knocked Down

You get up again, *garbage* is never going to keep you down.

56

Goals

Other people do not find your goals as important as you do. People may not be supportive with either actions or words and so they may create *garbage* for you. Remember, the goal is important to you, not them, so you may have to take extra action to accomplish the goal. You may have to call someone multiple times because he/she doesn't return your calls. You may have to follow up with someone again and again because he/she is not getting something to you. You are the one that has the goal, so you may have to do the extra work to get it accomplished.

57

Go Ahead, Kiss Up

Kiss up, brown nose, and schmooze. It's not necessarily bad. When used in the right time and place and in the right context, they may help you get rid of some garbage. Somehow or another, people decided that these were unethical and manipulative. They can be, but they don't have to be. It's a good thing when you use them to the benefit of all and no one gets hurt (key point!). If you're at a restaurant and the wait staff doesn't care about you, and you schmooze a bit to get him to care, then everyone wins, and you've gotten rid of some *garbage*. As for the fact that the agent should be nice and should be helpful, go back to point #42, deal with what is, not what you wish was.

58

No!

Sometimes you have to say “no.” “No” is neither bad nor good. It’s just a word. It let’s people know your *garbage* limits. “Yes,” also just lets people know your limits. If you don’t tell people where your limits are, they can’t guess. Brainstorm all the ways you can say “no” kindly. Just because you are saying “no” doesn’t mean it will be rude. And just because you say “no” kindly, doesn’t mean people will be happy. People want you to come to dinner, work late, take their kids with you on vacation, borrow your tools, etc. They will be upset, and they will get over it. If they don’t get over it, could you really have had a good relationship with someone who doesn’t respect you and your limits?

59

Never Give Up!

60

Not so Bad

Garbage you think will happen almost never happens. If the *garbage* does happen, it is usually not nearly as bad as you thought it would be.

61

Take a Risk

Ask yourself: What is the best case scenario? Worst case? What is the likelihood of each? What would you do if the worst case did happen? Could you tolerate the outcome? (You don't have to like the outcome...could you tolerate the outcome?) If no, could you change some variables to make the risk worthwhile?

62

What Will It Be for You?

Garbage can be your ruin...a catalyst to success...or one very funny story at the dinner table...it's all in how you look at it.

63

Garbage is a Test

It's a test to see how well you problem solve, how well you react under stress, how well you maintain your sense of humor. It's a way to look back on what you've overcome and be proud of your self.

64

Beware of Perfection

Perfectionists work really hard, sometimes too hard. If you consider yourself a perfectionist, ask yourself this question “Have you ever gotten anything perfect?” For most perfectionists, the answer is “no.” In the mean time, they create a lot of stress and anxiety in themselves. Here’s another way to deal with situations. Aim for perfection and handicap for reality. In other words, when you take into consideration the amount of time, money, resources, and help, then how did you do? It’s a way to be reasonable with your self. It’s not lowering your standards; it’s lowering your expectations.

65

Take Five

Taking a break can clear your head and let you think again. Sometimes we bury ourselves under *garbage* and lose our perspective. A few minutes break (and sometimes a few hours) can do wonders for giving you a clear head to deal with your garbage again.

66

You Want It You Got It

You get what you are looking for. We conveniently ignore anything that doesn't fit our belief system. If you believe that crossing paths with a black cat is bad luck, then on a day when you cross a black cat's path, if had your car tire go flat and you got a raise...you could potentially focus entirely on the flat tire. You might ignore the good luck of the raise. Be careful what you look for, you may get it only because it's the only thing that you are looking for.

67

Better or Worse?

If you keep doing what you're doing, will the *garbage* get better or worse?

68

People Don't Care

70% of people don't care about your problems, 20% think their problems are worse than yours, the other 10% are really glad you have problems.

69

Meaning What?

Avoid the human temptation to give meaning to everything. Some things have no meaning. *Garbage* just happened. It means nothing.

70

It's Their Garbage

Don't tote the *garbage* for other people. Other people will try and give you their *garbage* for you to haul. Don't allow others to add to your load.

71

Set Goals

Set goals that are achievable and realistic. Once you set a goal, stick to it. Set new goals once the originals are achieved. People who don't have goals help other people who have goals accomplish them.

72

Have a Plan

Create a plan to achieve your goals and watch your *garbage* shrink.

73

Reality vs. Fantasy

What you are afraid of is as real as truth in your minds eye. Your mind and emotions and body will react to something you imagine the way they react to something that is really happening. When you make a decision about dealing with your garbage, if your decision is challenged by your imagination...your imagination will win every time. Your mind cannot distinguish between reality & fantasy. Be careful what you imagine, it may prevent you from getting rid of your *garbage*.

74

Solutions Take Time

Trying to get a result in a hurry could make you think that you are a failure when, in reality, you've just not given your solution to your *garbage* issue enough time to work.

75

Reverse Engineering

Work backwards from the end result to see the steps needed to solve your *garbage* issue. This saves you steps that would have taken you off course.

76

Imagine It

Keep your eyes on the prize. Remember what your goal looks like. Visualize it. Think about it. See yourself accomplishing it.

77

Be Courageous

Courage comes from within and is based on you having the confidence to believe in yourself. You can handle anything that comes your way. You already have.

78

What would _____ do?

Get yourself a mentor. The person can be alive or dead, someone that you know personally or have never met. Pick someone that you know well enough that when you are challenged with *garbage*, you can ask yourself “what would _____ do?” Fill in that blank with the name of a person you admire and come up with an answer that will help you move through your *garbage*.

79

Don't Be Afraid to Fail

Many successful people have lost fortunes repeatedly, before ultimately achieving success.

80

Do Something Different

If you don't do something different, you will have the same *garbage* in your life 10, 20 or 30 years from now. Wouldn't you like to have completely different *garbage* down the road?

81

You Think/They Think

Quit worrying about what other people think, but don't completely ignore what others think. It's a delicate balancing act. If you disregard what others think, you may end up out of touch. Ultimately, that may not serve you. If you listen too much, you still may not serve yourself as you may end up losing yourself in the process. Value your opinion and the opinion of others, but weigh them carefully for their usefulness.

82

Treat the Problem

To make a big impact on your *garbage*, make sure you are treating the problem and not the symptoms.

83

Have No Regrets

Believe in what you are doing and move forward. Don't look backward. If you make a mistake, work to fix it and keep moving forward. Don't judge your past with new information that you have from the present. Forgive yourself for having a lack of information and move forward.

84

It's Evolutionary

The process of change is evolutionary not revolutionary.

85

Test It

When talking to ourselves, if *garbage* happens, we can talk ourselves into trying again and again. We need to balance that and test it against rationality, denial, responsibility, and accountability

86

Ask for Help

Are you going it alone? Let yourself get help. There is no written rule that says that you have to do it all by yourself. We are no less successful because we have had help in ridding ourselves of *garbage*.

Fix the Right Problem

Make sure you are fixing the right *garbage*. We sometimes fix the wrong *garbage*. If you hate your job and you keep trying to find ways to like it, you may be fixing the wrong *garbage*. Maybe what you need to do is find a job that you like. If you have trouble getting along with a friend and keep trying to find ways to get along, maybe it is time for a new friendship. Our persistence is admirable unless we exercise it on the wrong objective.

Give Yourself Time

Be patient when trying to change your habits. Its not easy to change habits and may take lots of time and a few failures before you get it right. Your mind may want to change, but your brain likes the way things have been done. It will work against you. Stick to it. You'll make that change.

89

Question Everything

Challenge everything. Don't stick with the norms or the way that you've always done things. Try something new. It may be exactly what you need to get rid of your *garbage*.

90

Break It Down

Use the empty drawer technique. When your *garbage* seems overwhelming, break it down into lots of smaller parts. Then, put everything away into a drawer except the aspect of it that you are currently working on.

About the author

Marian Madonia

Marian Madonia is an international speaker and author who is the Work Environment Expert. She advocates that the work environment created by organizations is what is going to determine how productive employees are and how much turnover an organization endures. Marian is a 20 year veteran of speaking, training, and consulting and a graduate of the Training Specialist Certificate Program at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Marian delivers her *Garbage Factor* programs which include: Attitude, Management, Leadership, Communication, Customer Service, and Team Work programs. Through her programs, she helps organizations improve turnover, productivity, and performance. Using her past experience in diverse areas such as: banking and financial planning, meeting & conference planning, associations, employee health and retirement programs, and insurance, Marian is able to bring real world experience for solutions that organizations need now. Marian can help you make it happen.

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Garbage + Time = Laughter

Garbage Happens! Things go wrong, we're cut short for time, your original plans change. These are just some of the things that throw off our day. This is the garbage that happens to us and throws a wrench in our plans and goals. Learn 90 quick tips to help you get through life's garbage. Use one or use them all to take out your garbage.



Marian Madonia is an international speaker and author who is the Work Environment Expert. She advocates that the work environment created by organizations is what is going to determine how productive employees are and how much turnover an organization endures. Marian delivers her People Side of Business programs which include: Attitude, Leadership, Customer Service, Team Work and of course, her popular Garbage series programs. Through her programs, she helps organizations improve turnover, productivity, and performance, and she helps people improve communication skills, conflict management ability, and reactions to adversity.

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