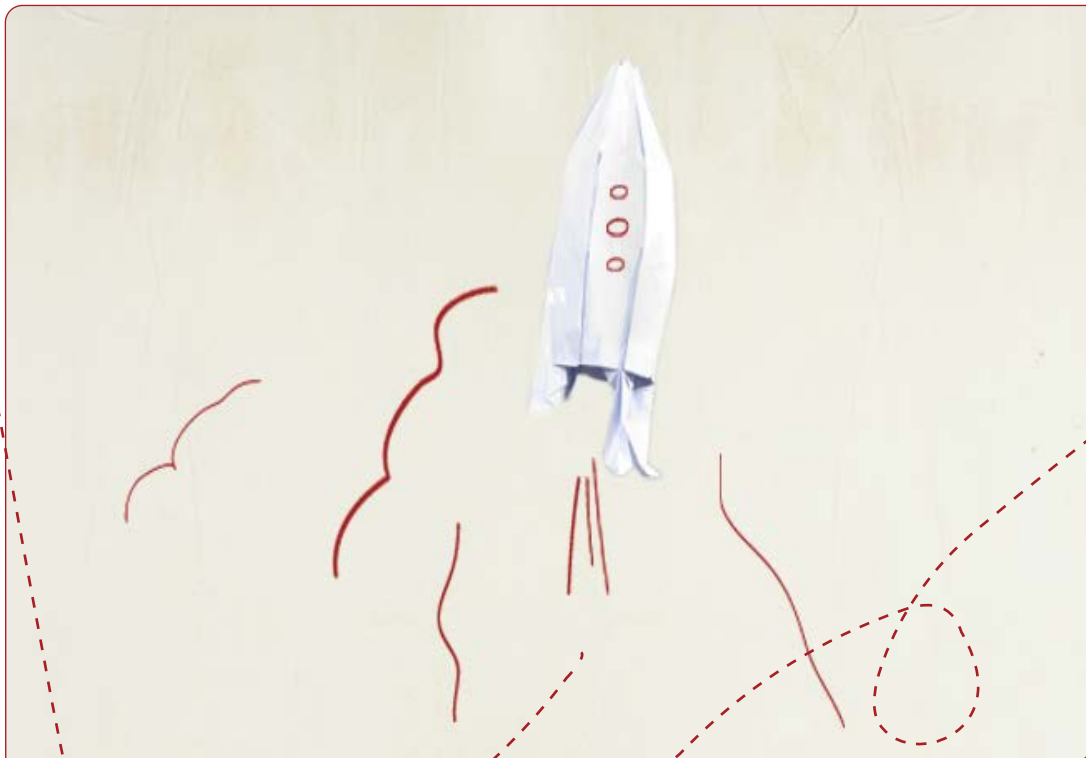


# Build a Business that Fits You Like a Glove

a pdf-booklet based on the blog series

## Let's take a flight

- ★ find your flame
- ★ turn up your fire
- ★ stay on track
- ★ collaborate to speed up
- ★ enjoy the flight
- ★ keep yourself going



Hi there,

Nice having you here. You're probably an entrepreneur or you're planning on taking the leap any time now.

And maybe you want to create a business more sustainably. A business that frees you up financially, that you love running, and that feels like the right thing for you to be doing with your time. This booklet gives you a taste of what it takes to start such a business you love and actually want to sustain. And motivates you to follow insight up with action, so things can start really moving for you.

Enjoy the flight! Elselien



# Find Your Flame

## From Rushing For Gold to Releasing Your Gold

Can you feel the gold rush in the air? A rush for finding a golden business idea?

In 1848 a man named James Marshall found gold in California. That was the start of the big Gold Rush. Whole tribes moved over land and sea to settle in that beautiful but rough landscape. It must have been tough work with a lot of sacrifice but well worth the effort. The ones who made it would be able to create a much better life.

It was literally a rush. More and more people were finding gold. The stock decreased every moment. So it made sense to be hasty and on top of it.

### **You feel the rush too.**

It's not about gold anymore in a literal sense. It's about finding THE golden business idea or THE golden business partner. Quick. Decide. Go for it. Don't miss out.

### **Does this rush actually make sense?**

We're not talking about a limited resource here, right? So where is the sense of urgency coming from and is there a way out?

If you suffer from the rush, then you're probably looking for the gold outside of yourself. As if some idea, product, client or partner out there will make it happen for you.

### **But if you know the gold is inside of you...**

then you know you can't lose it -- you can't be too late or miss out, either. What a relief! The gold inside of you is the unique bundle of talents, knowledge, ideas and passions that only you have. Your bundle might be hidden somewhere deep inside of you. Maybe it's undeveloped, unused or ignored. But it can't go away or be taken away from you. Ever. So take a deep breath and relax.

### **You might be thinking that this 'gold within' doesn't feed me, pay my rent, or buy winter jackets for my children.**

True. Inner work takes time. And it might be as tough as mining for gold. You'll have to start doing what you most enjoy without knowing where it will bring you or if you'll get anything back for it. But soon you'll find a way to monetize it.

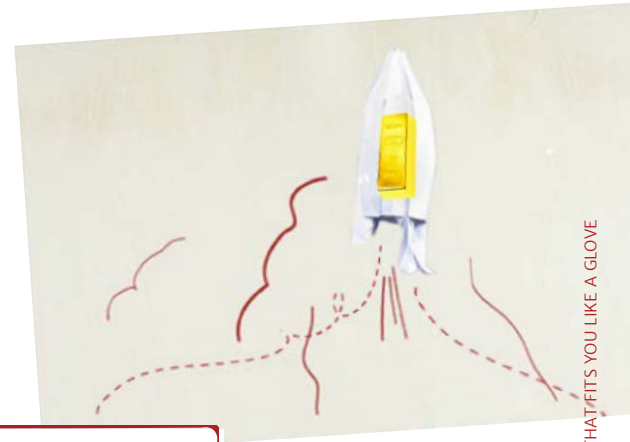
### **Soon, or ....late. Like 30 (!) years.**

Let's take a look at author Steven Pressfield's story. He wrote for around 30 years without any noteworthy success. He just sat down, wrote and did everything he could to become a better writer. He earned a bit of money with odd jobs, like fruit picking in the summertime. Once he even managed to sell a screenplay (that stayed unused). If he had saved some money, he would fully commit to writing again. Imagine, all those 30 years doing just that. Why didn't he quit? He just enjoyed writing. Even when he experienced defeat, inner struggle, and the resistance against it. On top of that he got to improve his writing skills, meet great people, and learn a lot about publishing novels. And luckily, this is an American story. He published a bestselling novel. The first of a range bestsellers.

An American Dream? Maybe. But think about it. It actually makes sense. It takes time to develop your skills and turn them into something of use. This happens while you're working, processing, and following through. Not while you're searching for a golden business idea.

**So, yes, let's do it.**

Start digging for the gold, polish it, and release it.  
Make that impact the world needs and loves to reward you for.



## Questions that lead to your flame

What activities give you the most energy and joy?

What did you love to do as a child?

What would you be doing if money were no object?

You can turn up your fire simply by doing these things more.  
Also or maybe especially when they seem illogical...

# Turn Up Your fire

## What Illogical Activities Will Get You Going?

\*and what's Jack got to do with it?\*

This is a true story about my good friend, let's call him hmmm... Jack. About two years ago Jack worked as an Engineer at a Multinational company. Everything was fine and nothing was wrong. But, and this might sound familiar to you, he actually wanted to be an entrepreneur. He wanted to do something that had him feeling like, "this is the right thing for me."

Every month he had a new crazy high potential business idea. From a postal shaving knife service to an interface design agency to building a boat with a Jacuzzi for cruising the Amsterdam Canals, he came up with it all. So why didn't he execute on any of those ideas? Why did he feel defeated after not executing those ideas? **And what did he do to get to a place where he now runs a full time business that fits him like a glove?**

**This is exactly what we're going to talk about.**

For a long time Jack was looking for that one golden business idea that would give him the push to take the leap into entrepreneurship.

But that's not how it went. The more great business ideas came and went, the more he lost his appetite. **The thing is, every time you don't take action on your enthusiasm, you loose a bit of your fire.** Not only that, a golden idea isn't always a golden idea for you to realize.

So the solution lies in building a habit of taking small actions fueled by your enthusiasm, combined with finding a golden business idea for you.

What Jack did can also work for you.

He started to follow his enthusiasm, by taking the tiniest actions, without having a clue where it would bring him. Which, in the end, brought him exactly where he wanted to be.

**This is what he did.**

He started with programming smart graphs in IGoogle a couple of evenings a week. In a weekend he turned an old bookcase into a balcony vegetable garden. He spent two weeks vacation building a CNC cutter in an old shed that belonged to his uncle... Do you see the logical sequence? ...The secret is... there isn't any.

Doing those things that he just felt like doing made him find his flame; Self-education, building technological equipment and programming.

One day, within about a year, he found his golden business idea. Everything came together. Building new types of 3D-printers for different purposes was it for him.

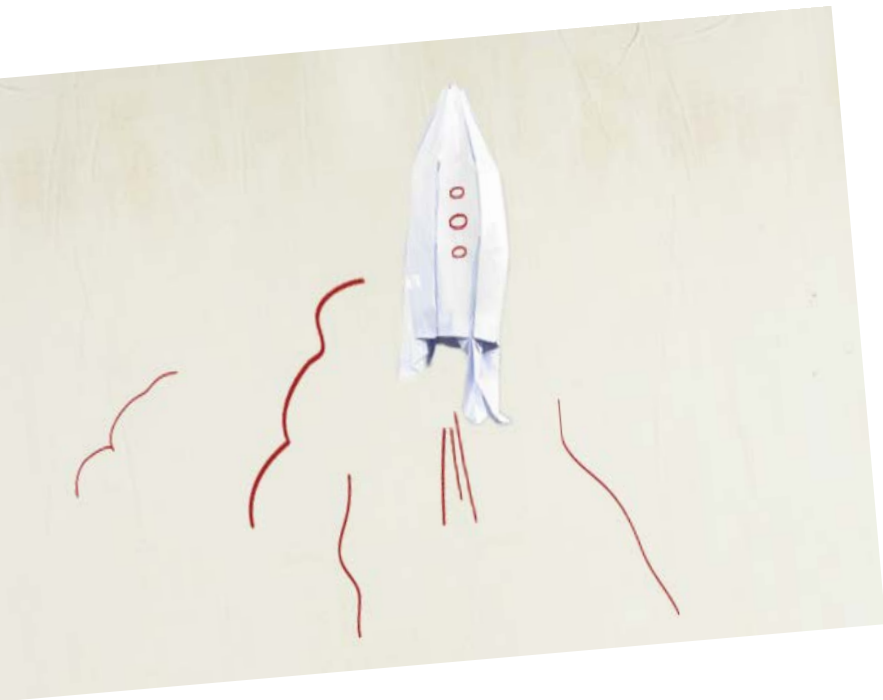
**His flame turned into an unstoppable crackling fire.** The only logical thing to do was to quit his job and spend all the time he had on this business idea.

Where will your enthusiasm bring you?

Can you make some space in your busy life to follow your impulses?

Now that we're about to enter the holiday season, there are no excuses, so let's start now; what's your illogical, unexplainable 'holiday' activity?

ps. Jack had to answer the What-are-you-doing-this-holiday-season-question with "building a CNC cutter in my uncle's old shed." "Huh, what? Why? What are you going to do with that??" And enjoyed answering, "I have no clue, do you have a good idea for me??" Which always led to fruitful conversations.



This all only works when you also actually take action.

It's best to keep it simple. Start with doing one easy illogical activity for only a short time daily.

Do you want to write more? Then start with 5 mins every morning. Maybe in the end this will lead to an hour a day, a weekend writing retreat or to you becoming a full-time writer. You never know. And it actually doesn't matter now. Start with 5 mins and be curious where it leads you. Don't wait until it makes sense or feels comfortable. Just sit down and write for 5 minutes.

And this goes for every activity - running, knitting, origami...

And in the long run this is a useful practice. In the next part read about how these things are important to keeping you on track along the journey.

# Stay on track

## Stay Firm So You Can Be Flexible

So you found your flame and stirred up the fire. This helped you to take the leap. What's needed to keep on track? Starting a business is challenging enough and one of the biggest challenges of all is the battle with overwhelm during the journey.

Nowadays you can do a lot with just a tiny budget. It doesn't matter if you create bicycles, cupcakes or books. Do you need a web shop to be accessible for your favourite type of customers? Just Google it and learn to do-it-yourself. Do you need a platform to host and promote your online course? Just pick one out of the many options. Do you need a business partner? Just put it out on the web, and thousands will come along.

So why is it that sometimes you thrive in this world full of possibilities, and at other moments you feel like Bambi in headlights?

You probably grew up in an environment where you were taught what to do and when to do it. It was clear to you what the reward or risk was. First your parents, then your teachers and eventually your employers provided this structure for you. This had a function. In a certain way it helped you to engage in society. And it kept you from spreading food on your face or screaming out loud when somebody took your toy (at least, in most cases).

Now as an entrepreneur and grown up you suddenly have all this freedom. Nobody tells you what to do or what's right or wrong. What a joy! But this can also be overwhelming at times. And you're not necessarily very well prepared to make your own choices and follow your intuition, every minute of the day.

Let's see what we can learn from traveling. Maybe you're just back from a trip and it's fresh in your mind.

What does this have to do with entrepreneurship?

What's similar?

A journey, unless it's all-inclusive and organized by your parents-in-law, is a short period in which you have to handle an empty agenda and making choices every moment of the day.

So what creates the conditions for some people to thrive during such a trip and others to stumble? Many things of course. But you can say the following 3 factors are very supportive of a good trip:

**At first:** know where you want to go. Pinpoint at least a few places you truly want to visit. Otherwise you keep on going where others direct you. And plan it loose enough so you can discover a few unexpected nice places and wander around.

**Secondly:** know what you really enjoy doing (so not per se what others like to do). This might be any of the following: learning something new, having good conversations, reading books or...whatever. And make sure those things are in the program somewhere. So you are encouraged enough to keep going in the inevitable not so nice moments... like the long drives, waiting in lines at the airport or rainy days.



**And thirdly:** know what the basic conditions for you are to be fit, so you can enjoy. This might be eating healthy food, sleeping enough, going for a run in the morning... in short; the things you easily forget during an exciting journey. Even when you know you'll get obstinate and grumpy after a while of not doing it.

You could say these 3 factors build a solid foundation. That makes you steady so you can be flexible, open and spot opportunities. These are also very fitting tenets for you as an entrepreneur.

What if you apply these factors to the way you run your business? Do you know where you want to go, what you truly enjoy and what the basic conditions are for you to stay fit?

**1. Know where you want to go.**

What are the 'Big Five' in your business for the next several months?

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**2. Know what you really enjoy doing.**

What activity in your business do you really enjoy doing, but are easily deprived by daily affairs? (Brainstorming with colleagues, talking with clients, organizing an event)

How can you make sure you do this more regularly.

**3. Know what your daily basic conditions are to stay fit.**

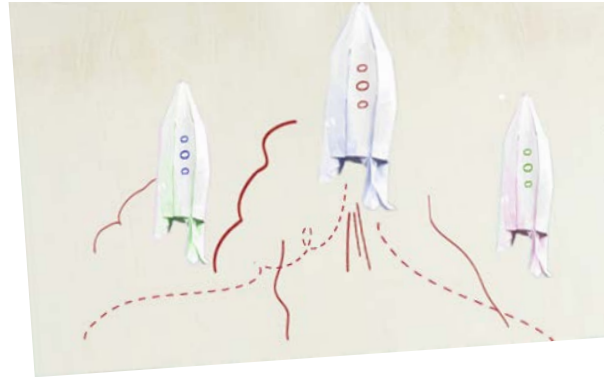
What is the one thing that's essential for you to feel good?

How can you make sure it's a fixed part of your daily schedule?  
(see [www.zenhabits.net](http://www.zenhabits.net) on how to build a habit)



# Collaborate to speed up

## How to Collaborate in a Way that Speeds You Up?



So, ok, imagine, there you are, working independently, passionately and on something you truly care for. One thing that you'll notice is that you keep meeting people with whom you share that passion. People you just click with. This often gives you a big energy boost. Everything seems possible. You go home with a head full of ideas and opportunities and your agenda is full of meetups and projects.

### Great, right?

Of course that's great, but it won't take long until you start longing for some peace and stillness in your head and agenda.

Then it's time for some clarity. Who will you really start collaborating with and how? This is exactly what we're going to talk about now.

So let's see how you can create collaborations that make you speed up instead of weighing you down. After reading this post you will notice that it's actually quite easy to achieve this. It is just a matter of asking the right questions and really listening to the answers.

### First it's important to understand the 3 elements to take into account before collaborating: values, purposes and talents.

★ **At first** you need to consider your values. These are the things that are important for you personally in every situation. Do you both have the same kind of go-with-the-flow mentality? Or is the other more strict? Do you both put fun before results? Or the other way around? If you don't know this from each other, or don't understand each other on this level, then the collaboration will be too much of a hassle.

★ **The second** element is purpose, something that you care for, something worth working for 24/7. Is it about making financial products understandable for the main public? Is it helping designers to create prototypes, the easy way? You'll have to be clear on a purpose that guides you through the hilly landscape of creation.

★ **Then thirdly** you have to focus on talents. What's your unique skill set? What's that skill or asset that you might not have, and that's very crucial to deliver good work? A very simple example; you might be both marketing creatives, but one has outstanding writing skills and the other has rocking visualisation skills. Sounds like a good couple to create powerful advertising, right?

### So if it is that simple, why does it often go wrong?

The moment you start walking your talk, you'll definitely meet people who are totally heading towards the same goal and do similar things. When you meet them, you feel totally understood. This is re-affirming and it fires you up. These are relations to cherish. So, what's the problem? Being too much of the same or not aware of the other's complementary aspects, you can be in each others' way.

**Let's for now focus on 2 clear types of fruitful collaboration.**

★ The “let’s make it happen” collaboration; Same values, same purpose, complementary talents. If you have a lot in common, great. Then go mining for the complementary talents. Secondly you need to research what is needed to fulfil your shared purpose. If your talents and needs fit, then there is a strong basis for collaboration. Go ahead and get to business. Design a process together and commit to doing the work.

★ The “let’s share ” collaboration; same values, other purpose, other talents. This can be for example friends or people you just click with, but who are working on a totally other businesses. At first just good company. Since you’re working on another business, the collaboration lies in sharing things, like a workspace. Doing this you’ll experience that the gold lies in the objectivity. Nothing will hold them back for giving honest advice or unexpected ideas. Which might make the difference for you.

Keep this in the back of your mind and go back to that moment you’re meeting people and really have a great conversation. How to make sure you get to know asap if there is any gold, if there is a fruitful way to collaborate?

**Try out the following steps and see what happen:**

- 1. Ask the right questions asap.** Find out what the values, purpose and talents of that person are, before you even think about exchanging business cards. So have some good questions in the back of your mind and listen.
- 2. What does your gut feeling say?** Before going too much in the rationale, go to your gut feeling. If negative or neutral, fine, here it stops. If enthusiasm arises, great, continue to the next step.
- 3. Does this collaboration fit? And if so, in what way?** Take some time to analyze the information about this person, and to structure your thoughts using the values, purposes and talents. Do you have a basis for a fruitful collaboration? If not, then better let it go. If yes, only then, yes only then, continue...
- 4. Now it’s time to meet up and make great things happen.**

Does this all feel too calculating to you? Of course, this is a personal thing and it takes practice to find the right questions in a natural way. But it can turn into a fun and profitable habit, which helps you to truly connect with people. So let’s start practicing in your first next meetup. Can you discover the persons’ values, purpose and talents in one conversation?



Okay. Imagine. It's the end of the year. You mined for your talents, turned it into an offering, discovered what you need to stay on track and collaborated to speed up. Now it's December and you're looking back. You enjoyed some successes, but for sure some things turned out differently than you wished for. How can you make this season of reflection positive? How do you make sure you gain enough inspiration and energy to keep on creating great things in the coming years?

## Enjoy the Flight

### Why Appreciation Juices Up Your Creativity

You probably see that a lot of healthy companies are also having lot's of fun. Maybe they're organizing big flashy events or tiny get-togethers. Just to take time to enjoy and appreciate what is. And maybe you've been noticing that they keep on doing this, also when they're living the more tense and uncertain phases of their business life.

This is because appreciation actually has an important function. Appreciation juices up your creativity and that of the people you work with.

**You'll see this clearly when looking at the natural creation cycle.**

In the **cold and dark winter**, after a year of hard work, you withdraw yourself. Relax. You process all experiences and emotions. Clean things up. And in the silence you're able to hear your new ideas, dreams and wishes. The seeds...

When the snow melts and the first **sunny spring** day arrives, you start to carefully sow. You share your fragile ideas first with people you trust. You curiously explore possibilities, define strategies and plan, creating the right soil.

In the **hot summer** your idea is turned into a strong sprout. Now you fully go for it and work hard to make things grow.

And when the **fierce autumn** comes you can enjoy and share the fruits of your hard work.

Sometimes the fruits are big and juicy and it only makes sense to enjoy and share them.

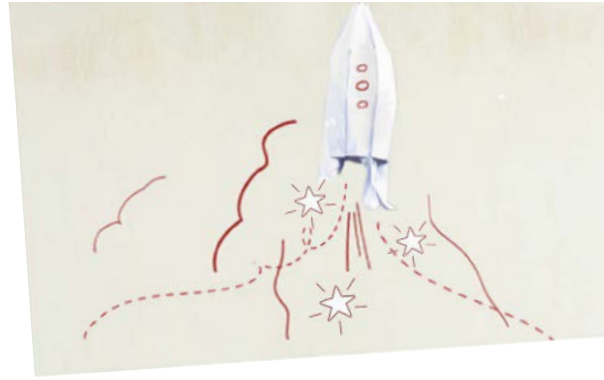
At times you might feel there should have been other fruits or more fruits. Or that these fruits are not 'good enough.' But also here you better eat and share them. It's food. It gives you the essential energy and inspiration to get yourself going.

And this is exactly the function of those fun moments. Not every crazy party has this effect though.

Go to the next post to find 5 ways to celebrate this season so that it boosts your new year creativity.

# Get yourself going

## 5 ways to make this celebratory season a booster for your creative new year



Sinterklaas, Santa Claus, New Years Eve. There it is again. The festive season. Love it or hate it. It's happening anyways. So it might be a good idea to take a moment and think about how you can turn this season into a booster for a creative new year. Worth trying, right?

Don't keep postponing celebration until you feel you have achieved 'enough'. No, do it wherever you are now. So you can start to experience the benefits. How? Read the 5 ways to celebrate and decide what would work for you at this moment.

### 1. Openly enjoy the applause

Performers rehearse in advance how they will receive the applause. How to bow, smile, hold hands or not. Because receiving applause gives them what they need to keep on going in good spirits. So maybe this is a good practice for you too. How can you openly receive and enjoy appreciation? ("Nice dress!" "Yes, I love it too, thanks")

### 2. Enhance the celebratory moments in your community

Every organization or community has moments for celebrating. The most famous ones are the Friday-afternoon-drinks, Christmas or anniversaries. Great, nothing wrong with that! But most of these are so habitual that they lose their meaning and so miss the effect. How can you make these festivities into moments of receiving and appreciation? A well-prepared speech or some spontaneous storytelling can already make the difference.

### 3. Letting others share in your success

...so you can multiply it and enjoy it even more. Maybe you'd like to organize something extra for your favorite clients, give some free stuff away or support another entrepreneur.

### 4. See people enjoying the fruits of your work

The actor has his audience right in front of him and can't get around them. But a lot of entrepreneurs hardly see their clients (and especially not the happy ones). So sometimes you need to actively connect with them. Even just sending out a feedback form will do. Or organizing a client event, doing a tour to visit some in their natural habitats or making a mini-documentary. Sounds like fun.

### 5. Applause for others you appreciate

Last, but not least... Give what you want to receive. Do you give appreciation to the people that inspire or help you? No? Write your favorite author an email, leave a stunning review at that great webshop or retweet that line that makes your day.

So. What tiny thing can you do this celebration season to receive and appreciate what is creating great things for you in the new year?



That's it. I hope this booklet was just what you needed to round up the year in a positive way. And you'll start the New Year full of renewed inspiration and energy.

If you liked this, then subscribe for my bi-weekly emails so I can keep you up-to-date and feed you regularly with new insights and how to's. Just fill in your name and email address in the form on my website, [www.elselienepema.com](http://www.elselienepema.com).

And in case 2014 is the year for you to (re)launch your business, then join my Kick Off program. Starting January 20th. Want to know more? Go to [www.elselienepema.com/kickoff](http://www.elselienepema.com/kickoff)

Looking forward to staying in touch and working with you.

Lots of good wishes,

Eselien



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