

A close-up photograph of a golf club head and a golf ball resting on green grass. The club head is silver with black accents and is positioned diagonally across the frame. The golf ball is white with a dimpled texture and is in the foreground. The background is a bright blue sky with some light clouds.

BREAKTHROUGH POWER FOR GOLFERS

A Daily Guide to an
Extraordinary Life

DAVID YOUNG

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POWER
FOR GOLFERS

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Wind Runner Press
Round Rock, Texas

Welcome

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Dedication

To the memory of my father and mother, Dayton and Mina, who taught me the value of hard work. And to my wife, Christina, who showed me the power of love.

Introduction

Tom Watson said, “My golf swing is a bit like ironing a shirt. You get one side smoothed out, turn it over and there is a big wrinkle on the other side. Then you iron that one out, turn it over and there is yet another wrinkle.” Perhaps you can relate. Golf is challenging – but that’s why we can’t wait to get on the course again.

There are no shortcuts to lowering your handicap, but there are proven techniques that will help you play smarter and better. *Breakthrough Power for Golfers* provides daily tips for improving your game, and it gives you tools for building a successful and rewarding life.

For each day of the year, *Breakthrough Power for Golfers* provides four great quotes, usually from golfers known for their outstanding accomplishments. Their insights are based on years of experience. You can read all four quotes in one minute, so you can squeeze them in before you start your breakthrough day.

The first quote is humorous, which will put you in a good mood, ready to face life’s challenges. The second one will help you focus on the important things in life, such as developing integrity, building a strong family, making a difference in the lives of

others, enjoying simple pleasures and finding time for renewal, all critical to laying an unshakeable foundation. The third quote will help you overcome the weaknesses and seemingly impossible circumstances that have held you back. And the fourth one will help you seize the summits. These will encourage you to dream big, set goals, develop effective plans of action, follow through with superior work and persevere, even after setbacks or failures. In short, *Breakthrough Power for Golfers* will help you leave a legacy of greatness and enjoy the journey along the way.

Becoming a great golfer isn't easy, but according to Jimmy Demaret, "The click of a solid wood shot soaring far down the fairway is well worth all the hours of practice."

Start with a smile

If mastering the golf swing is really nothing more than a matter of developing the muscle memory necessary to perform an unfamiliar physical movement like, say, riding a bicycle, then why aren't there 7,500 books on how to ride a bicycle.

— *Leslie Nielson*

Focus on what's important

The real prize is not the beautiful Masters trophy sitting on my shelf at home. The real prize was hitting a thousand chip shots in the backyard with my dad, skipping a ball off the water with Coach Steve Loy as my caddie and hitting a thousand golf balls by myself in the rain.

— *Phil Mickelson*

Break the barriers

I try to feel oily.

— *Sam Snead, on how he stays loose when he swings*

Seize the summits

Pop didn't teach me golf. He taught me discipline.

— *Arnold Palmer*

❧ *January 2*

Start with a smile

It's often necessary to hit a second shot to really appreciate the first one.

— *Henry Beard*

Focus on what's important

Where did it all go?

— *David Feherty, on achieving £1 million in career earnings*

Break the barriers

When I putt, I don't just look at the whole ball, I look at the back of the ball. By focusing on the back, you help ensure that you'll strike the ball from straight behind it, which in turn will encourage you to make the proper low back-and-through stroke.

— *Greg Norman*

Seize the summits

The ones who maintain their commitments are sustained by a vision of themselves as they would like to be. The ones who falter are those who rely on progress to sustain their motivation. When progress stops, so does their commitment.

— *Dr. Bob Rotella*

Start with a smile

Bunker: Horrendous place. Hitler committed suicide in one.

— *Anonymous*

Focus on what's important

Keep excited – it's more fun working toward something than just waiting around for nothing in particular to happen.

— *Jack Nicklaus*

Break the barriers

It is important to be a good bunker player, because then you don't have to fear the bunkers when you're shooting for the greens. Fear in your swing is what causes errant shots. So if you work on your sand game, and you can get out of bunkers, you know you're going to get up and down most of the time. Then you won't be afraid to hit that shot at the pin if it's tucked near a trap.

— *Ted Schulz*

Seize the summits

The one regret I have is that I was not good about letting little mistakes go. A shot I missed. A stupid bogey. They would stay with me for a few holes and that's not good. The times that I played well, I played better because I accepted mistakes.

— *Ben Crenshaw*

❧ *January 4*

Start with a smile

My golf swing is a bit like ironing a shirt. You get one side smoothed out, turn it over and there is a big wrinkle on the other side. Then you iron that one out, turn it over and there is yet another wrinkle.

— *Tom Watson*

Focus on what's important

It's important to get away with family and friends. I've always strived for balance in my life. Sometimes you have to put the clubs away. When you have balance, you're going to be more successful.

— *Tiger Woods*

Break the barriers

It is important to start the backswing mainly with the left side in order to encourage a full extension of that arm.

— *Bobby Jones*

Seize the summits

I used to hit my driver off every tee, then I saw some of the players hitting three-woods off the tees. "Ah hah," I thought. "So that's course management!"

— *Patty Sheehan*

Start with a smile

Golf is a game everybody quits, but nobody stops playing.

— *Bill Davis*

Focus on what's important

It's just plain, healthy fun to be outside, competing and enjoying each other.

— *Robert Dedman*

Break the barriers

What you might learn in six months of practice, your pro can tell you in five minutes.

— *Jackie Burke*

Seize the summits

No doubt you know the abject frustration of losing your swing in the middle of a round. A good way to regain your feel is to grip the club at the clubhead end and make a few practice swings. This makes the club very, very light. It gives you a different sensation with your hands. When you go back to swinging the club normally, you'll automatically be able to feel the clubhead.

— *Tom Watson*

❧ January 6

Start with a smile

Conversation: Small talk between shots. If your partner's talking about someone who isn't around, it's gossip. If he's talking about himself, it's dull. If he's discussing your 250-foot drive, it's of paramount importance.

— *Martin Ragaway*

Focus on what's important

Golf never palls or grows stale, as morning by morning the players appear at the teeing-ground with as keen a relish as if they had not seen a club for a month. Nor is it only while the game lasts that the zest is felt. How the player loves to recall the strokes and other incidents of the match, so that it is often played over again next morning while still in bed.

— *James Balfour*

Break the barriers

To build maximum clubhead speed you must employ centrifugal force instead of brute force/body effort.

— *Dean Reinmuth*

Seize the summits

At some point, you say to yourself, "I want to be the best." But when you honestly make that commitment, you have to realize all the dedication and time that it takes.

— *Raymond Floyd*

Start with a smile

Fade: An intentional slice by a skilled player. Useful in implying that your shot into that condominium on the right was intentional: “I’d been meaning to get together with those folks for some time.”

— *Bill Geist*

Focus on what’s important

Don’t take your bad shots home with you.

— *Tony Lema*

Break the barriers

You’ll be a better putter over the long haul if you learn to take a carefree approach to your game on the greens.

— *Fred Couples*

Seize the summits

The very best thing I do – better than my setup, better than my backswing turn, better than my downswing turn – is to visualize a perfect shot in my mind every time I step up to the ball.

— *John Daly*

❧ *January 8*

Start with a smile

You get either the youngest caddie or the oldest golf cart – and neither works.

— *Richard Haskell*

Focus on what's important

Make sure the career you choose is one you enjoy. If you don't enjoy what you are doing, it will be difficult to give the extra time, effort and devotion it takes to be a success.

— *Kathy Whitworth*

Break the barriers

You don't have to be big, strong or even Australian to play aggressive golf. You don't even have to be highly talented – you simply have to know how to make optimum use of whatever you have.

— *Greg Norman*

Seize the summits

The reason for my success is simple: fifteen years of practice and hard work.

— *David Duval*

Start with a smile

The trick is to know when that one time is about to happen.

— *Walter Hagen, on betting \$10 on and making a hole-in-one, after being told it was a 100,000-to-1 chance*

Focus on what's important

Helping a blind person get a seeing-eye-dog or helping an abused woman find a home has meant so much to me. I understand now why giving is more important than receiving.

— *Ken Venturi*

Break the barriers

On fairway bunker shots, your impulse is to try to help the ball into the air by hitting it on the upswing – the scoop move. Instead of helping the ball get up and out, the scoop actually makes you more likely to top the ball and leave it in the bunker. Convince yourself to swing down and through.

— *Tom Nees*

Seize the summits

Not one golfer in ten plays better when they're mad. Almost every golfer I know performs their best when they're filled with joy, optimism and a breathless anticipation of hitting the next shot.

— *Johnny Miller*

❧ *January 10*

Start with a smile

If there are several caddies waiting around for an assignment, I ask them to add forty-seven and fifty-four. Then I choose the one with the lowest answer.

— *Bruce Lansky*

Focus on what's important

The much-derided male custom of conducting business on the golf course actually has a certain validity. Would you really want to invest your life's savings with somebody who had just toed his ball into a better lie when he thought you weren't looking?

— *David Owen*

Break the barriers

The most rewarding things you do in life are often the ones that look like they cannot be done.

— *Arnold Palmer*

Seize the summits

The lower you can crouch behind the ball, the better you'll be able to read any breaks. That's why, if a green is elevated, you'll often see players walk down the slope to study the putt from ground level.

— *Nancy Lopez*

Start with a smile

I asked my caddie for a sand wedge and ten minutes later he came back with a ham on rye.

— *Chi Chi Rodriguez, on his Puerto Rican accent*

Focus on what's important

If you don't believe in something, don't sell your soul. Principles are more important than money.

— *Jack Nicklaus*

Break the barriers

First you teach a golfer to hook the ball by using his hands and arms properly. Then you teach him to take the hook away by using his body and legs properly.

— *Harvey Penick*

Seize the summits

On occasion another player will try to psyche you out. That player must not believe he can beat you with his clubs, so just play your game, and that guy eventually will beat himself.

— *Dr. Bob Rotella*

❧ *January 12*

Start with a smile

A handicapped golfer is anybody who plays with his boss.

— *Anonymous*

Focus on what's important

A positive mental attitude is a key ingredient to a balanced, long and happy life.

— *Robert Dedman*

Break the barriers

When things happen to us that we don't understand, we can scream, "Why me? Why me, God?" We can allow circumstances to drive us away from God. Or we can do an about-face and run to God and cling to Him and find in Him our security and our hope.

— *Paul Azinger, on being diagnosed with cancer*

Seize the summits

If you buy into the fact that you control your destiny, you'll never let another player impose his will on you or intimidate you.

— *Tiger Woods*

Start with a smile

Skill: Describing a great drive or long, difficult putt by one's self. Contrast with *act of God*, which describes a great drive or long, difficult putt by an opponent.

— Paul Dickson

Focus on what's important

There is more to life than golf. Being a good citizen, raising your children, educating them, spending some quality time with them, that's what I am into now.

— Lee Trevino

Break the barriers

Many golfers stretch their arms away from the body in an effort to reach the ball. Although extending the arms may feel powerful, it actually cuts power by creating upper-body tension. Instead of making a swing, you chop at the ball, usually resulting in a slice.

— James Frank

Seize the summits

Goals are the fuel of progress.

— Greg Norman

❧ *January 14*

Start with a smile

They tell me that playing golf is good for business, but with me it would probably be the medical business, the personal-injury business, the window replacement business.

— *Bill Geist*

Focus on what's important

Everyone needs a change of scenery. Golf is played on Mother Nature's own turf. For a few brief hours you can change your environment and give your mind a chance to suppress and alleviate all forms of distress.

— *Dr. Gary Wiren*

Break the barriers

A low, straight-back takeaway is the foundation of a wide swing arc, which eventually translates into increased power.

— *Butch Harmon*

Seize the summits

They don't give style points in golf. The main thing Harvey Penick got across to Ben Crenshaw and me was how to score. He taught us that the object of the game is numbers, not looking pretty. What's best is what works.

— *Tom Kite*

Start with a smile

Hanging lie: Situation when one member of the foursome keeps questioning your score from the last hole.

— Joe James

Focus on what's important

Confidence, of course, is an admirable asset to a golfer, but it should be an unspoken confidence. It is perilous to put it into speech. The gods of golf lie in wait to chasten the presumptuous.

— P.G. Wodehouse

Break the barriers

When most amateurs feel like they need to hit a big drive, they prepare as if they're going to get punched. They tense up, clench their muscles and hold the club really tight. That tension restricts your ability to cock your wrists and reduces your turn – a recipe for shorter shots, not longer ones. Keep your arms and hands loose and soft and you'll immediately add distance.

— Ernie Els

Seize the summits

We fail more often than we succeed. You can't let those failures get to you, because they will erode your confidence and chip away at your psyche.

— Tiger Woods

❧ *January 16*

Start with a smile

The trouble that most of us find with the modern matched set of clubs is that they don't really seem to know any more about the game than the old ones did.

— *Robert Browning*

Focus on what's important

Watch the raunchy humor. Sure, you want everyone to have a good time. But unless you know your partners' attitudes and outlooks well, you risk not only offending them but losing their business too.

— *Gary McCord*

Break the barriers

Walter Travis, probably the greatest putter the game has ever seen, always said that he visualized the putting stroke as an attempt to drive an imaginary tack into the back of the ball.

— *Bobby Jones*

Seize the summits

One can think of all the fundamentals on the practice tee. That is where they should be thought about and practiced until they are automatic – but don't think about them on the golf course.

— *Charles Kemp*

Start with a smile

In prehistoric times, cavemen had a custom of beating the ground with clubs and uttering spine-chilling cries. Anthropologists call this a form of primitive self-expression. When modern men go through the same ritual, they call it golf.

— *Anonymous*

Focus on what's important

I'm very relaxed when I'm playing, because it's not a job, it's a game.

— *Nancy Lopez*

Break the barriers

I try to hit every putt as if I've just made a million in a row.

— *Brad Faxon*

Seize the summits

Golf is a game where all putts are to be putted. It doesn't matter who's behind you. You should putt out every single putt. There are no gimmies on the PGA Tour.

— *Andy North*

❧ *January 18*

Start with a smile

Golf is not a game, it's bondage. It was obviously devised by a man torn with guilt, eager to atone for his sins.

— *Jim Murray*

Focus on what's important

I am more proud of the way people feel about me and the friends that I have than I am about my golf career.

— *Byron Nelson*

Break the barriers

I'm very careful never to make big swings without loosening up thoroughly first for fear of seriously straining a muscle, particularly in my back. Thus I begin each session by working the driver through my elbows so that its shaft lies across the middle of my back, then carefully stretching by rotating my upper body left and right.

— *Seve Ballesteros*

Seize the summits

The reason I like an over-all swing key is that out on the course it is too late, really, to work on individual portions of the swing. You run the risk of the swing collapsing on you. But an over-all swing key can get you around on those off days.

— *Johnny Miller*

Start with a smile

Don't play too much golf. Two rounds a day are plenty.

— *Harry Vardon*

Focus on what's important

Once you have actually puttied, it's a nice gesture to fix any spike marks or scuffs you may have caused or noticed – as many pros on tour habitually do for the benefit of players behind.

— *Jack Nicklaus*

Break the barriers

The next time you think you are about to make a nervous stroke called a yip, whistle first and I bet you hole the putt.

— *John Daly*

Seize the summits

Never assume that you can easily duplicate the best shot you ever hit with a particular club. Think instead of the typical shot with the club.

— *Hale Irwin*

❧ *January 20*

Start with a smile

A good one-iron shot is about as easy to come by as an understanding wife.

— *Dan Jenkins*

Focus on what's important

Avoid habits that are generally considered to lead to poor health levels. If you can, avoid alcohol. If you cannot, restrict the drinking. Many talented golfers have been ruined as their social drinking degenerated into alcoholism.

— *Dr. Peter Cranford*

Break the barriers

If there is a fountain of youth, it has to be exercise.

— *Gary Player*

Seize the summits

Players who are easily distracted should design complicated yet short pre-shot routines. Players who have a tendency to get anxious often benefit from slower routines that emphasize tension relief and give them time to regain a sense of control.

— *Robert Brown*

January 21 ❧

Start with a smile

We pros seem to be in possession of all sorts of occult secrets denied to more common man. I have seen golf books which were as difficult to read as advanced textbooks in physics, which they in fact somewhat resembled.

— *Joseph Amato*

Focus on what's important

Don't tell stories at the expense of holding up the group. Stop your tale when it is time for you – or others – to play your ball, and then pick up your story later.

— *John Steinbreder*

Break the barriers

Practice puts your brains in your muscles.

— *Sam Snead*

Seize the summits

Talent minus hard work equals zero success.

— *Earl Woods*

❧ *January 22*

Start with a smile

I was always more of a breaker than a thrower – mostly putters. I broke so many of those, I probably became the world's foremost authority on how to putt without a putter.

— *Tommy Bolt*

Focus on what's important

Golf is a friend. A friend is an antidote for despair.

— *Bob Toski*

Break the barriers

If two people are supposed to practice, it may increase the likelihood they'll do it. If one is not in the mood, the other may prod him to practice anyway.

— *Dr. Bob Rotella*

Seize the summits

Never gamble when there's a penalty such as water or out-of-bounds nearby.

— *Dave Pelz*

Start with a smile

Some golfers believe *overclubbing* can be corrected by *overlooking* or *undercounting*. When using a caddie it can also be corrected by *overtipping*.

— *Anonymous*

Focus on what's important

The score is important, of course. And the discovery that you are superior to another golfer is satisfying. But when your score is bad and the other fellow beats you, golf still has been a blessing to you. The score isn't the be all and the end all.

— *Tommy Armour*

Break the barriers

If rough is growing in the direction of the shot, the ball will come out easier and faster; if it is against that direction, the grass will resist the club, so you must swing harder.

— *Raymond Floyd*

Seize the summits

When setting up on the tee, make sure you square yourself to the target and not the tee markers. Markers may be placed to direct you to the right or left of your intended target. It's helpful to stand back from the ball and survey the terrain before you put your peg in the ground.

— *Judy Rankin*

❧ *January 24*

Start with a smile

It's amazing how many people beat you at golf once you're no longer president.

— *George Bush*

Focus on what's important

Don't give advice unless you're asked.

— *Amy Alcott*

Break the barriers

If you're a *feel* putter like I am, consider using lead tape on the bottom of your putter when greens are slow. I'll use from one to three pieces, depending on speed. That lets me make a consistent stroke no matter where I'm playing.

— *Tiger Woods*

Seize the summits

Make your goals specific, measurable and time-dependent. Instead of setting the goal "to get better this year," be more specific and have a timetable in mind, such as "I want to improve my handicap three strokes by October 1 of this year."

— *Patrick Cohn*

Start with a smile

In my house in Houston I still have that putter with which I missed that two-and-a-half-foot putt to win the Open. It's in two places.

— *Doug Sanders*

Focus on what's important

Everybody wants to be an exceptional golfer without spending the time on that journey. Half the fun is the journey.

— *Andy North*

Break the barriers

I am convinced that the happiest and best golfers are those who have realized that there is no single gimmick that works, and that good golf is attained only by patience and humility, and by continually practicing both the outer and inner games.

— *Timothy Gallwey*

Seize the summits

Don't focus too much on your opponent, no matter what shot he or she hits, or you'll put unnecessary pressure on yourself.

— *Jim McLean*

❧ January 26

Start with a smile

If golf had never been invented, how would they measure hail?

— *Ron Dentinger*

Focus on what's important

A lot of young players on the LPGA and PGA Tour make the mistake of thinking about the money. Money is their first thought because, like all of us, they need it. But this actually hinders their playing. When they start worrying about money, they freeze over putts because they're thinking, "Gosh, every time I miss a shot I'm costing myself money!"

— *Kathy Whitworth*

Break the barriers

When I have a short but missable putt, I imagine there is a gutter from the ball to the hole. All I have to do is hit the ball and the trench will funnel it into the hole. I can't tell you how many times this visualization drill helped me save par.

— *Gary McCord*

Seize the summits

All of my life I've always had the urge to do things better than anybody else.

— *Babe Didrikson Zaharias*

Start with a smile

Why am I using a new putter? Because the old one didn't float too well.

— *Craig Stadler*

Focus on what's important

I get a kick out of overtipping people who usually don't get any tip at all, like the girl at the ice-cream counter. It leaves her happy and makes my ice cream taste better.

— *Pete Dye*

Break the barriers

On bunker shots, don't keep your eye on the ball. Instead, watch a spot about an inch to an inch-and-a-half behind the ball, because that's where your impact should be. Since you don't need to hit the ball on this shot, there's no reason to look at it.

— *Greg Norman*

Seize the summits

When you are in a situation on a golf course where it seems a toss-up whether to hit the ball or to submit to the humiliating penalty of declaring yourself to have an unplayable lie, you will be better off taking the unplayable lie.

— *M. Scott Peck*

❧ *January 28*

Start with a smile

G is for *Green*, that's constructed to roll

In every direction away from the hole.

— *Richard Armour*

Focus on what's important

Doing what you love solves so many problems. If you do what you love, it's never hard to get out of bed in the morning with a smile on your face. If you do what you love, it will be easy to work as hard as you have to work to succeed.

— *Dr. Bob Rotella*

Break the barriers

Lessons are important in golf because it is easier to create a good habit than to change a bad one.

— *Paul Parker*

Seize the summits

The thing to be careful of in the wind is to see that you don't let it rattle you. It baits you into pressing. When you're driving against a stiff breeze, you should take things a bit more easily than usual. Don't try to overcome the wind, but just accept your loss of distance and hit the ball comfortably down the fairway.

— *Bobby Jones*

Start with a smile

“Go in! Go in!”: A phrase yelled by golfers attempting to sink a difficult putt, or by those playing behind a slow foursome.

— *Anonymous*

Focus on what’s important

Every night I’m home, when it’s bedtime, I lie down next to each of my two young kids until they’re asleep. I didn’t have enough of those moments with my other kids.

— *Lee Trevino*

Break the barriers

Hitting the ball a long way has nothing to do with muscle power and brute force. Sure, I’m a big, tall guy and that certainly helps. But it’s good, solid technique, not size and brute force, which sends the ball a long way.

— *Ernie Els*

Seize the summits

A good approach is to imagine that the ball that you’ve just sliced into the trees isn’t yours but belongs to someone else. Think how you would talk to that golfer if you were caddying for him. Undoubtedly, you would find some kind words to say – you wouldn’t berate him. Nor should you berate yourself with self-talk.

— *Dr. Richard Coop*

❧ *January 30*

Start with a smile

Golf is a game in which you yell “fore,” shoot six, and write down five.

— *Paul Harvey*

Focus on what’s important

Golf has probably kept more people sane than psychiatrists have.

— *Harvey Penick*

Break the barriers

It was a great joy to improve. There wasn’t enough daylight in the day for me. I always wished the days were longer so I could practice and work.

— *Ben Hogan*

Seize the summits

When I feel myself tightening up under the pressure, I shake my hands at the wrists like a swimmer who’s on the mark ready to start a race. I will often do it before I putt. Any tightness in my body eases, so I can make my best effort without forcing the stroke.

— *Tom Watson*

Start with a smile

Since bad shots come in groups of three, a fourth bad shot is actually the beginning of the next group of three.

— Henry Beard

Focus on what's important

Harry Vardon once warned against becoming *overgolfed*. This is certainly true for me. I need to recharge my batteries doing many different things.

— Gary Player

Break the barriers

I work to the rule that if the green appears to be fast, I will aim my putt at an imaginary hole six to twelve inches short of the hole. If the green appears to be slow, and particularly if during the last two or three feet to the hole the ground is uphill, I hit it firmly for the back of the hole.

— Bobby Locke

Seize the summits

The tough question to answer is, of course, “How do I control my emotions?” One thing I’ve done in the past is make a secret pact with myself. “No matter how mad I may get or how poorly I play,” I tell myself, “I will not let on to my opponent how I feel.” Call this playing golf like a professional poker player.

— Hale Irwin

Dear Friend,

I hope you enjoyed the first 31 days of *Breakthrough Power for Golfers*. If you'd like to read all 366 days, you can order either the paperback, the Kindle or the Nook edition at InsightsOnSuccess.com.

— David Young

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David Young is a policy advisor to the governor of Texas. He received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree, Summa Cum Laude, from the University of Arkansas and his Master of Business Administration degree from The University of Texas at Austin.

David grew up in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Both of his grandfathers were born before the Civil War. He and his wife, Christina, live in Round Rock, Texas. David has traveled extensively throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, and has visited South America, Asia and the Middle East.

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