

NAAFA NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TO AID FAT AMERICANS, INC.

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Editor: Rosalie I. Radcliffe

STOP DIETING AND START LIVING

Fat people do not have to be unhappy, claims Susan Wooley. She is convinced that it's not the extra pounds, but the extra anxiety, that's the real cause of fat people's heavy hearts.

Dr. Susan C. Wooley is an associate professor of clinical psychology at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center. She also recently has become a national consultant to Lane Bryant. With her husband Wayne Wooley, also a clinical psychologist, she is co-founder of the Clinic for Eating Disorders at the University. Both Drs. Wooley are serving as Advisors to NAAFA. (See article in January-February 1980 Newsletter.)



DR. SUSAN C. WOOLEY

People should forget about losing weight and learn to like themselves--every pound and inch, suggests Dr. Wooley. Herself a fat woman, she is very familiar with the diet circuit. Up to 1969 she had tried every fad diet invented, including a brief try at total fasting. Even after reaching a "normal" weight, "I didn't feel normal," she remembers, "I still felt fat." Her personal decision was to stay fat and like herself, and much of her time is spent in helping others caught in a similar dilemma decide what is best for them. People should realize they have a choice, she says.

Dr. Wooley sees weight as primarily a women's issue, one which should be discussed in consciousness-raising groups around the country. "Women who are about 10 pounds underweight [can be] considered 'fat' in our society [while] men have to be 30-40 pounds overweight before they are considered obese, so it's harder on women."

Many women ruin their health on fad diets and drugs in order to maintain their desired weight. The stress of dieting and the stress of unhappiness over weight may be as harmful to health as extra pounds, claims Dr. Wooley. The links between obesity and poor health, she thinks, have been oversimplified. There is new evidence that low body weight is equally as dangerous to health as obesity. Some authorities, she continues, believe that fluctuations in weight are more damaging than maintaining a high but stable weight.

The important thing to remember about the health situation, Dr. Wooley says, is that even though losing weight may be good for your health, only a small minority are ever successful at dieting. How effective is a treatment that doesn't work, she asks.

Contrary to popular belief, many overweight adults don't eat any more than normal weight adults. Heredity and constitutional factors make a big contribution to body weight, says Dr. Wooley. One study shows that 80 percent of the children of obese parents will be obese because their metabolic rate is lower--they just don't burn calories as fast as normal children.

(continued on Page 2)

Dr. Wooley, a wife and mother, understands how the problems of fat women affect their home and family life. Women who learn to accept their weight, she claims, may be surprised to discover their husbands are happier. "Many overweight women are afraid to ask their husbands if they mind their being fat. They just assume their husbands don't like it. But many men would love their wives to stop dieting . . . to go out and do things with them," she says.

"It's your own image that determines how people relate to you," states Dr. Wooley. "Today, having accepted my size, it's much easier for me to flirt with men. I project something positive about myself, which always makes a woman more attractive." Too many women expect to hold the attention of people by the way they look, she asserts. "We believe that if we have the perfect dress and look just perfect that everything will be perfect, like going to the prom. The thing is, there is no prom."

Life will become easier for fat men and women once society's attitude changes, Dr. Wooley believes. Television surveys show that no continuing characters on TV are white, female and fat. The few fat women on TV are black, "because the values are still different for blacks," says Dr. Wooley. But just as no one considers it strange any longer for a black mother to sell toothpaste, she believes society soon will accept a fat mother peddling products in the media.

Once society's attitude changes, Dr. Wooley says, the individual fat person's image can change very rapidly. In the meantime, she suggests we stop believing the myths about obesity and fat people. Instead of counting calories, start liking yourself no matter what your size. Cease being a victim and stretch to your full potential. Follow Susan Wooley's personal philosophy: Be the best you can be.

--RIR

[Much of the above material was taken from an article by Deborah Licklider, Food Editor, Philadelphia DAILY NEWS.]

BOARD MEETINGS OPEN TO MEMBERS

Any NAAFA member in good standing is welcome to attend meetings of the Board of Directors. Scheduled meetings for the next several months are: December 12, January 16, February 20, March 20, and April 10. If you are interested in attending, call 212/776-8120 to confirm the date, time, and place.

HELP YOURSELF--HELP SOMEONE ELSE--
HELP NAAFA--GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP!



ROSALIE RADCLIFFE

Persons join organizations for various reasons. Anticipation of fulfilling personal needs is often as strong as the wish to serve an idealistic/political/social cause. These motives do not necessarily stand at cross purposes; frequently, they reward and nourish each other. Individual members receive personal benefits that help them promote the goals of the organization which in turn is able to serve the needs of its members more adequately.

NAAFA was founded to promote tolerance and understanding in our society for fat people while working to increase the self-esteem of individual fat persons. Much has been accomplished in the past decade which can be viewed with pride by those involved. Most will agree, however, that much more is required before all fat people can assume their rightful roles and places in society.

In order for NAAFA to move ahead effectively in our pursuit of these goals, a workable balance must be found and maintained between personal and public needs and ambitions. When one set of values outweighs the other, direction and goals for the entire organization are detoured and obscured. A degree of flexibility is necessary, of course, but both individual and group benefits must be nurtured and neither should be sacrificed for the other.

Persons in positions of leadership within an organization have a special obligation for promoting the group's purpose. NAAFA leaders have an extra burden to carry; they lose their anonymity by becoming public figures and gain access to confidential information not available to the general membership. This added responsibility and its accompanying power becomes a heavy load in a continual struggle to find a workable balance between personal rewards/ambitions and group goals/benefits.

Many persons within NAAFA succeed admirably in seesawing their way amidst personal gain and group welfare. Others, unfortunately, seem to fail infamously. No one, of course, has found the perfect formula for navigating this tightrope. It is my personal hope, however, that during NAAFA's second decade all of us will allow the organization's goals of tolerance, understanding and self-esteem for everyone to season our values, motives, and actions. And when error is made, let it more often

be in favor of the group than the individual. May our joint effort enable NAAFA to enter the 1990s as a well-known, powerful organization that has made giant strides against discrimination for the well-being of all fat persons.

--RIR

SOCIAL NEWS

NAAFAN WEDDING

Audrey Glass and Roland Petit were married at 11 a.m. on May 18, 1980 at Har Zion Temple in Gladwynne, Pennsylvania by Rabbi Gerald Wolpe. Following the ceremony a small reception was held at Audrey's parents' home in Bala-Cynwyd, with lox and bagels and champagne. Roland and Audrey are presently living in Philadelphia and are members of the Pennsylvania Chapter.



AUDREY AND ROLAND PETIT

IN MEMORIAM

NAAFA extends condolences to Jane Goetz, former Florida Chapter Chairperson, on the death of her mother.

REMEMBER NAAFA WHEN YOU MOVE!
Unless you or the post office inform us of your new address, you may lose the balance of your membership privileges. The post office is supposed to forward mail for a year after you move. But play it safe -- send us your new address.



DIANNE RUBINSTEIN

BOARD ELECTS TREASURER

Dianne Rubinstein was elected Treasurer at the Board of Directors' meeting on October 17. She will be completing a term that expires December 31, 1981.

Since June she had been serving as Acting Treasurer due to the resignation of Matthew F. Madigan, who had succeeded Ernest Harff.

At the same meeting the Board elected Nancy Summer to serve as Assistant Treasurer. This is a new position created by the Board.

When writing to the NAAFA office, if your correspondence requires a reply, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. You will receive a faster answer and be helping NAAFA cut operating expenses. Thank you.

ABBY CONTINUES SUPPORT

In November, 1979, NAAFA received mention in the syndicated column, "Dear Abby." She suggested that a fat woman who had contacted her might find the help she was looking for by writing to NAAFA and provided the address. Three months later, Lisbeth Fisher, NAAFA's Executive Secretary, calculated that the office had received 1,581 requests for literature as a direct result of the newspaper column.

Eleven months later Abby has done it again! "Fat, Female and Miserable" wrote to her elaborating some of the many difficulties a fat person has to cope with. Two suggestions were given. The first was Overeaters Anonymous and she provided their California address. Her second suggestion was: "The National Association to Aid Fat Americans, Inc., [our address]. This is a group of frankly fat people who have banded together for the purpose of helping the obese to accept themselves as they are. There is much to be said for both [NAAFA and OA]."

Until NAAFA is able to support the expense of national advertising, we are especially appreciative for publicity such as this which reaches millions of Abby's daily readers.

VICTORIES IN CALIFORNIA !!



Things have been happening in California in the area of job discrimination--good things. One segment of the action is related here and another is told in the article "Oakland Activist Wins Crusade".

Part of the story began nearly 2 years ago in Daly City when Diana Archer was refused a job as police dispatcher. She applied for the job in February 1979, passed the routine written test easily, as well as the typing test, personal interview, and police department screening of her background. Seven months later she was overjoyed to receive a letter stating she had the job, pending a physical.

After the physical, Ms. Archer was told she was no longer eligible because of her weight and high blood pressure, a condition she denied having. Her request for a second physical by another doctor was denied. "I've never had any trouble before," she said, having worked as a theater cashier, a post office employee, and a dispatcher for a vending machine company. "I've lived in Daly City all my life. I've watched it grow and I know it well. I listen to my police scanner radio all the time, [and] the job sounded like something I'd really like."

The letter Ms. Archer received denying her the job stated that if she lost weight she could come back to see them. "By the time I lost 200 pounds [necessary amount to reach the desired weight suggested by the city guidelines], the job would be gone. And if I could, I would've lost it without them," she said. "I've been fat all my life, since I was eight," stated Ms. Archer.

Her size has made her the target of critical remarks from friends and strangers--situations she has learned to handle with quick wit and good humor. If the job refusal had happened 10 years ago she feels she probably would have cried

and then dropped the issue. When the Daly City position was denied her, however, she decided it was time to fight back with a charge of job discrimination.

With the help from the Employment Law Center in nearby San Francisco and attorney Prudence Poppink, Ms. Archer filed complaints with the federal Department of Labor, the Office of Civil Rights, the Division of Revenue Sharing, and the state Department of Fair Employment and Housing. An investigation by the federal Division of Revenue Sharing, which contributes a large amount of money annually to the police department budget, initiated action.

In July 1980, after a visit by a federal investigator, Daly City agreed to allow Ms. Archer a second physical by a doctor selected by city officials. She was found to be possibly "borderline" hypertensive, but there was "no evidence that this degree of elevation would interfere with her performance."

A month later Ms. Archer learned she had won the job and was to begin work. "Everyone assumes that because you're fat you have high blood pressure and that you have all kinds of other things wrong with you," she said. "I just proved them wrong." She is now working to obtain back pay and seniority for time spent off the job fighting the case.

OAKLAND ACTIVIST WINS CRUSADE

Not very far from Daly City where Diana Archer's struggle for employment was going on, another battle over discriminatory policies in employment was taking place. In Oakland, Louise Wolfe, Chairperson for the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of NAAFA, took her crusade to the Personnel Department of Alameda Co. Her encounter was prompted by their claim, two years earlier, that she had failed to qualify for employment as a recreation therapist because of weight.

On March 25, 1980, Ms. Wolfe wrote Mr. Alfred Nardi, Director of Personnel for the county, requesting his office abolish regulations concerning weight for county employees. A few days later an article in the OAKLAND TRIBUNE quoted Mr. Nardi's claim that since February, 1980 "Corpulence is no longer a factor in our hiring. It used to be some years ago, but all that has been changed."

The following day Ms. Wolfe anonymously visited the personnel office. True, the height/weight chart was gone. All the brochures and job descriptions mentioned the county's weight policy, however. When the front desk employees were asked, both said that the policy was valid and one produced a copy for Ms. Wolfe. She then talked with the Assistant Personnel Director. He explained that the policy change had not been fully enacted because the county was considering other changes before printing new literature. He promised to cross out all references to the policy in their present supply of literature and notify all personnel.

Later the same day Ms. Wolfe revisited the personnel office and requested a copy of the new medical standards which had been passed in February. She discovered the new policy stated that anyone weighing over the specified chart listings was requested to see a private physician (at own expense) before examination by a county doctor. Applicants with existing diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease were disqualified regardless of degree of severity. Healthy overweight applicants could be hired conditionally provided they reached the desired weight during a 6-12 month probation period. These rules applied to all county positions.

During her second visit to the personnel office, Ms. Wolfe was able to obtain an appointment with Mr. Nardi. After their discussion, he made a verbal administrative decision to eliminate conditional employment for healthy fat people which would include all present employees.

The following day Ms. Wolfe hand-delivered a letter to Mr. Nardi requesting that the weight policy be changed to read: "A person's weight will not be the cause for applicants failing the medical examination unless it can be shown that the weight causes significant functional impairment which would interfere with job perform-

ance." During this visit he informed her that he had decided to drop the entire weight policy except for an optional program of weight loss. Two days later, on April 7, the Alameda County Civil Service Commission officially eliminated their weight policy except for Deputy Sheriff and safety positions.

1981 ELECTION COMMITTEE TO BEGIN WORK

The 1981 Election Committee is composed of those Board of Directors members whose terms will not expire in June 1981. They are Lisbeth Fisher, Chairperson; Ernest Harff, Dianne Rubinstein, Florane Sclar, and Davea Wallis.

If you are interested in running for a seat on the Board of Directors, please submit a letter to the committee chairperson, c/o the NAAFA office, indicating your interest and listing your qualifications. If you would like to suggest another person for a position, the committee would like to hear from you also. To receive further information concerning qualifications for a Board member or a copy of the election rules and manual, please send a SASE to the NAAFA office.

The 1981 Election Committee will be activated in December 1980, and will meet soon thereafter. It is important, therefore, that they receive your suggestions as soon as possible.

Due to production problems, this issue is not being mailed until late November.



the dumplings

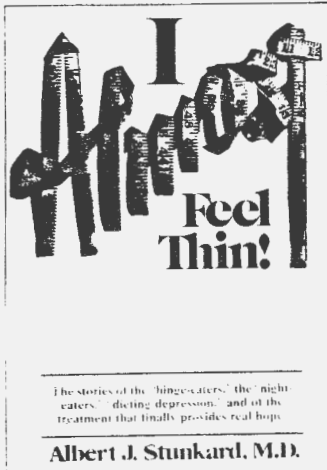
Fred Lucky, THE DUMPLINGS (Tempo Books, Grossett & Dunlap Publishers, NY, 1975, 1976), p. 26.

[Ed. Note: Two volumes of THE DUMPLINGS are available to NAAFA members through the Book Service for \$.95 each, plus \$.50 postage per book.]

I ALMOST FEEL THIN

Reviewed by Ethel Weiss, Ph.D.*

Alfred J. Stunkard's book is an interesting introduction to the study of obesity. As a psychiatrist and researcher he has been at the forefront of advances in the field. Through a discussion of the problems of some of his patients and the studies these have led him to undertake, we are able to see much of what is currently known about the problems of the obese and the treatment of obesity.



His clinical interests brought two problems to his early attention, the night-eating pattern and the binge-eating syndrome. The night-eating pattern is characterized by lack of appetite in the morning, over-eating in the evening, and combined agitation and insomnia. Stunkard concluded that this pattern represented a special kind of response to stress

found in some obese people and for them, weight loss was not very frequent.

Binge-eating involved a compulsive desire to eat as a way of drawing energy away from an often unconscious psychological conflict that the person cannot cope with directly. Surprisingly, this is more common among anorexics than obese persons. According to Stunkard, binge-eaters usually have severe emotional disturbances which do not respond to emotional support from family, friends, or physicians. He reports that a few binge-eaters who resolved their emotional difficulties also managed to lose a great deal of weight in the process.

Dr. Stunkard's work reveals that the age obesity begins is an important factor in predicting whether a person is a good candidate for a weight loss program. People who were fat children have the poorest prognosis for weight loss. They not only have fatter fat cells, they also have more of them. In addition, they are likely to have poor body images, to see their bodies as very negative and very central in preventing them from finding fulfillment.

His more optimistic findings deal with activity level and social factors that contribute to maintaining higher weights. When the obese increase their activity levels they not only expend more calories

but tune their appetite regulating mechanism so that intake is related to need. Normal weight girls at girl scout camp, for example, increase their activity and food intake but maintain their weight. Overweight girls increase their activity but not their appetite and lose weight.

Social factors also relate to weight. Higher socioeconomic classes have less occurrence of overweight. Weight is also influenced by religion and ethnicity. As environmental factors contribute to overweight, appropriate social and educational changes might lead to changes in weight patterns. Stunkard emphasizes that while obesity may be unhealthy it is not necessarily abnormal. It is very typical in certain subgroups.

Dr. Stunkard studied the relationship of depression to dieting. He distinguished between psychological factors (e.g., threat of independence) that result from loss of weight and biological factors that result from food deprivation. He points out that in evaluating a treatment for obesity, the emotional cost must also be assessed. Behavior modification is the treatment he views as least stressful.

Dr. Stunkard is very optimistic about behavior modification--the application of learning principles to the control of behavior. His own research, however, does not support its use very strongly. In one study 15% of a group who were trained in the use of behavior modification lost 20 pounds, but were all members of TOPS for several years and had just gained weight prior to the study. Another study found that only 28% of the members of TOPS who belonged in 1968 were still members in 1970. This group had a mean loss of 20 pounds in 1968 but only 16 pounds in 1970 (i.e., they had gained back 4 lbs.)! This reviewer believes behavior modification was not very successful for very many and thinks Stunkard's earlier conclusion still applies:

Most obese patients will not enter medical treatment for obesity; of those who do, most will not lose a significant amount of weight, and of those who do lose weight, most will regain it.

While I do not completely agree with Stunkard's optimism about behavior modification, this is a wise and compassionate book that fascinates as it educates.

Reviewer's comment: I found I Almost Feel Thin very readable and basically very sound. Stunkard writes well and the book would be enjoyed by our more curious members.

*Dr. Weiss is Chairperson, Department of Psychology, City College of New York, and serves as the Chairperson of NAAFA's Advisory Board.

Ed. Note: I ALMOST FEEL THIN will be available to NAAFA members through the Book Bazaar and Bountiful Boutique at a price of \$5.95, plus 75¢ postage and handling.

UPDATE ON LIQUID PROTEIN

Six fat people were closely monitored for 40 days by a research team at the University of Rochester Medical School. During this time the dieters ate nothing but commercially prepared liquid protein. Three of the six subjects experienced irregular heartbeats during the period of study.

The researchers' report, published in the September NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE stated that "a liquid protein diet is frequently associated with potentially life-threatening arrhythmias [irregular heart beats] even though the problem does not show up on ordinary electrocardiograms." Their report concluded: "We recommend that the use of liquid protein diets should be terminated pending further investigation of the causes and of prevention of the cardiac toxicity."

During 1977, after publication of THE LAST CHANCE DIET, it was estimated that 98,000 American women took liquid protein for at least a month. The Food and Drug Administration claims the diet may have been a factor in 60 deaths. This form of weight-reduction faded from popularity after the FDA issued warnings of its hazards. Unfortunately, it is still on the market, however.

THIRD ANNIVERSARY FOR SHADOWITZ FUND

On June 14, 1977, NAAFA Board member and Parliamentarian, Naomi Shadowitz, passed away.

Naomi was loved by many, and the Board of Directors established the Naomi Shadowitz Memorial Fund in her honor. Members of the committee administering the fund are Sheila Goodman, Chairperson; Carlos Allen and Michael Simpson.

The fund has been designated for special projects, such as the FAT CHANCE magazine and national advertising, all of which it is believed Naomi would have favored. It is currently collecting interest in a savings account until enough funds are raised to initiate one of these projects. All donations to the Naomi Shadowitz Fund are tax deductible and should be made payable to and mailed to NAAFA.

President's Message

BILL FABREY



NOT FAT ENOUGH FOR NAAFA?

Once again some NAAFA members find themselves discriminated against--except that WE--their fellow members--are the oppressors! I am talking about a peculiar and unfair form of reverse discrimination found in NAAFA called "pro-fat" discrimination. Members, especially female, who weigh less than their fatter sisters, are told by some men and women in this organization that they are "not fat enough to be in NAAFA." Incredible!

What is a new NAAFAn to think when she first attends a chapter meeting, dance, or convention, only to be asked by women, "Why are you here? You aren't fat enough to have any problems!" Or to be told by men who are F.A.'s, "You don't appeal to me--you aren't fat enough." Both comments are enough to drive many women to tears and to renounce their membership in NAAFA.

Imagine a timid 150, 200, or even 250 pound woman coming to NAAFA almost as a last resort--to find her place in a society that makes it hard on any woman who weighs even a few pounds more than is considered "proper." She has encountered most of the same kinds of discrimination as her fatter girlfriends, yet some NAAFA members give her a hard time about "not being fat enough."

I recently overheard someone make such statements to a new member who weighs about 180 pounds. The individual who spoke should have known better--she is a member of NAAFA's Board of Directors! I believe that she was not being mean or malicious in her comments--just thoughtless. I have heard other conversations, however, in which old-fashioned jealousy on the part of the fatter participant may have been a factor.

Please! It is time for all of us to consider the feelings of all NAAFAns--not just the very fat. There are no weight restrictions on membership in this Association.

BBW COMPLAINTS

NAAFA has received many inquiries about the magazine BBW (BIG BEAUTIFUL WOMAN) since advising members in our February-March 1979 Newsletter that it was beginning publication. Because of what we believe is unethical behavior by the management of BBW, however, NAAFA has withdrawn all cooperation from the magazine.

If you have subscription or other problems involving BBW, write directly to the magazine. Their present address is: BBW, 3518 Cahuenga Blvd. West, Suite 210, Los Angeles, CA 90068. It has recently come to our attention that some members requesting single issues or full subscriptions have received no reply or refund in spite of repeated letters to BBW. If dissatisfaction continues, these people might want to carry the problem through general consumer complaint channels, including the U.S. Postal authorities.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES MENTIONED IN THE NAAFA NEWSLETTER APPEAR FOR PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY. STATEMENTS MADE BY ADVERTISERS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT OR AGREE WITH OFFICIAL NAAFA POLICY OR PURPOSES, NOR DOES NAAFA ENDORSE ANY PRODUCT OR SERVICE.

PERSONAL ADS

Attractive NY male 46, 6'2" would enjoy hearing from a very busty, warm, affectionate female. Enjoy theatre, movies. Reply to Dept. 121, NAAFA, P.O. Box 43, Bellerose, NY 11426.

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Intelligent male NAAFAn, 32, would like to meet a female NAAFAn approximately 300 lbs., 26-32, intelligent, attractive, non-smoking, NY-NJ-CT area. Reply to Dept. 122, NAAFA, P.O. Box 43, Bellerose, NY 11426.

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I am a white male, 5'6", 58 years old, 160 lbs., live alone in a small apartment in Camden, and work nearby. I would like to hear from females 18 to 50 (white). reply to Dept. 123, NAAFA, P.O. Box 43, Bellerose, NY 11426.

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In Memory

of

STANLEY FISHER

December 22, 1966 - May 12, 1978

Only 11 years old, he wanted to be President of NAAFA when he grew up.

COMMERCIAL ADS

Copies of the program from both 1979 (Tenth Anniversary) and 1980 Conventions are available. Send \$1 for each one desired, indicating the year of interest, to NAAFA, P.O. Box 43, Bellerose, NY 11426.

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Learn about NAAFA's history through the Newsletter. Back issues are available as follows:

Single issues, \$1 each, plus a SASE.
One volume (6 issues), \$5 postpaid.
7-volume set (42 issues), \$25 postpaid.

All issues are available from Vol. I, No.1 October 1970. A few are in Xerox form, but most are originals.

CLASSIFIED AD RATES

Commercial Ads: 50 cents/word, 10-word minimum. Department number available at \$10/issue. (Contact NAAFA for display rates.)

Non-Commercial Ads: 25 cents/word, 10-word minimum. Department number available at \$5/issue.

Non-members must pay commercial rates for personal ads.

All ads are accepted for publication provided they are not against NAAFA's purpose. They may include personals, wanted to sell or buy, employment notices, meeting announcements, and many other items.

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