



Newsletter

May 2022



Dear friends, families, supporters and teens,

Spring is upon us and you remain our hero. It hasn't been easy staying strong during a Pandemic, but you have and you are still standing. You've gotten up everyday, put forth your best effort, and led through your example that there is hope in every season, even the difficult ones.

We hope you know how valuable you are. We need you and your stories, and we need each other. Connections are one of the keys to our emotional health. Thank you for being an important link in our chain of connections and after reading "Your Story" and the "Power of Listening to Another's Story", please consider sharing yours with us. Your story can be shared anonymously or not. See the details on how to share below.

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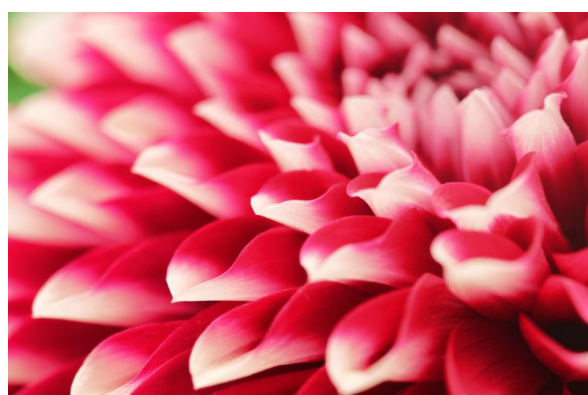
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Hope and Hope-Bearer

By Kristi Barth, co-founder Teens Finding Hope and book author

April is designated as [National Month of Hope](#) and I'd like to suggest

we just keep that rolling right along into May. With hope comes promise. Whether we’re hoping for a brighter tomorrow, or the promise of a good meal, there are many reasons to be hopeful. When things are at their darkest, hope is our best defense and strongest ally. The value and positive impact hope can have on human life is widely recognized and difficult to ignore.

People often speak about hope strengthening their resolve and accompanying them even in their darkest hour; guiding them through seemingly desperate circumstances. Hope helps us remain committed to our goals and motivated to take action towards achieving. Hope gives people a reason to continue fighting and believing that their current circumstances will improve, despite unpredictable circumstances.

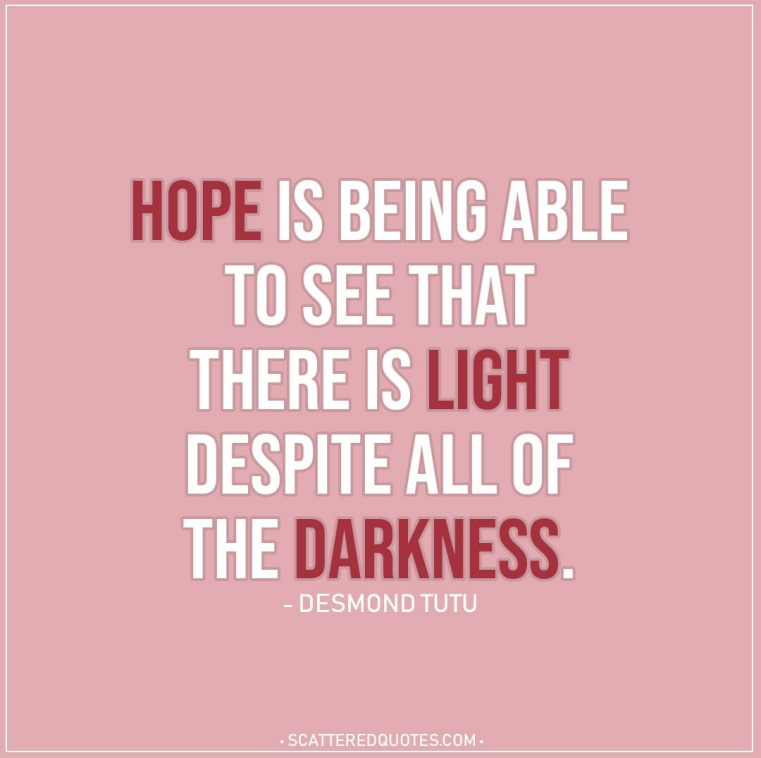
As psychologist and renowned hope researcher Charles Snyder stated so eloquently: *A rainbow is a prism that sends shards of multicolored light in various directions. It lifts our spirits and makes us think of what is possible. Hope is the same – a personal rainbow of the mind.*

Spread some sunshine Everyone needs a little hope every now and then so take this month as an opportunity to bring hope to someone and send a little sunshine their way. The good part about this is that it just takes a little effort to become **hope-bearers**. Volunteer by offering your service, lift the spirits of someone dealing with a medical issue, spend a day with the homeless, or commit to small acts of kindness during the month!

Don’t forget yourself!
Hope is something that opens the heart, mind, and soul, but sometimes we tend to forget the power that hope holds. Take a deep breath and visualize yourself in a new situation, whether it is about your health, your relationships, or your career.

Share your hope
Share stories of hope, favorite quotes, and moments of inspiration with friends and family and encourage others to do the same.

We hope for a bright year for you filled with possibilities, opportunities to smile and time to ponder positive things. Blessings and thanks for being a **HOPE-Bearer**.





*Your Smile is Your Logo...
Your Personality is Your Business Card...
How You Leave Others Feeling
After Having an Experience With You
Becomes Your Trademark...
- Jay Danzie*

The Power in Listening to Another's Story

By Sherry Krueger, co-founder of Teens Finding Hope and book author



Several years ago one of my students had written about his weekend. His paper read, “I went to the park with my dad. We drank a pop. We came home.” It wasn’t much of a story for a third grader, so I knelt down, intent upon teaching him how to expand his thoughts. I began by asking him about the pop. “What kind of pop did you drink?”

“I drank a Coke,” he said. Then he whispered, “I still have the can.”

“You still have the can?”

He nodded, and everything I was about to teach was swallowed immediately. He told me how his father would promise to do something with him every week, but he would never show up. For years this boy would wait every Saturday, hoping to see his dad’s car, but it never came. Until the previous Saturday. On that day his dad had taken him to the park where they sat, talked, and drank Coke. Since it was the only thing he’d ever done with his dad, he saved the can. He placed that red can on his nightstand so it was the first thing he would see in the morning and the last thing he would see before falling asleep.

His story taught me an important lesson. The power to help others is strengthened when we listen. It’s easy to make split judgements about someone’s situation and act on our judgment. If I had acted on my initial thoughts that day and given him the advice I thought he needed I would have missed the importance of his story altogether. His story

was never about a weekend at the park. It was about a small red can and the significance it held.

I remember this boy and his can every time I meet with someone, and it prompts me to take extra time to listen. As researcher Brene Brown explains, connection only happens when people allow themselves to be authentically seen. To be authentically seen requires people to be courageous enough to tell their stories, and it requires the rest of us to be patient enough to listen.

Listening to understand rather than to reply has enabled me to help others more effectively, as well as help me erase misconceptions I wasn't aware I had. After listening to my neighbor, I now understand why the migrant parents around our neighborhood allow their kids to drink pop and eat sweets every afternoon. To me it was due to a lack of supervision. To them it was due to success. In the words of my neighbor, "I look out the window and see them drinking a coke, and I think, 'Isn't that wonderful? Look at how successful we are. It's so wonderful to be living in a country that enables us to live in such nice apartments and be able to afford snacks.'" Gulp. My thoughts on the situation were put on hold so I could celebrate with her. How wonderful it is that they are able to provide for their children! I can now tailor any future comments on the situation accordingly.

When helping people, the most powerful thing we can do is listen. Listen longer than we think we need to listen. Put a hold on our thoughts, our words of advice, our responses. Just remember that small red can and listen to understand.

Your Story, It's Important

By Kristi Barth

Get out that paper and your pen.
Write down those times, of where and
when. Memories you remember well. We
all have a story to tell.
Forgive and learn from your mistakes.
New chapters now your future makes.
Embrace each one, feel your heart
swell. We all have a story to tell.

poem by CHARLIE HALLIDAY

Most of us desire to have perfect lives and social media often shows the better side of life—the Hollywood version, but we know life isn't always picture perfect. We are imperfect beings, and we find connection and hope in one another's imperfections. Our stories will bring hope to people and may even provide a reason for someone to keep going.


You don't have to be famous, all-knowing or even extraordinary to share your story. We all have stories to tell. Our lives are important and meaningful. We all walk different paths in life. We should never judge others by their outer appearance because the inside of us has so much to reveal. We walk amid people that are hurting and

struggling and we often aren't even aware. We all have stories to share.

Your story is as unique as you are! Stories will help build bridges from one heart to another. There are people we work with, family, acquaintances and friends that have been homeless, suffer from addictions, struggle with mental illness, are battling a major health concern, have lost loved ones and we may not know their stories. Many of us don't share our story because it doesn't feel important or we are embarrassed by it. I'd like to offer you a challenge to listen to others' stories and when we feel safe or in a good space to take a worthwhile risk and share our own stories.

You are amazing and your story is valuable like you. **You are welcome to share your story with us either anonymously or not. You can send it to teensfindinghope@yahoo.com.** We value you and your story whether you share it or not.

Remember you are worthy. Blessings



"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." - Maya Angelou

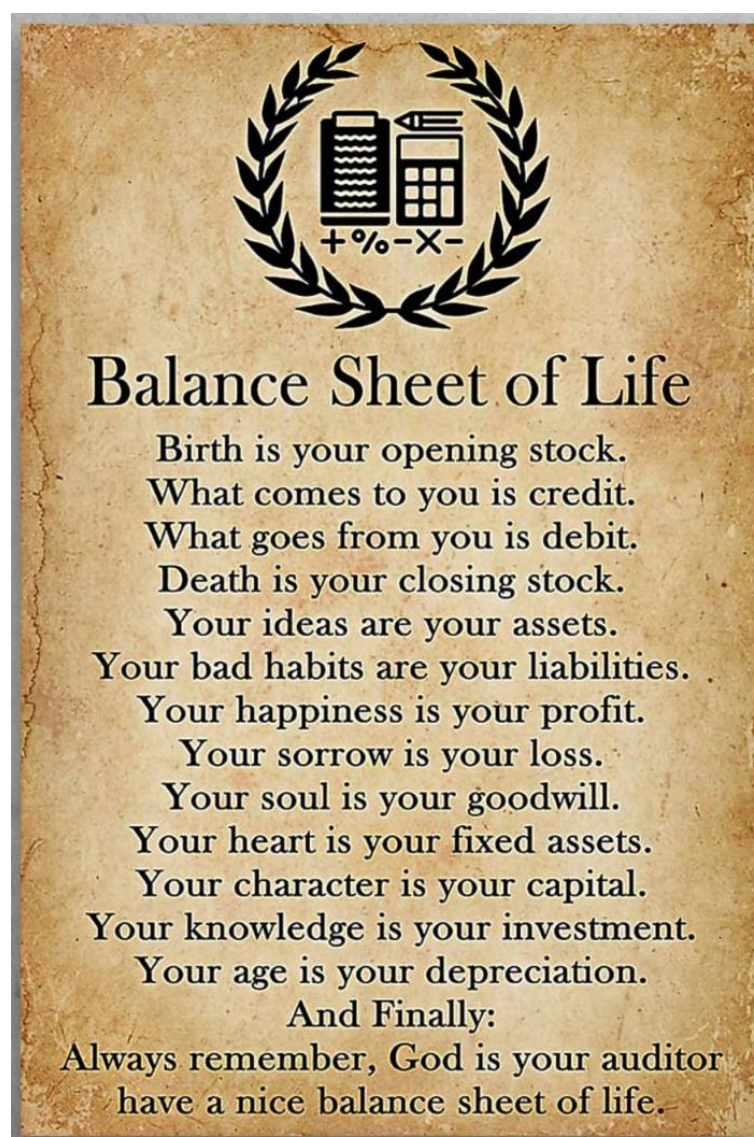
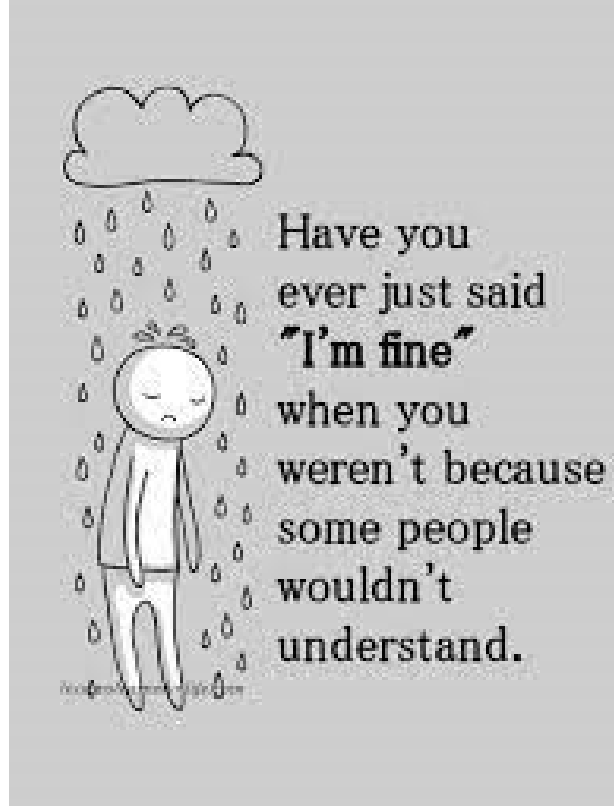
TELL YOUR STORY

" BE MINDFUL.
EVEN IF YOUR
MIND IS FULL. "

JAMES DE LA VEGA

www.TheMindfulnessSummit.com





Training My Eyes to See Hope

By Sherry Krueger



Hope seldom arrives alone. It often arrives holding hands with pain and disappointment. A little over a year ago we got the news that my mother’s cancer was incurable, and today we got the call that the end is nearer than we want it to be. The lump in our throats and the crushing in our hearts is overwhelming. Her fight has been a hard one, and it has been difficult watching the suffering her cancer has caused. Yet in the middle of this hard, we have made an effort to focus on the things that make these days bearable —the deer that walk through her yard each morning, the plants blooming in her garden, the kind words spoken by her nurses, the midnight games of Yahtzee on her bed when we can’t sleep... We are training our eyes to see through the darkness and find these slivers of light and hope.

What we’ve learned is there is so much delight waiting for us in all of our moments. It’s not always possible to insulate ourselves and avoid the pain. The hard parts and the beautiful parts—we have to embrace them all. Yet it’s possible to walk through these painful days when we can find hope. And so we search.

For those of you in a similar fight, our family stands with you. We see you in your struggle and we understand your pain. Keep on loving and warring on, remembering there is hope hidden within the darkest places. We hope you are able to find yours and grab a hold.



One Simple Step to Build Self-Confidence

by Sherry Krueger

We all have a self-talk track that plays in our heads. It’s usually not a problem, unless that track is always negative. We know from science that our thoughts influence our actions and feelings. That is why coaches put a lot of emphasis on their half-time speeches. It is why athletes have bands they wear on their wrists with positive phrases. It is why people post recipes to social media with captions like “The World’s Best....” Thoughts influence actions.

What happens if our thoughts are always negative? Our actions and feelings become negative, and our self-esteem takes a nosedive. According to the American Psychological Association, having a high self-esteem is the key to positive mental health and well-being.

One simple way to improve your self-esteem is to change your self-talk. An effective way to do that is to make a list about all of the things that make you who you are. List things you are good at doing, things you are proud of, and qualities that make you unique. Place it somewhere where you will see it every day, like the bathroom mirror. Then find time to read through the list to remind yourself of who you are. Whenever your negative track starts to play, stop and read your list. It’s like changing the station. Read it over and over to get you through the storms.

Here are some sentence starters to get your list started:

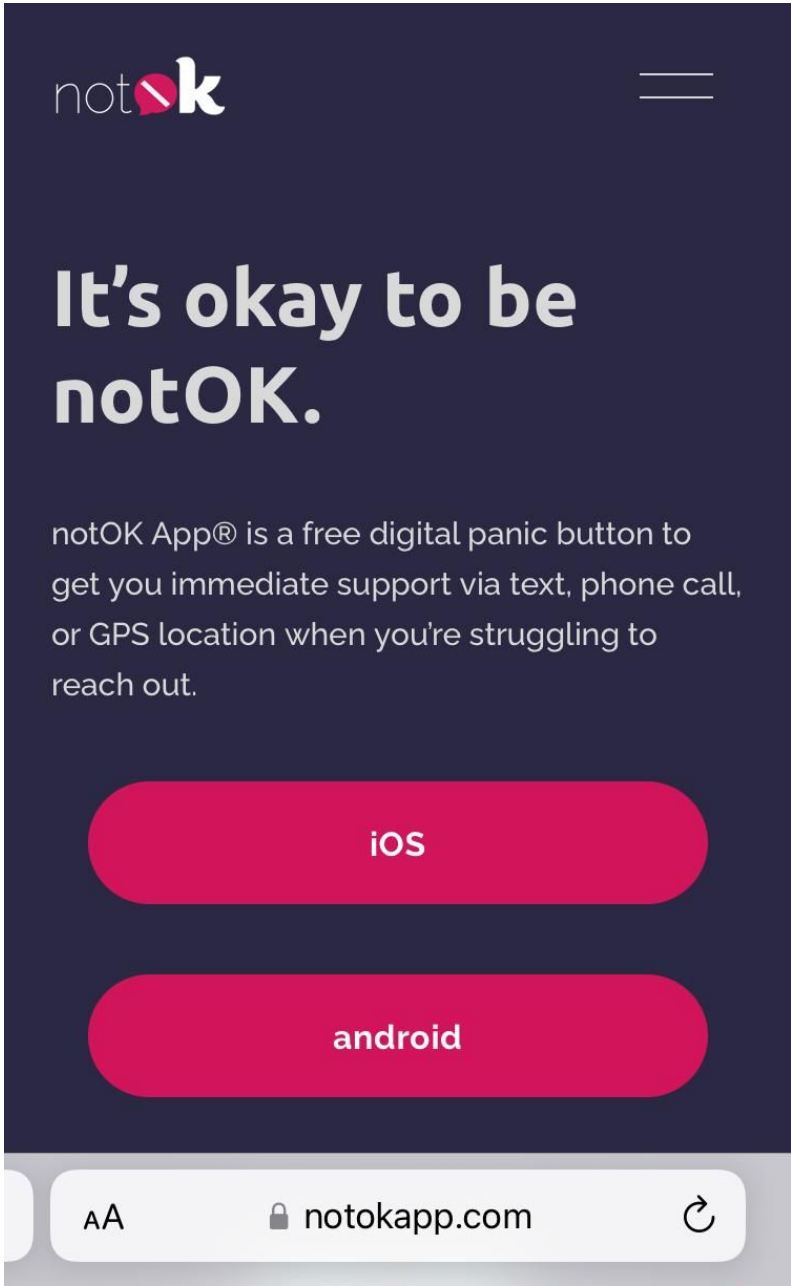
- Congratulations on —*
- Good job —*
- You are so good at —*
- People love the way you—*
- You can—*
- You are—*
- I feel good about —*
- I overcame —*
- I improved—*
- I will—*

New App: NotOK

Did you know there’s an app that enables kids to push out notifications to their support people when they aren’t okay and contact immediate crisis support with the push of one button?

It is called notOK.

Click the image below to visit the website.



Resources

If you or a friend are showing signs of depression, we have a wallet-sized brochure that can help provide some support. It will give you ideas for how to help someone and the numbers you can call for support. Just click on the image below:

How do I know if my friend needs help?

Notice: Big changes in your friend (eating, mood, hanging out, etc.).

Ask: Are you thinking about suicide? Do you want to hurt yourself?

?

How do I get help for my friend?

1. Call 911

2. Go to the Emergency Room

3. Seek help from a teacher, counselor, or trusted adult

4. DO NOT leave your friend alone

5. Call or text one of the suicide hotlines

There are many safe places to get support.

1-800-SUICIDE

1-714-NEWTEEN

6-10 pm PST

1-800-273-TALK

1-800-448-3000

Text:

teen2teen to 839863

4-10 pm PST

Crisis Text Line 741741

You can contact any of these anonymously just to talk or get information.

TEENS FINDING hope inc.

#YourLifeMatters

#IAMVALUABLE

Teens Finding Hope's Spotify Playlist

Worksheets

- click images to download -

Friend of Frenemy

Friend or Frenemy?

Sometimes a friendship can turn toxic. Toxic friendships are relationships that make you feel bad about yourself or are harmful to your well-being. Use the checklist below to check the health of your friendship.

Friend	Frenemy
Encourages you	Tries to make you feel bad about yourself
Gives you compliments	Puts you down
Points out your mistakes in a kind way, wanting to help you	Criticizes your mistakes
Hangs out with you in public	Ignores you
Listens to you	Is concerned about themselves first
Stands up for you	Makes you feel unsafe sometimes
Willing to talk and work through problems	Unwilling to work through problems-wants to stay upset with you
Invites you to join in	Leaves you out often
Understands when you say "no"	Pressures you to do things you don't want to do
Is okay with you spending time with other people	Gets jealous when you speak or hang out with others
Treats you with respect	Gets physically or emotionally aggressive with you

If you find your friend has turned into a frenemy, turn the page to see some strategies you can try for managing this relationship. Remember: You deserve to have positive, healthy relationships.

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Journal Prompts

Journal Prompts

One of the healthiest ways to deal with overwhelming emotions is keeping a journal. Writing in a notebook not only helps you get those emotions out of your head and on paper, but it also helps you identify things that triggered those emotions.

Your journal doesn't have to follow any particular format or be shared with anyone. It's your own personal place to hash things out. In fact, you don't even have to write long paragraphs—you can just "tweet" your thoughts and feelings.

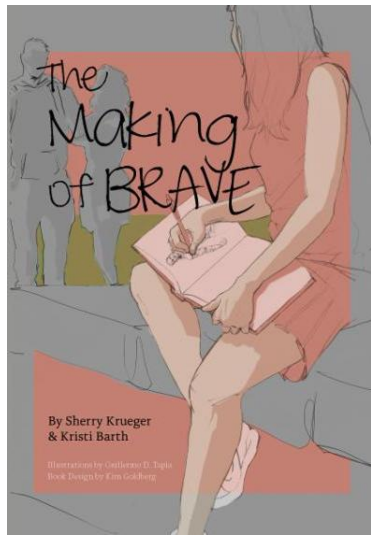
If you'd like to try this strategy, here are some prompts to get you started:

I feel...	I'm afraid that...
My family...	I'm struggling with...
My friends...	The most disappointed I've ever been...
I remember...	I was so surprised when...
I hope...	Nobody knows that I...
I love it when...	Three things I'd do if I wasn't so afraid...
I wish...	Three things I can't go without...
Some of the things that make me happy are...	My saddest memory is...
If I could have dinner with anyone, it would be...	If I could change one thing...
My biggest desire is...	I'm having a difficult time with...
My favorite family memory is...	My pet peeves are...
The best thing I've done...	I wish I could forgive ____ for...
I'm looking forward to...	I feel guilty about...
The most courageous thing I've ever done...	The biggest lie I've ever told...
My dream for the future is...	I'm mad that...
I'm grateful for...	My parents/friends don't...

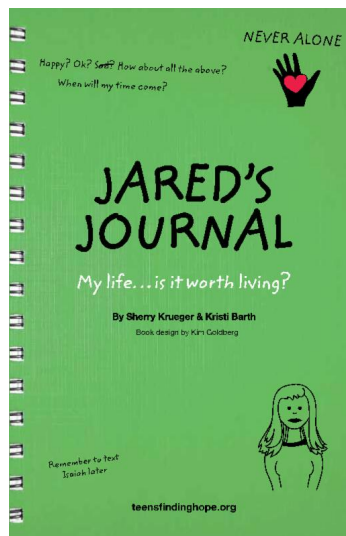
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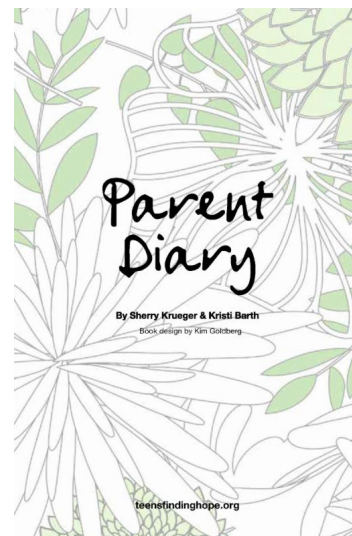
Books



[The Making of Brave](#)



[Jared's Journal](#)



[Parent Diary](#)



[Finding Rainbows](#)



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