

A photograph of a woman with long hair, seen from behind, standing in a grassy field. She is wearing a dark coat. In the background, there are mountains and a bright sun, creating a rainbow effect in the air. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and contemplative.

# Strategies for How to Find Healing and Hope to Use Our Stories Well in the Present and The Future

Facilitated by Ruth E. Van Reken

PNG-KLS-SPLC Retreat

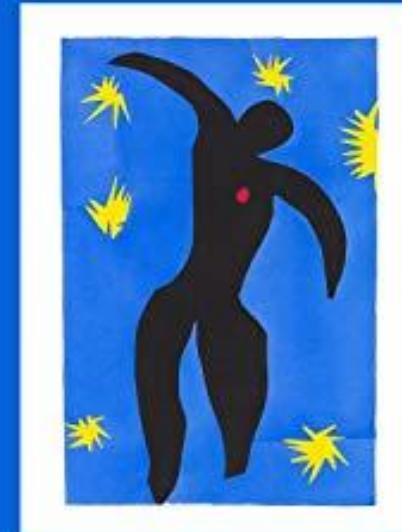
October 7, 2023

Book I forgot  
to mention...

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

# THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE

BRAIN, MIND, AND BODY  
IN THE HEALING OF TRAUMA



BESSEL VAN DER KOLK, M.D.

"A MASTERPIECE THAT COMBINES THE BOUNDLESS CURIOSITY  
OF THE SCIENTIST, THE ERUDITION OF THE SCHOLAR, AND THE PASSION  
OF THE TRUTH TELLER." —JUDITH HERMAN, M.D.

What does it mean to  
have a secure sense of  
identity?

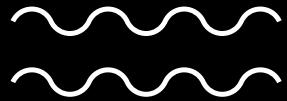
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Sharon  
Willmer's  
quote...



- “There are two common elements I see lacking in the MKs I counsel. The first is a loss of comfort. The second is the loss of a sense of personhood, what it means to be made in the image of God.”

• Written in 1984



Sharon  
Willmer's  
quote...

- “There are two common elements I see lacking in the [TCKs] I counsel. The first is a loss of comfort. The second is the loss of a sense of personhood, what it means to be [human].”

• Written in 1984

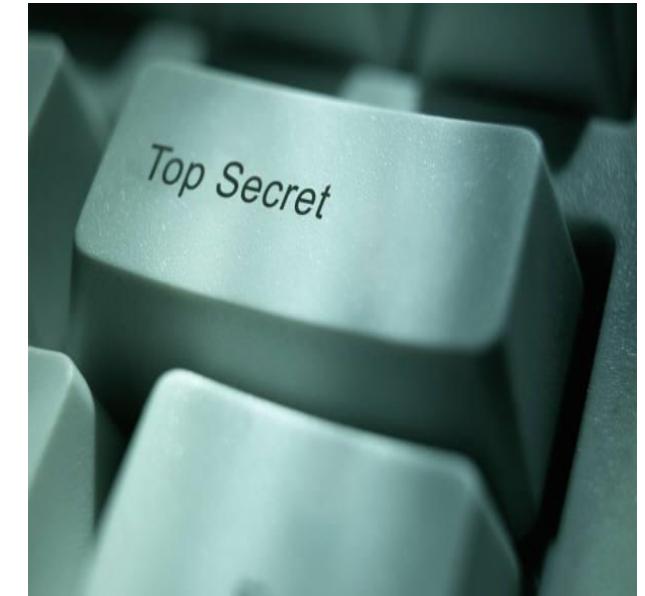


# My definition for a 'sense of identity'

- Includes both personal and social identity, meaning I have a clear sense of who I am and how, where, and to whom I belong
  - That includes understanding
    - what it means to be human (likeness)
    - what my personal giftings are and are not (uniqueness)
    - my values
    - the community(ies) I am part of
    - my role and place in those communities

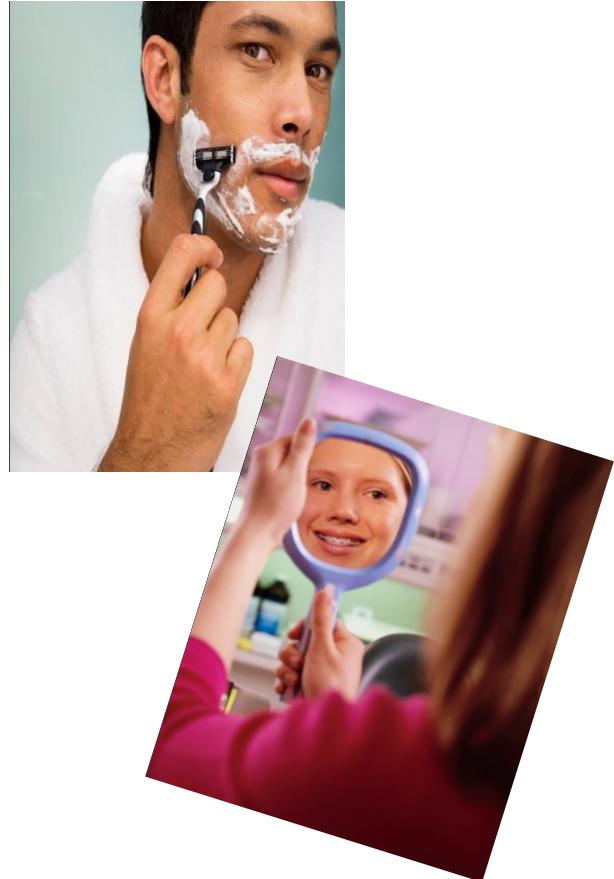
# What we're also talking about...

- **Hidden Diversity**— a diversity of experience that shapes a person's life and world view but is not readily apparent on the outside, unlike the usual diversity markers such as race, ethnicity, nationality, etc
  - *Ruth E. Van Reken and Paulette Bethel, CIES, 2003.*



What does it mean to be a human and what do I need because of that?

- Relational
- Emotional
- Creative
- Intellectual



- Volitional
- Spiritual
- Unified
- Valuable

# How do these realities also give me permission to understand and accept my uniqueness?

- Relational
- Emotional
- Creative
- Intellectual
- Volitional



- Physical
- Spiritual
- Significant
- Unified



# What to do about shame?

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- Sit and make a list of some system messages
  - Are any of them adding to your shame?

# Messages from another school

- Preschoolers growing up in Asian Cultures, privileged families with various involvement of local help.
- Parents working with mission system. Reacting. Improvising.
- *Expectation that you would know and adapt on return to parents home country.*
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- *"You are different" (home culture)*
- *You are responsible for supporting your parents' ministry (OMF)*
- You are loved / special / worthwhile (family)
- You are alone (Chefoo) Learning is fun
- The systems we know conflict
- Conform to the rules / obey (Schools / OMF / Church)
- Jehovah Jireh
- Self-isolation and disengagement
- Conform. Chameleon mentality. Respond to peer pressure
- Not conform! Outwit the system; prove you can be bad!
- Stay silent, become invisible
- Put up defences / build walls
- Find other ways to express dissent
- Fight or flee
- Earn respect
- Work hard
- Avoid long term relationships and never be honest; superficial relationships

# Coping strategies

- Humour and self-deprecation
- Accentuate the positives; gloss the story
- Smile technique!
- Hide your inner emotions
- Creative cunning – problem solving – finding alternative solutions
- Allegiances amongst peers – group mentality
- Block it out
- Stuff it
- Extreme fluctuations between intimacy and distance
- Work hard to deserve love – in an exaggerated form-
- Ignore
- Independence
- Chameleon
- Buck it!
- Conform
- Rebel
- Play the system
- Blend in and don't stand out
- Detach from those you love
- Play it up or play it down
- Perfectionism
- Suppress who you are
- Sex, drugs and rock n'roll



# What to do about shame?

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- Listen for the ‘I should’ and ‘I shouldn’t’ messages you tell yourself
- Ask ‘Who says?’
- Consider the paradox of the pride that is possible in shame!



# Anxiety

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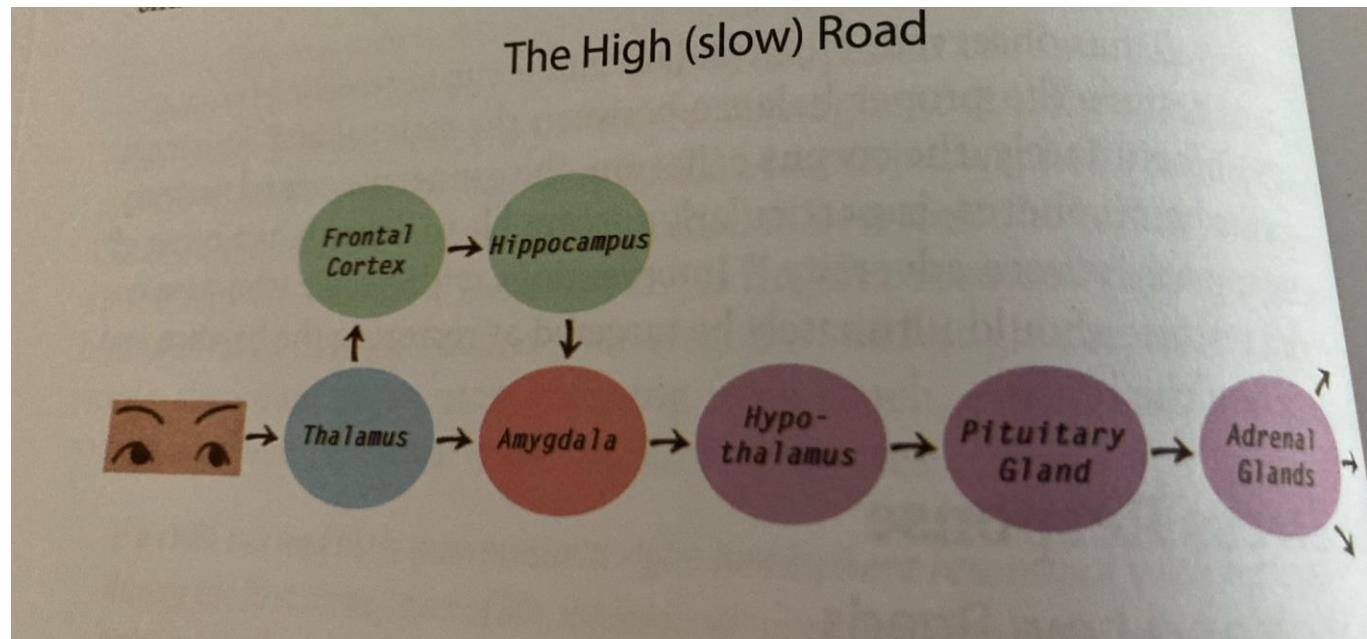
‘Has it happened yet?’

A circular landscape photograph showing a misty, forested mountain on the right and a calm lake in the foreground. The sky is a soft, hazy blue and white.

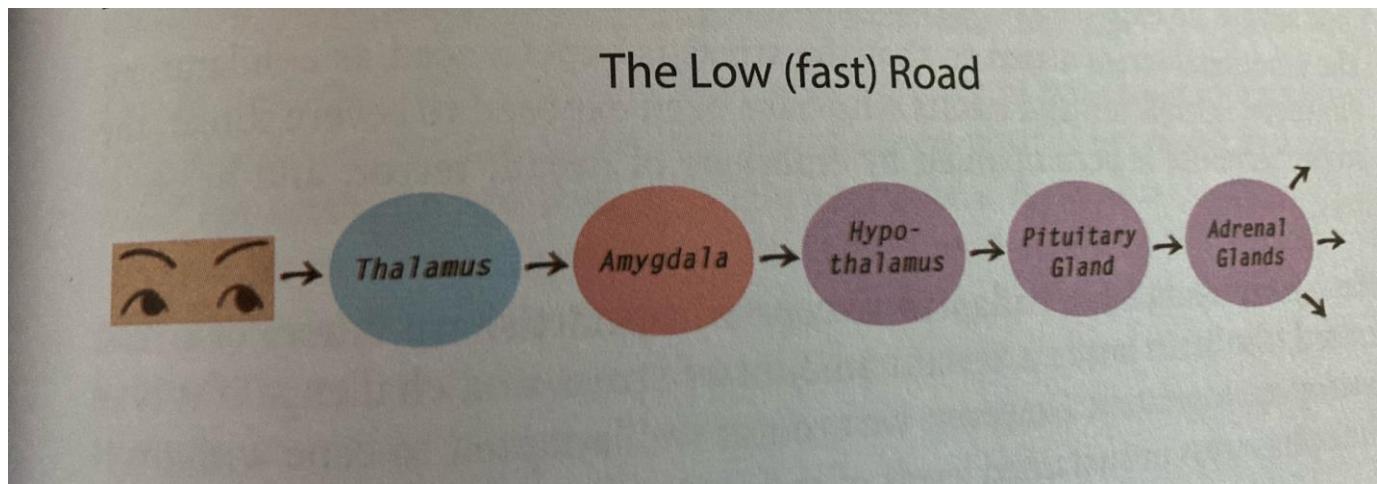
# Strategies for healing...

- Putting language to the losses
  - When did I feel like this before? When triggered
- For me, the great 'I AM-ness' of God
  - Present in all time, all the time
  - Writing takes me back
- For you?
  - Therapy?
  - Art?
  - Groups like this?
  - Paula to explain about EMDR

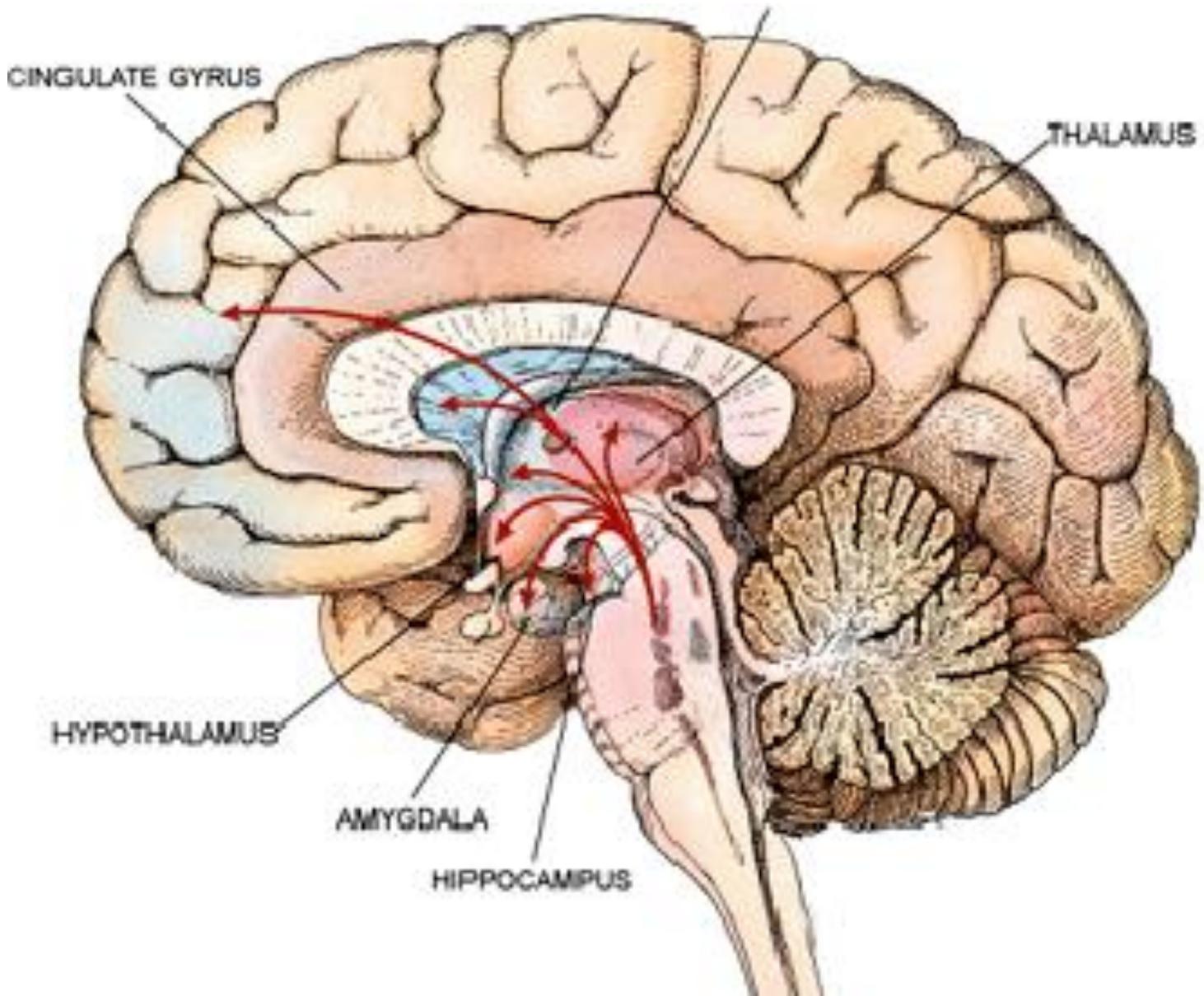
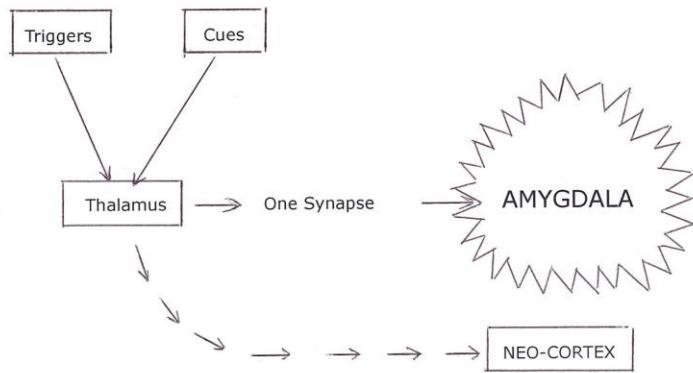
Normal  
response to  
surrounding  
world

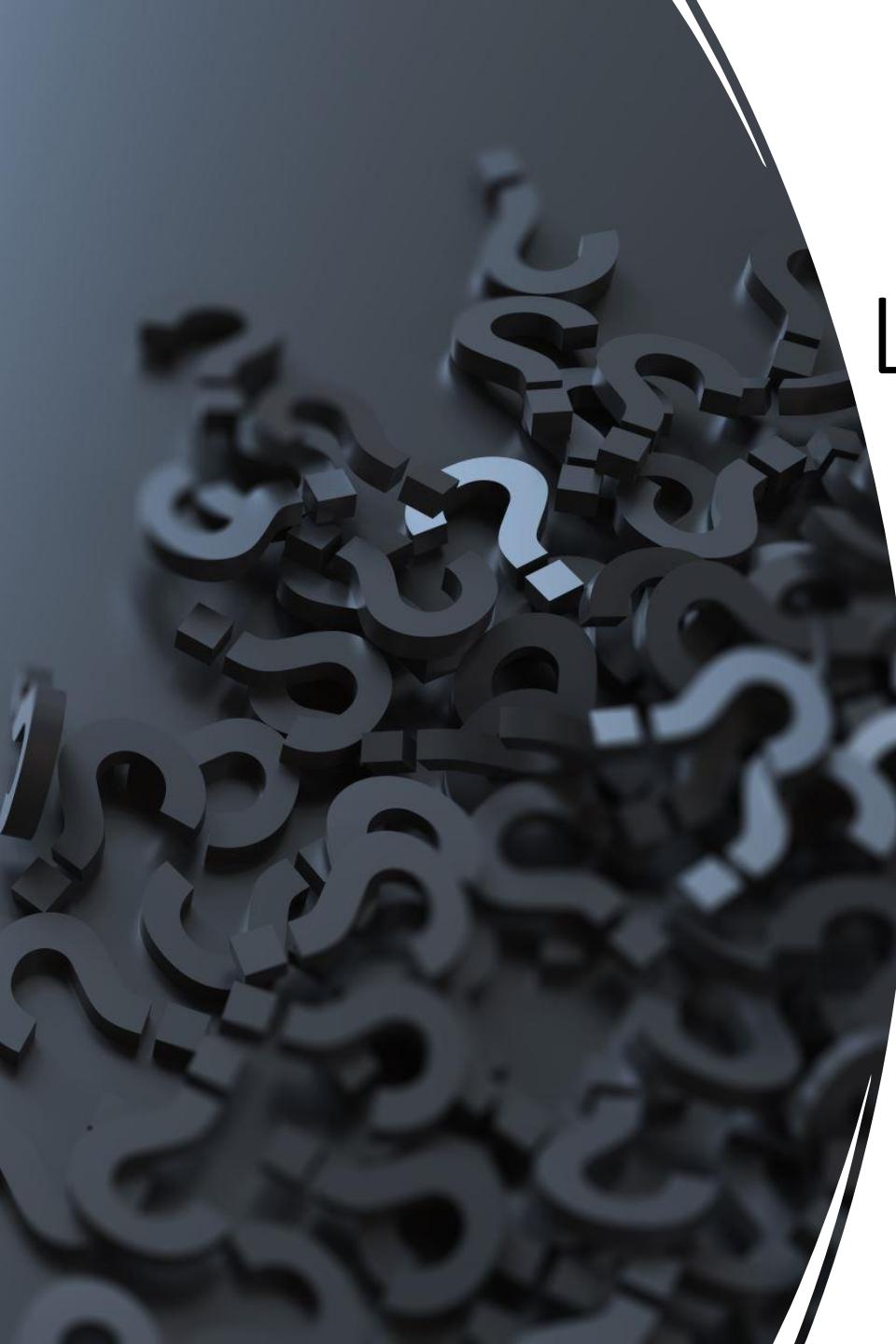


How trauma  
changes  
normal  
response



### Neuro Hi-jacking!





# Last questions or comments?

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- And thanks for having me!