



AGENDA

An Introduction to Mindfulness & Self - Care

Physical & Nutritional Health & Well-Being

Mental & Emotional Well Being

Spiritual Health

Social Well-Being

Creating Vision Boards: Focused Goals & Mindset





PHYSICAL SELF-CARE



**Physical movement, nutrition and rest
are the 3 pillars of physical wellness.**

Ask yourself and answer the following:

- Am I getting enough exercise?
- Is my diet fueling my body adequately?
- Do I sleep well and long enough for my body to repair itself?
- Do I drink enough water to stay hydrated?

Physical self-care involves activities that support and improve your physical well-being by keeping your body healthy. Think about it! Ninety percent (90%) of the stimulation and nutrition to the brain is generated by the movement of the spine! Reasons to exercise aren't just to lose weight and how you look! Just 30 minutes of exercise three times a week can make the brain younger by 9 years within six months!

Exercise and movement helps with: stress management, sleep, energy, productivity, muscles & bone strength, and reduction of chronic disease/risks.

What areas above do you think could use improvement in your life? _____

Exercise has also been proven to release body chemicals such as dopamine and endorphins in your brain that make you feel happy. Explore and be curious about different activities that afford movement. Find those you enjoy, such as walking, hiking, swimming, dancing, yoga, playing outside with your kids, and biking - whatever sparks motivation to move! When it comes to physical and mental health, movement counts!

What do you do to “move” on a regular basis? _____

What might be an obstacle that keeps you from exercising regularly? _____

What area of movement are you curious about trying _____

SENIOR CHAIR YOGA POSES

1. Ujjayi Breathing



2. Cat/Cow



3. Circles



4. Sun Salutation Arms



5. Sun Salutations with Twists



6. High Altar Side Leans



7. Eagle Arms



8. Assisted Neck Stretches



9. Ankle to Knee



10. Goddess with a Twist



11. Warrior 2

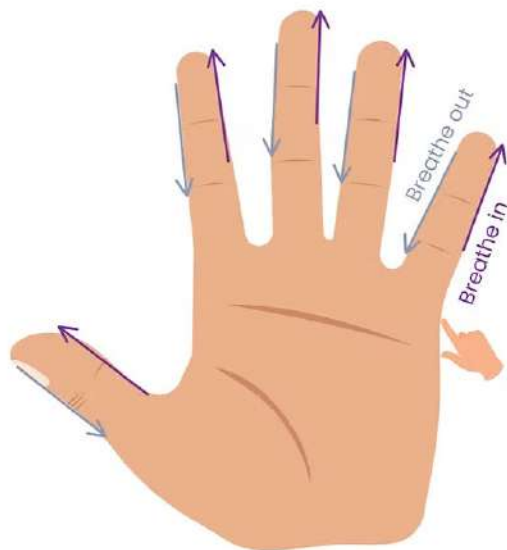


12. Forward Fold



BREATHWORK

Five Finger Breathing

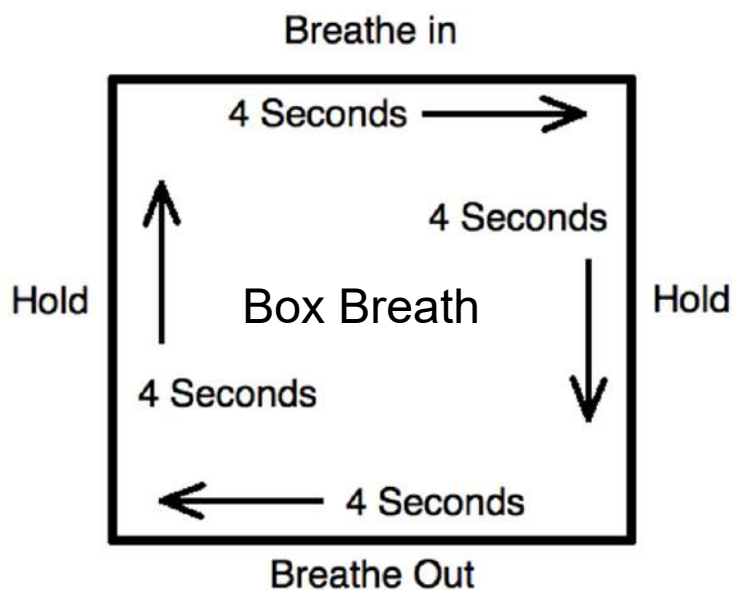


4-7-8 Breathing

Inhale for a count of four, hold for a count of seven, exhale for a count of eight.

Candle Breathing

Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose, as if smelling a flower. Exhale deeply, pursing lips as if blowing out a candle.





Mindful Eating Experience

Use your five senses to bring awareness and increased enjoyment to your food/meals. Read through these questions before and answer them as you slowly eat your Energy Bite...one small bite at a time. You may want to close your eyes so you can concentrate on the tastes and textures. Chew thoroughly before swallowing to savor each morsel.

What do I see? Color, Shape, Visual Texture, Patterns.

What do I hear? Crunch? Squish? Slosh? The sounds of chewing.

What do I smell? Does the food have a smell, aroma? Does the room have a smell that adds to the food/meal?

What am I tasting? Is the initial taste Sweet? Salty? Sour? Bitter? Savory? Tangy? Is there an aftertaste?

What am I touching or feeling? Using a utensil or hands? Is the food dry or moist? Hard or chewy? Squishy? Hot or Cold? Grainy or smooth?

Energy Bites Recipe

HLN with Lynn Smith

Makes ~ 24-30 balls.

24 servings (balls)

- 2 cup old-fashioned oats, dry
- 2/3 cup honey
- 1 cup of ground flax or (1/2 cup ground flax and 1/2 cup chia seeds)
- 1 cup dark chocolate chips or (1/2 cup chips and 1/2 cup dried fruit)
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup of chunky peanut butter or other nut butter

Stir all ingredients together. Cool in refrigerator for 20 minutes. Shape into balls. Store in refrigerator in a container.

76 calories/4 g protein/5 g fat/7 g carbohydrate per ball.



Nutrition Resources:

Quick, Easy,
& Budget
Friendly Meals



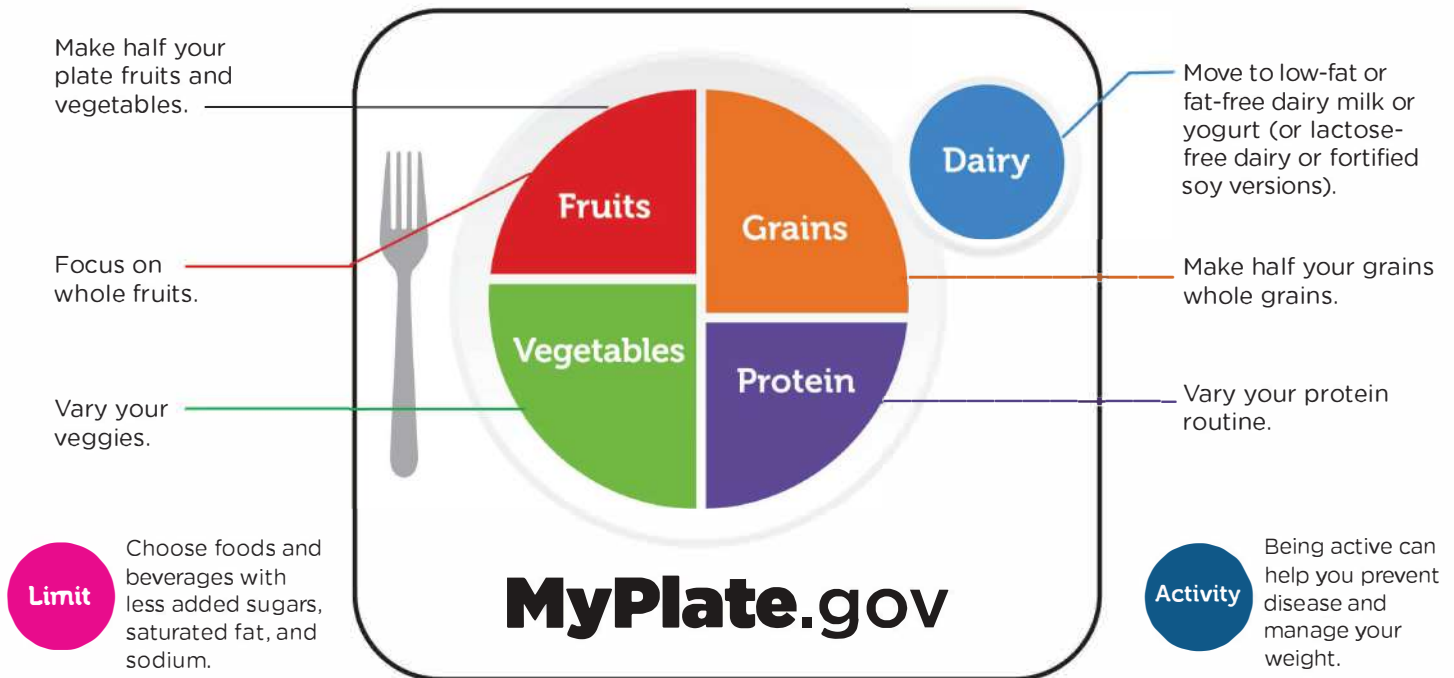
Healthy
Snack Guide



20 Mindful
Eating
Handouts



Healthy eating is important at every life stage,
with benefits that add up over time, bite by bite. Small changes matter.



Fruits	Vegetables	Grains	Protein	Dairy
<p>Focus on whole fruits like fresh, frozen, canned, or dried.</p> <p>Buy fruits to have them available to add to your meal or eat as a snack. If you buy juice, select 100% fruit juice.</p>	<p>Eat a variety of vegetables and add them to mixed dishes like casseroles, sandwiches, and wraps.</p> <p>Fresh, frozen, and canned count, too. Look for "reduced sodium" or "no-salt-added" on the label.</p>	<p>Choose whole-grain versions of common foods such as bread, pasta, and tortillas.</p> <p>Not sure if it's whole grain? Check the ingredients list for the words "whole" or "whole grain."</p>	<p>Eat a variety of protein foods such as beans, soy, seafood, lean meats, poultry, and unsalted nuts and seeds.</p> <p>Select seafood twice a week. Choose lean cuts of meat and ground beef that is at least 93% lean.</p>	<p>Choose low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) dairy. Get the same amount of calcium and other nutrients as whole milk, but with less saturated fat and calories.</p> <p>Lactose intolerant? Try lactose-free milk or a fortified soy beverage.</p>

Daily Food Group Targets — Based on a 2,000 Calorie Plan

Visit [MyPlate.gov/MyPlatePlan](https://www.MyPlate.gov/MyPlatePlan) for a personalized plan.

2 cups	2½ cups	6 ounces	5½ ounces	3 cups
<p>1 cup counts as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 small apple 1 large banana 1 cup grapes 1 cup sliced mango ½ cup raisins 1 cup 100% fruit juice 	<p>1 cup counts as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 cups raw spinach 1 cup cooked collard, kale, or turnip greens 1 small avocado 1 large sweet potato 1 cup cooked beans, peas, or lentils 1 cup cut cauliflower 	<p>1 ounce counts as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 slice of bread ½ cup cooked oatmeal 1 small tortilla ½ cup cooked brown rice ½ cup cooked couscous ½ cup cooked grits 	<p>1 ounce counts as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ounce cooked lean chicken, pork, or beef 1 ounce tuna fish ¼ cup cooked beans, peas, or lentils 1 Tbsp peanut butter 2 Tbsp hummus 1 egg 	<p>1 cup counts as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup dairy milk or yogurt 1 cup lactose-free dairy milk or yogurt 1 cup fortified soy milk or yogurt 1½ ounces hard cheese 1 cup kefir



Choose foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.

Limit:

- Added sugars to <50 grams a day.
- Saturated fat to <22 grams a day.
- Sodium to <2,300 milligrams a day.



Activity

Don't forget physical activity!

Being active can help you prevent disease and manage your weight.

Kids ≥ 60 min/day Adults ≥ 150 min/week



EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING



OUT OF MY CONTROL

others' opinion of me

other people's beliefs/behaviors

the future

outcomes

my response

my boundaries

the past

my energy

IN MY CONTROL

aging

**who I choose to
spend time
with**

the way I speak

my time with

emotions

how I process

time

my attitude

**how people
speak to me**

the way I treat others

my self-talk

external events

the way people treat me

CHANGE YOUR WORDS; CHANGE YOUR MINDSET.

FIXED

I'll never be as smart
as that person.

I can't do it.

This is too hard.

I'm not good at this.

I made a mistake.

I give up.



GROWTH

Everyone is talented
in many ways.

I'm still learning.
I'll keep trying.

With more practice
it will be easier.

This may take
some time and effort.

Mistakes
help me learn.

I can try a different
strategy.



What are boundaries?

Another foundation of our well-being is boundaries. Personal boundaries are limits we set for ourselves in the relationships in our lives. Healthy boundaries with others are rooted in communication, respect, and understanding. They are important because they help to avoid burn out, promote balance, and ensure relationships are mutually respectful and supportive. By setting boundaries for ourselves, we feel empowered to say “NO” when needed but are still open to growth. Someone with too rigid boundaries may keep others at a distance or have difficulty remaining flexible. Alternatively, someone with porous boundaries may become over involved with others or put outside factors ahead of their own needs.

Types of Boundaries

Conversational created around topics you are open or not to discussing	Time created around how much time you spend with someone or doing something	Physical around physical proximity, sexuality and your space shared with others
Relationship mutually agreed upon with partner, family, friends.	Personal those you have with yourself based on awareness of your own unique needs.	Content things you will/will not consume or consume in moderation on social media, TV, etc.

Ways I practice healthy boundary setting:



*Varied cultures may have different expectations for boundaries.

The Space Between

By Billy Jack Brawner

Magnolia Journal Spring 2023

time
always measured, always quantified
sometimes labeled; good times, bad times, happy times, sad times
sometimes identified by the big, monumental
mark-it-on-the-calendar kinda times
but then other times feel in-between
the pending time
the not-yet time
the patiently waiting time.

the time that is the space between
the beginning and the end of something.

planting the seed and reaping the harvest
casting the line and reel in the big one
grinding the beans and taking the first sip
having the dream and seeing its magic played out
charting the course and reaching the summit
paddling out and riding the waves
starting the oven and buttering the bread
saying hello and living happily ever after
reading the first line and finishing the story.

it is here, in the mundane and in the not yet and in the unknown
as we patiently wait for what's to come
when things begin shifting
the stories we'll someday tell are being written
life is unfolding and lessons are being learned.

and I bet you more times than not, when we look back
it'll be this space—this moment in time—we waited for all along.

What is worth slowing down for?

How can your presence make an impact?

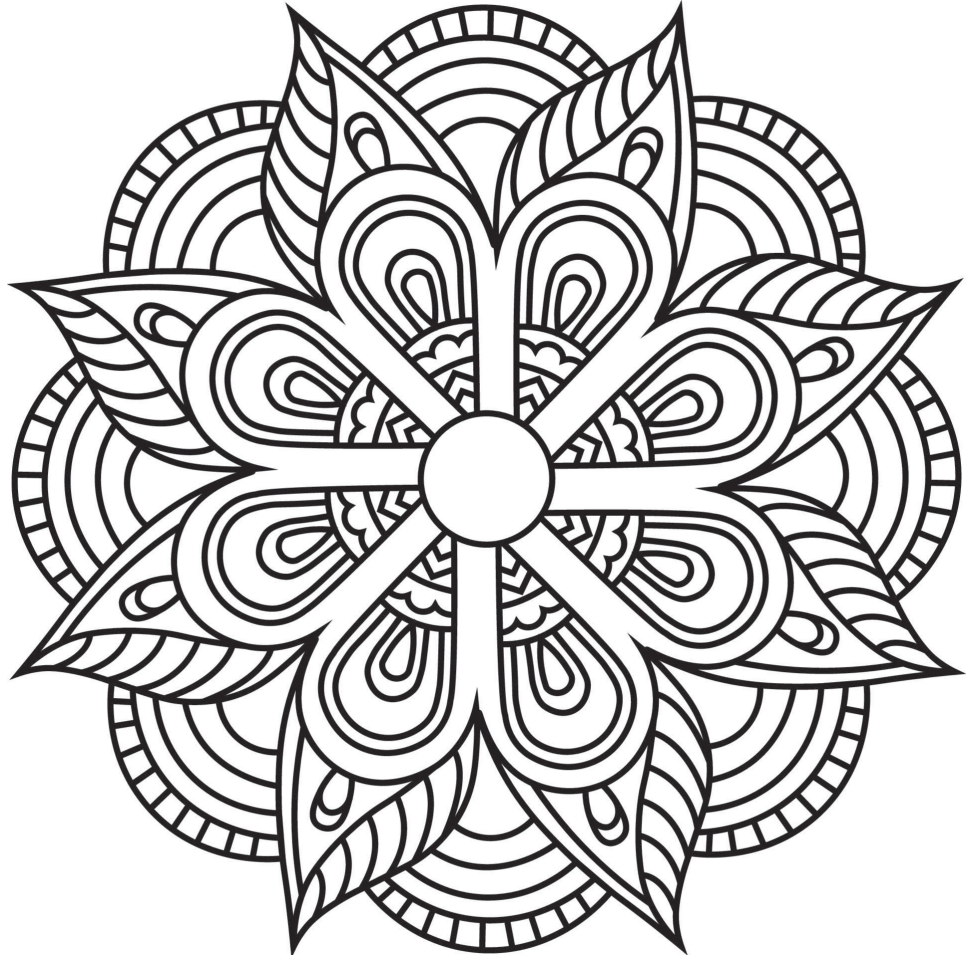
SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE

Creative Mandala Meditation

The meditative benefits of creating mandalas are many:

- Aids release of negative thoughts and emotions.
- Decreases tension and anxiety, can be used as stress management tool.
- Increases focus and allows self-healing.
- Increases self-reflection and personal awareness.
- Encourages creativity and self-expression.

Coloring in general can help you be more mindful. It helps you to practice mindfulness as you focus on color choice and staying inside the lines keeping to the present moment. Settle into a space where you will not be disturbed. Have a paper and pencil handy to jot down any inspirations or thoughts that come through. Place your colored mandala in front of you to view the image. Bring your gaze to the mandala with soft focus eyes. Wander around the mandala subject. Notice patterns, colors, symbolism and what thoughts come to mind. Do not feel pressured to find light bulb ideas or simple thoughts to write down. Meditation may just bring relaxation but can also be inspirational. Observe your trends of thought and insight and see how they can apply to your life.



Cultivating Presence and Inner Peace

3 Step Mini Mediation

This useful activity is helpful when more formal mindfulness practices might not be practical. It is designed so you can practice throughout the day to bring awareness to the present moment. Using the same technique, you can lengthen your meditative practice as you become more comfortable with it.

1. Step out of Autopilot

- In this moment, try to bring your awareness to what you are doing, thinking, and sensing.
- Pause. Take a comfortable, relaxed but upright posture. Breathe natural breaths.

What thoughts come up in your mind? What feelings?

- Give them your attention and acknowledge these natural experiences. Then let them pass. Attune yourself to who you are and your current state.

2. Become aware of your breath.

- Right now your only goal is to focus on your breath.
- How does your body move with each breath in and out?
- How does your chest rise and fall as you let air in?
- Feel how your belly pushes in and out, how your lungs expand and contract.
- Find a pattern of your breath, (ex: 3 in 3 out) and anchor yourself to the present with this awareness for six breaths or up to a minute or two.

3. Continue breathing. Expand your awareness outward.

- Let your awareness spread first to your body.
- What physical sensations are you experiencing?
- Note feelings like tightness, lightness, and let them go.
- Think of your body as a vessel of your inner self.
- Expand your awareness to your surroundings.
- Bring your attention to what is directly in front of you.
- What colors, shapes, and textures can you notice?
- Be present in this moment for a while longer.
- Take a slow deep cleansing breath, inhaling through your nose and out your mouth.

WALKING A LABYRINTH

It may seem illogical to walk a winding pathway to clear your mind and center yourself spiritually – but the labyrinth – or “sacred path” – can be a helpful spiritual tool for contemplative thought, insight and prayer.

NOT A MAZE

A labyrinth is not a maze. In a maze, you have to worry about where you are going and finding your way out. A labyrinth is just on path – it leads to the center and back out again – so you cannot get lost.



WAYS TO WALK THE LABYRINTH

As you begin walking, become aware of your breath. Allow yourself to find the pace your body wants to go. You may pass others or let them step around you. You may want to pose a question before you begin and let the answer unfold as you walk. After your journey, you may choose to sit and journal the experience.

THREE STAGES

Shedding – the first stage quiets the mind.

Walking to the center is a time of releasing, letting go of burdens – sorrow, loss, anger, uncertainty, discontent.

The burden you release may be your own, or the burdens of another, your community, even the world.

Honor your feelings and release them, turning them over to the universe as you walk along.

Illumination – the center is a place of meditation, rest, and prayer.

When you reach the center, pause and spend some time there. Open yourself to the Universe’s illuminating and healing presence. You may feel the release of tension. What might the Universe want you to hear or feel? Receive what is being given to you.

Union – walking away from the center is a time of union and encouragement.

As you walk away from the center, give gratitude, be empowered and take ownership. The path out is that of becoming grounded and integrating the insight. It is being energized and making what was received manifest in the world.



BECOMING



ENVISION YOUR BEST SELF

- When are you the happiest?
- When are you most unhappy?
- What are three things that instantly put you in a great mood?
- Who makes you feel motivated and inspired?
- What do you value in others?
- What gives my life meaning?
- What are the things that make me laugh?
- How do I envision my future?
- How do I want to spend my time?
- What motivates me?
- What are my priorities?
- What do I hope to accomplish in the next few months, next year?
- How do I plan to achieve my goals?

SOCIAL SELF-CARE

- What activities make you feel most connected to others?
- What programs or activities do you regularly participate?
- How do your social habits impact your relationships with others?
- What do you think holds you back from being more social?
- How often do you check your social media accounts?
- How often do you read the news? How do you feel afterwards?
- What do you think can improve your social self-care?

Daily Recap

Morning

Right now I feel: (1 = Lousy 5 = Great!)

12345

My affirmation for today is:

I am worthy of self-care. Today I will:

Evening

Right now I feel: (1 = Lousy 5 = Great!)

12345

What went well today?:

Something I am grateful for:

	Emotional	Physical/ Nutritional	Spiritual
Morning	Affirmation	Go for a run	Watch the sunrise
Afternoon	Meditate	Practice a mindful meal	Community Center
Evening	Journal	Yoga stretch	Color a mandala
Night	Read 20 min or one chapter	Lights out by 10:00 PM	Screen time detox

Activities To Support Your Journey

- Put yourself first and calendar in self-care.
- Use the self-care/mindfulness tracker system to build and plan your practice.
- Enlist a friend to hold you accountable and check-in on your self-care goals.
- Meditate to promote awareness, decrease stress and enhance attention.
- Do Yoga to reduce stress, increase relaxation and improve body image.
- Be artistic to promote self-awareness and self-exploration.
- Listen to music to release endorphins, reduce stress levels and aid in the healing process.
- Walk in nature to promote positive emotions and connect to the world around you.
- Focus on areas that align with your goals, values, and beliefs.
- Journal to reflect and express your deepest thoughts and feelings.
- Find time for gratitude each day.
- Read inspiring stories, essays, or listen to podcasts that inspire.
- Make connections through groups of like-minded individuals.
- Unplug from technology.
- Walk the labyrinth at Hopelands Gardens
- Take time to rest, recharge and sleep.
- Eat healthy, mindfully and for satiety.
- Carry a water bottle to stay hydrated and monitor your intake.
- Keep up with health and wellness visits.
- Learn to say “NO” and have clear boundaries.
- Get a massage to release oxytocin, improve circulation and lower heart rate.
- Do something that contributes to the greater good.
- Move your body every day.
- Cut the negative self-talk.
- Celebrate life’s small wins.
- Enlist the help of a good therapist.

CHERYL MURGA

Cheryl Murga, BA, MS is a retired science educator living a zen life in Aiken since 2018. As a certified yoga instructor and long practitioner of meditation, she has a deep understanding of how the body and mind are connected. She is also a CSRA Sierra Club hike leader and Master Gardener who enjoys providing activities for others to make connections to the natural world. She strives to support the common good and bring out the best in others by offering her services through outreach and enrichment programs in the community. She loves being free to travel, hiking to waterfalls and doesn't mind getting her hands dirty!

