

Wellbeing Toolkit



Supporting your mental health and wellbeing
during the next couple of months



**Clackmannanshire
Council**

www.clacks.gov.uk

Comhairle Siorrachd
Chlach Mhanann

Wellbeing Toolkit

Managing your mental health and wellbeing during this time can be tricky; particularly when we do not have as much daylight, and having the enthusiasm to go out into the cold makes getting exercise and vitamin D more difficult. Then, on top of that, add in the introduction of additional restrictions across the Country – it’s not been an ideal start to the year.

The next couple of months will be tough for us all so it is more important than ever to take proactive steps to manage your mental health and wellbeing - particularly where you might be working from home, or are feeling isolated from your colleagues, friends or loved ones.

We have put together some tips and advice below on managing your wellbeing during these uncertain times. You can find even more information on the wellbeing section of the Keeping Staff Connected page on our internet www.clacks.gov.uk/coronavirus/wellbeing/ This section is updated regularly.

Mental Health Top Tips Poster

We’ve created Top Tips poster which you will find at the end of this toolkit. Use it for your own reference, or print it off and place it on staff noticeboards or common areas. For even more resources, check out Mind’s ‘Do One Thing’ poster which has some great ideas, and can be found online through the clacks.gov.uk/staff page.

Tips for managing your mental health in the New Year

- 1. Make time for yourself**
Find something that helps you change state if you're feeling stressed, or anxious. Particularly something you really enjoy — that usually means you're good at it, and achieving something boosts your self-esteem.
- 2. Take proactive steps to support your mental health**
Sometimes it's the simple things that can make a big difference. Exercise, spending time outdoors, or having a phone call with a friend, can all give your mental health a big boost.
- 3. Don't be afraid to seek out help**
If you feel your stress levels rising act now, not later. Talk to your line manager, a colleague or friend, or look at the resources we have available on www.clacks.gov.uk/staff.
- 4. Manage your time**
Take steps to manage your day, particularly where you are working from home. Try blocking out time, avoid scheduling meetings over lunch time (12pm-2pm) and take regular breaks away from your PC.
- 5. Show compassion**
Remember that everybody's situation is different. Look out for your colleagues, check in with one another, and be understanding of each others circumstances.

For more information on managing your mental health, go to www.clacks.gov.uk/staff

FACE COVERINGS **AVOID CROWDS** **CLEAN HANDS** **TWO METRES** **SELF-ISOLATE**

Go Home Healthy

MAINTAINING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF ALL EMPLOYEES IS IMPORTANT

We have a range of measures to promote and encourage your mental and physical wellbeing at work

These include:

- Occupational Health
- Healthy Working Lives
- Health checks
- Clacks Academy modules
- Stress risk assessments
- Stress Control classes
- Free counselling service

More information on **CONNECT**

Remember to talk

Feeling anxious or stressed over the coming months is totally normal – very few of us will have experienced circumstances like these before. One of the best ways to overcome this anxiety is to talk to a colleague, a friend, or someone close to you. We also have trained Mental Health First Aiders who are there to support you when you need it.

For managers, try setting up regular catch ups with staff, or even a Friday Casual Call using something like MS Teams. Perseverance is key – it might be slow to take off but for those who choose to come along it can quickly become a highlight of their week.

Stay Active

Let's start by recognising that Scottish winters are not brilliant when it comes to weather, but where we are working in isolation, or in unfamiliar circumstances, staying active can be really important to maintaining your mental health.

Over the coming months try to stay active and make sure you take breaks throughout your day. You don't need to train like you're running a marathon, but anything which gets your heart rate up can be good for lowering blood pressure, and keeps your immune system working effectively.

It's also important not to stray into bad habits such as increased alcohol consumption (which is particularly easy to do where working from home or during colder, darker nights). This is an unhealthy coping mechanism which will make you feel worse over time.

[For more information on staying active, check out the NHS Live Well site.](#)

Keep your mind active

Sometimes we need a distraction to keep us away from thinking too much about lockdown or other things going on in our lives – particularly where social media can play a large part in spreading rumour or false information. Keeping an active mind is brilliant in helping us think positively, and can be achieved through a variety of different ways such as cooking, music, exercising, knitting, playing computer games...and basically anything which keeps you engaged, and happy!

Taking Breaks

When working from home and things are busy it's all too easy to work long hours without taking regular breaks away from your computer. Working at a computer all day can cause back, neck and shoulder pains, headache, eyestrain and fatigue. We use DSE assessments and proper equipment/ furniture to help us prevent injury however breaking up the day will also help to keep us healthy and rested. Ensure you take a proper break for lunch and try to break up your day by stepping away from your screen occasionally, even if it's just for a few minutes.

Look out for your colleagues

Everyone will experience lockdown differently, so remember to keep perspective on your own and others circumstances. That means being mindful of what people are experiencing and looking out for one other. Keep in regular touch with your friends and colleagues through phone calls, texts, MS Teams etc. Or, take more practical steps such as trying not to schedule meetings over lunchtimes (12pm-2pm) so as to give people the opportunity to take a break.

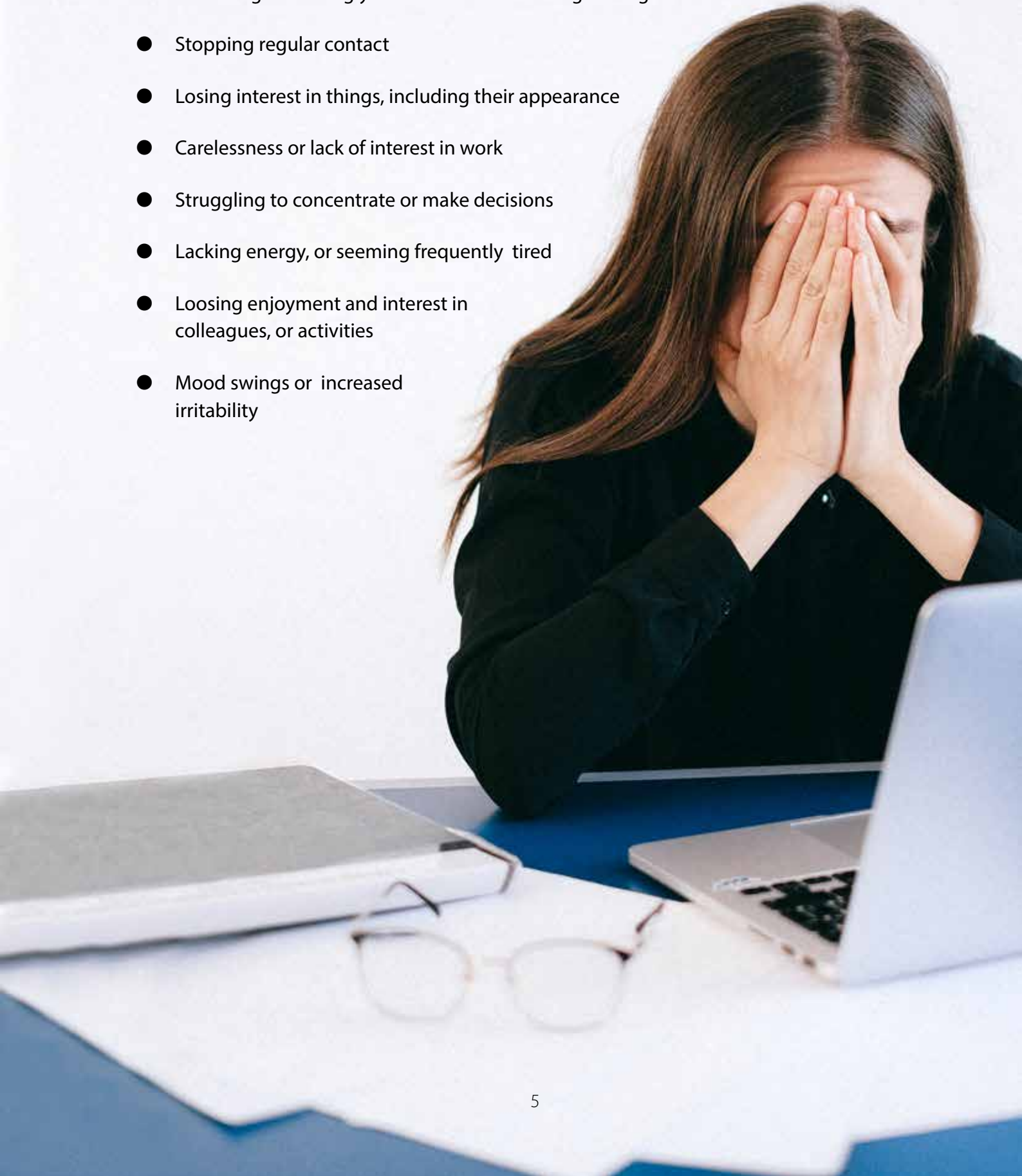
Try to be inclusive when keeping in touch with groups of colleagues and ensure that individuals are not further isolated. Even when an individual is not able to attend regular meetings or catch ups, knowing they are thought about and invited will encourage them to engage when they can.

Remember, above all else:

- Be aware of others
- Listen to others
- Build mutual support
- Keep checking-in
- Maintain a wider perspective

The current situation will also lead to heightened levels of anxiety – and this goes for people in your team or area, colleagues in other portfolios, or even your managers. Look out for the signs that someone might be struggling to cope by considering the following (it's called being helpfully nosy!):

- Becoming increasingly withdrawn and avoiding colleagues
- Stopping regular contact
- Losing interest in things, including their appearance
- Carelessness or lack of interest in work
- Struggling to concentrate or make decisions
- Lacking energy, or seeming frequently tired
- Loosing enjoyment and interest in colleagues, or activities
- Mood swings or increased irritability



Make a Plan

Sometimes it helps to take some time and think about what will work for you when it comes to managing your own wellbeing over the next couple of months. A Wellbeing Plan can be a really useful tool to helping do this. If you're putting a plan together, try considering the following:

Who do I want to keep in contact with?

How can I help others?

What will I do to stay healthy?

How will I keep my mind active?

What will be my daily routine?

How can I tell when things are getting too much?

What are my distractions when I feel stressed, anxious or down?

Who can I talk to if things get too much?

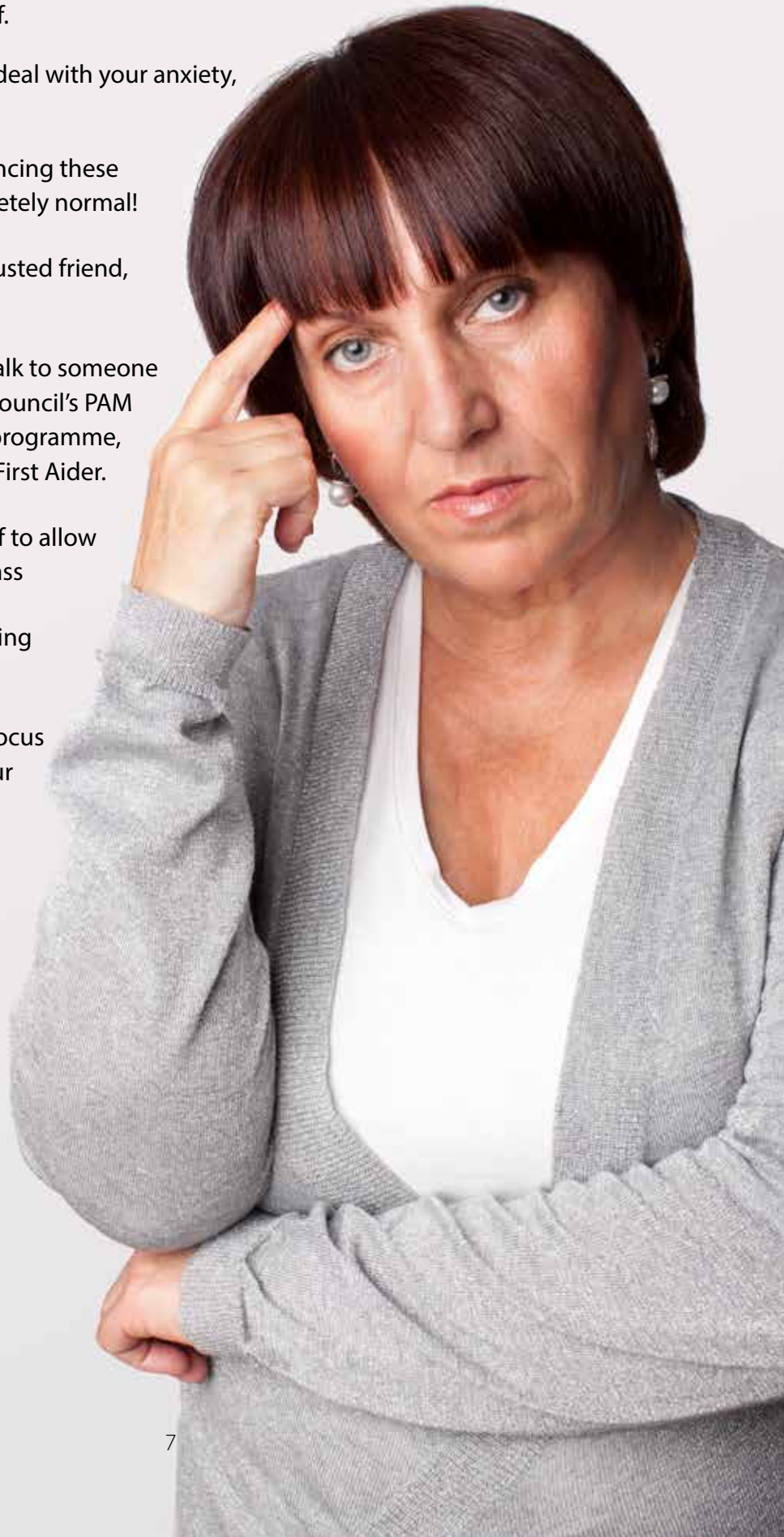
What if you are struggling to cope?

It's really important to recognise when you might be feeling overwhelmed, and take steps to try and manage the sense of stress or anxiety you might be having. If you're interested in apps, trying using popular ones such as Sleepio, Silvercloud, or Feeling Good. You'll find more details of these on www.clacks.gov.uk/staff.

Use the ideas in the toolkit to help deal with your anxiety, but remember that above all else:

- You are not alone in experiencing these feelings, and they are completely normal!
- Share your feelings with a trusted friend, colleague, or your manager
- If you are finding it hard to talk to someone you know, you can use the Council's PAM Assist employee assistance programme, or speak to a Mental Health First Aider.
- Find ways to distract yourself to allow feelings of anxiousness to pass
- Avoid using alcohol as a coping mechanism
- Use your Wellbeing Plan to focus on how you can manage your feelings of uncertainty.

To help manage your wellbeing further, try looking at the resources available on the www.clacks.gov.uk/staff pages, and the online Clacks Academy Elearning page.



Mental Health & Wellbeing – Support At Work

Clackmannanshire Council is committed to supporting a mentally healthy workplace and continue to promote a culture of good mental health in these unprecedented and challenging times.

With further national lockdown measures in place for 2021 it is more important than ever to look after and manage your mental health and wellbeing.

In addition to talking to your manager, work colleagues, family and friends, you are encouraged to get in contact with our team of trained Mental Health First Aiders if you feel that you need additional support.

Mental Health First Aiders

We currently have 4 staff members who have gained crucial skills in managing mental health in the workplace and who have learned how to support others. As a Mental Health First Aider they have volunteered to support any colleagues who may need their help.

This service is confidential and is available Monday to Friday (see availability of Mental Health First Aiders below). Due to the COVID restrictions all contact will be made via telephone, MS Teams or Zoom.

Seonagh Perrie Revenues

sperrie@clacks.gov.uk 01259 452 390

Monday from 10am onwards

Tuesday from 7am to 7pm

Wednesday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Elaine Mulligan HR & Workforce Development

emulligan@clacks.gov.uk 01259 452 173

Monday to Wednesday to 6pm

Thursday to 5pm

Evelyn Paterson Health & Safety

epaterson@clacks.gov.uk 01259 452 176

9 day compressed week

every second Monday off 8:30am to 5pm

Jennifer Brady Housing

jbrady@clacks.gov.uk 01259 452 687

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm



Remember if you don't feel comfortable speaking to someone at work, there are plenty of other organisations who will be able to help and support your mental health and wellbeing.

For low mood, anxiety and depression you can get support from:-

- PAM Assist, our employee assistance programme.
- Mind
- NHS Inform: Your Mental Wellbeing
- Breathing Space
- Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)
- Samaritans Scotland

In addition, there is a wealth of information on how to maintain your health and mental wellness at www.clacks.gov.uk/coronavirus/staffinformation/

We welcome and encourage employees to share their views around workplace mental health and wellbeing and will listen to your responses and use this insight to drive our strategy and objectives.

If you do not have access to a PC then please get in contact with your line manager or Service HR Business Partner for further information.

If you would like to be considered for Mental Health First Aid Training in the future, please email hands@clacks.gov.uk

The Keeping staff Connected page on the Council website has a section on Wellbeing with resources for everyone to access.

<https://www.clacks.gov.uk/coronavirus/wellbeing/>

For policies on health and wellbeing please follow the links below



<http://connect/working-for-us/health-and-safety/74-hr/health-and-safety/4408-employee-mental-health-policy.html>

<http://connect/working-for-us/health-and-safety/2-31-stress-management-policy.html>

<http://connect/working-for-us/health-and-safety/2-2-alcohol-drugs.html>



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