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# Islamic Approach to Laziness

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### Abstract

The current discourse of today's world has focused on providing well-being for human, while peace of mind and happiness are not necessarily the product of one's well-being and well-being is consistent with human mental health. Meanwhile, social scientists and health researchers have acknowledged that a phenomenon called laziness is a common disease of our century that has left people feeling at ease. This descriptive-analytical and library-based research addresses only one factor (harm), namely "laziness", among the factors and areas that undermines human peace. The modern religion has discussed how to get out of laziness. The present study acknowledges that rituals such as prayer, fasting and hajj provide a profound definition of health to believers, reinforcing the principles and components of true "peace". Religious rituals, as a practical solution to this process of influence on the one hand by weakening factors encouraging laziness, and on the other by improving the necessary spiritual talents and capacities, such as a spirit of hope, self-esteem and confidence, a realistic view to oneself and others. ... and the restoration of his criticizing spirit and responsibility will be able to deal with laziness.

Keywords: Laziness; Relaxation; Religious Rituals; Spiritual Health

#### **Problem Statement**

Sustainable development in any society depends on the level of human health. Health benefits that are desirable are not simply achieved without a long-term plan. In this regard, the importance and necessity of discussing spiritual health has never been ignored by social researchers in the last century. An important and controversial issue is the quality and degree of spiritual well-being in a society. In the meantime, what is the expectation of religion in general? What are the ways in which religion can relieve human beings from the lack of peace and tranquility of humanity today? What part of religion's capacity and assets can be effective in maintaining the mental health?

Whether we look at religion generally or specifically, it seems that there is only one option ahead of us. There is an essential connection between religion and mental health because religions in general and the schools of revelation in particular have focused on the spiritual and psychological aspect of man. If we ignore the whole dimensions of the impact of religion, history testifies that the spiritual function and effectiveness of religious teachings in the evolution of the human spiritual dimension cannot be ignored. No religion can be found, whether monotheistic or non-monotheistic, which has simply ignored the human spirituality and mental health. In other words, to take a stand for the spirituality and mental health of a conscientious objector, we, in fact, need a form of self-loathing and inner contradiction. Islam, as the holistic religion and the end of Abrahamic religions, has declared the highest goal of the Islamic religion to be the completion of ethics. For example, the Qur'an praises the Supreme Prophet (PBUH) as an example of a person who possesses well-being spiritually and his unique moral integrity is as follows: "And lo! thou art of a tremendous nature" (AL-QALAM/4).

The constant reaffirmation and emphasis on revelation in the subject of cultivation is a clear indication of the importance and concern of the Islamic creed for human spiritual superiority and health. The essence of rituals and worship is to provide self-awareness and teaching the creatures of to remember the God and avoid negligence. Prayer, an excellent example of worship and rituals, while active in spiritual health, generates a state of self-awareness. The Quran says: ".. Establish worship to remember Me" (TA-HA/14) which means: Mental- spiritual health, which often leads to a sense of calmness, is realized in the shade of conscious remembrance of His Highness. In the Qur'an we read: " ... Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest!" (AR-RAD/28).

Elsewhere, the Qur'an states that forgetting the divine remembrance leads to confusion and uncertainty." But those who turneth away from remembering Me will have a narrow life are blind on the Day of Resurrection" (TA-HA/124). In explaining the status and role of the virtue of self-awareness (mentioning or remembrance) in the acquisition of spiritual health, subtle points can be drawn from Islamic sources. "Rememberance of God enlightens the heart and mind. It is the capital of every human being and its benefit is avoidance of Satan tempting."

The spiritual health of the individual and society has indicators and symptoms that do not originate from statistics and claims, but from the need to institutionalize many of the ethical traits of humans and adhere to desirable norms.

A careful and analytical look at the mental and psychological conditions of society shows that many indicators of mental health are not well established. The existence of some side effects and injuries obviously endangers the mental health of the community. Among the traumatic and causal areas that endanger the spiritual health of society, this research addresses one of the paradigms of "laziness" that has endogenously become a common disease of our time. There is an attempt to summarize the concept and reality of the disease and briefly discuss ways to cure this disorder from the religion's outlook.

### The Concept of Laziness

The linguists have come up with the definition and concept of laziness as someone who is sluggish and unwilling to work and is a do-nothing<sup>2</sup>. In Arabic lexicon, we can refer to the word "kassel" which has a semantic symmetry with laziness.<sup>3</sup>

Studies in the concept of laziness show that this behavioral phenomenon can have a psychoethical root that results in complex behavioral symptoms; on the other hand, it refers to some hidden moods. Some scholars have described the phenomenon of laziness and loneliness as follows:

Laziness as a concept in the field of psychology has been around for forty years in the eyes of Western scholars. This group of psychologists' state: Laziness is to postpone the work we intend to do in the future. In fact, the essence of this psychological injury is to postpone, adjourn, lighten, and procrastination at work; as a result, negligence also makes sense in both individual and social contexts. In Arabic, the words "kassel" and "zajer" are synonymous with laziness.<sup>4</sup>

Obviously, the result will be laziness and Reluctance for the afflicted person in the face of important tasks and failure to accomplish tasks and duties.

# Factors Underlying the Incidence and Prevalence of Laziness

Since the phenomenon of indolence and laziness in itself is a subject with different dimensions, affected by different origins and backgrounds, reflecting on the socio-historical and cultural background of religious societies in the Eastern world can practically highlight some points:

#### 1. Belief in Fate (Fatalism)

Experience proves that just as profound theology and a correct understanding of religion can contribute to the growth and development of the believers of the religion, the misunderstanding of religion also drives the believers of religion to regress. Among these issues is a misunderstanding of the subject of fate. A considerable number of people have interpreted fate as a condemnation of man to an inevitable destiny. As a result, this group no longer has a mission to enter the realm of life in many areas. These people seem to have never been the addressee of the Prophet's luminous utterance, which he said: All of you are responsible for each other's affairs."

Of course, this religious misunderstanding also exists in some of the other social and moral beliefs and theories.<sup>5</sup>

### 2. The Normative-Value Confusion of Society

The level of interest in the community and the degree to which it adheres to the principle of accountability and avoidance of laziness depends on the degree of stability of the normative value system of that community. It is natural that when one sees in his personal analysis no appreciation by society for the "principle of commitment" and also he/she sees those who are living in a state of easy going and have a decent livelihood with poor literacy and some wealth, He has no attempt to strive.

#### Social Structure

One of the factors that foster the spirit of laziness in human societies is the modality and quality of power structures and governments. The more intimate the relationship between the state and the nation and with participation in affairs and mutual respect, the more clearly the tendency of citizens to cooperate in the social life spheres becomes stronger. Conversely, when the relationship between the people and rulers is cold and based on the rulers' tyranny and despotism, this belief will be dominant in the culture of the society that: "how useful it is to work when it is in the hands of others".

Some factors can be added to the mentioned areas such as weakness and inefficiency of law enforcement, disappointment and lack of self-esteem.

### Analysis of Laziness from as Evidenced in Religion in the Transcendent Rituals of Islam

Concepts such as Fturah, Taswif(boredom), and the like, which are conceptually overlapped with laziness, have been described as wickedness that have prevented many from achieving perfection. Even in the mystical approach (called: seir-o-soluk) the people of the Tariqat have been warned of this moralethical anomaly. For example, the Qur'an has characterized laziness as a characteristic of the hypocrites' worship and prayer: "Lo! the hypocrites seek to beguile Allah, but it is He Who beguileth them. When they stand up to worship, they perform it languidly and hypocritically, and are little mindful of Allah " (AN-NISA/142).

Ibn Arabi mentions that the reason for lack of motivation by the hypocrites is the lack of enthusiasm to appear in the presence of God, and lack of willingness to control the hearts and also association with the infidels.<sup>6</sup> Testeri's commentary also cites the boredom of prayer from the characteristics of hypocrites and narrates three other signs for the hypocrites: telling lie, breaching thecovenant, and betrayal when trusted.<sup>7</sup>

In the book entitled "Explicit Interpretation", the reason for laziness of the hypocrites during prayer is mentioned as follows: "And nothing preventeth their unity except that they became unbelievers in Allah and in His messenger, and they come not to worship save as idlers, and pay not [their contribution] save reluctantly" (AT-TAWBA/54). The hypocrites cannot truly seek God Almighty because of their infidelity and esoteric opposition, so if they pray, their prayers will be out of laziness.<sup>8</sup>

The prophet says: The Prophet (peace be upon him) commands Ali ibn Abi Talib<sup>9</sup> (AS): O Ali (AS) Avoid two traits: Annoying others and laziness. In the prayers of Ali ibn al-Hussein (AS), we read: The God, I have lived my life (in virtue of my covenant with you) with long dreams. One of the signs of laziness in the light of the Prophet (pbuh) are as follows: The lazy sign is four things: laziness at work to the limit of failure, failure to the point of ruin and ruin of work, destruction to the extent of blame and malice to the extent of sin and disobedience.

Careful studies of Islamic teachings and the subject of laziness will guide us to the major points:

A: Laziness is affected by specific factors and has specific symptoms. B: The effective role and function of laziness is evident in some immoral conducts and mental illnesses.

Some scholars have described the origins and grounds for the emergence and incidence of laziness:

Low self-esteem, excessive self-esteem, low tolerance level, obsessive-compulsive perfectionism, craving for short-term pleasure, lack of self-esteem and laziness, dissatisfaction with the situation, unrealistic perception of others, lack of responsibility towards others, stubbornness with others are the source of laziness in different people.<sup>4</sup>

# The Consequences of Laziness from the Perspective of Islam

The hadiths of the Imams (PBUH) on the explanation of the negative effects of laziness from the psychological point of view show that the disastrous consequences of this phenomenon have destroyed the individual and society, destroying all the dignity and aspects of human life, and it will cause irreparable damage.

1. Violation of Rights: Right-seekers need the principle of continuity and consistency in the pursuit of the right to respect and obtain the right. Lazy people end up losing their rights and others because of their lack of resistance and integrity in their personality. Imam Ali (PBUH): A beautiful and clear commentary:

Those who obey laziness lose their rights. <sup>12</sup> In fact, negligent individuals are often lazy and fail not only in respecting the rights of others, but also in the exercise of their own rights. <sup>13</sup>

- **2. Surrender and helplessness:** Human action has proven over time that the key to victory and the pursuit of great aspirations depends on the degree of motivation and perseverance. Those who obey laziness lose their rights. <sup>14</sup> The Emir of the Faithful Ali (AS) says: Laziness is the pest of victory.
- **3: Poverty:** Particular attention should be paid to this fundamental consequence among the lazy consequences. This is enough to make all the elements of one's personal and social life subject to life-threatening crises like a major earthquake. Poverty and deprivation diminishes all the faith and moral virtues of the individual and society. The prevalence of poverty, widespread destruction, and emergence of individual and social corruption are the events that occur simultaneously. Imam Ali (AS) says about this consequence of loneliness and laziness: When it all came together, laziness and helplessness came together, resulting in poverty. <sup>11</sup>
- **4: Failure to achieve dreams:** The type of concerns and aspirations of each individual are one of the motivations and effective factors for the continuation of human life. In essence, people who do not think about fulfilling their dreams are wasting their lives. On the one hand, effort and discipline are the first desirable character. Whether it be a material or spiritual desire, the present world or the hereafter is no different. Accordingly, lazy people turn any wish into failure and vain because of negligence, carelessness that results from a lazy source. Imam Kazim (AS) has described the deprivation of attaining dreams: "Avoid humiliation and boredom, both of which prevent you from taking advantage of the world and the Hereafter."
- **5- Feeling invalid:** A sense of personality and prestige among people is due to conditions and traits that are certainly not enjoyed by the caudal people. Sluggish and loose-minded people do not get the job done by relying on others, and cannot be a credible point for others. Imam Ali (PBUH) considers any trust and reliance on lazy people useless 17: "Do not rely on lazy people in your work". It is clear that the result of such a situation is nothing more than overbearing and feeling overwhelmed."

#### **Solutions**

Due to the complexity of laziness in terms of dimensions and context, a single solution for it, as a mental illness, cannot be suggested. Integrated solutions should be considered in this regard. It is important to note that laziness, whether social or individual behavior, should not be allowed to become habitual. Imam Hassan Askari (AS) considers separating a person from his habit as a miracle and says: "returning someone from what he/she is used to is like a miracle." Paying attention to religious teachings leads to many solutions, some of which come from rituals and worship.

Islam, on the basis of its anthropology, emphasizes the authenticity and immortality of the soul. Therefore, it always prioritizes the health and safety of humans. To this end, Islam has made such a major impression in the context of its doctrines and teachings.

As noted, areas such as self-esteem, over-expectation of self and others, lack of patience and intolerance, short-term enjoyment, laziness and lack of confidence, unrealistic view of self, irresponsibility, and stubbornness towards others are known to be the cause of laziness. Therefore, which part of the religion's capacity can be more effective to heal spiritual weaknesses as the source of the emergence of laziness? Among the fundamental principles of religion, one should not overlook the effective and efficient role of religious rituals and worship.

The main and highest purposes of worship are the consolidation of the spirit of worship and submission to the Almighty. Naturally, we come to devotion to God in the approach to worship, and the worshipping God brings the worshippers to the realization of the righteousness of transcendence; therefore, under such circumstances, man becomes like a mirror to the appearance of divine attributes, and the slave of God deserves the name of a believer.

The influence of rituals and worship in Islam is wide and covers many areas of human life, especially the area of mental health; it is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an: "And whoso magnifieth the offerings consecrated to Allah, it surely is from devotion of the hearts" (HAJJ/32). Obviously, as the celebration of divine rites and rituals shows the virtue and health of the soul, the function and content of the rites also influence the development and protection of the mental health of the individual and society.

Among the various types of rituals related to the subject of laziness, we discuss the Prayer, fasting and Hajj<sup>19</sup> as examples of treatment of laziness as a mental illness and show how rituals and worship with specific function treat this disease, thereby protecting the spiritual health of the individual and society.

# Prayer

Prayer is the most important form of worship and has its own rituals for helping the slaves in times of turmoil and crisis: "Seek help in steadfastness and prayer" (AL-BAQARA/153), and on the other hand, preventing any evil: ".. worship preserveth from lewdness and iniquity" (AL-ANKABOOT/45), and so on. It is the means of proximity to God. On the other hand, it promotes a spirit of awareness of the essence of righteousness and a sense of servitude in the face of the Almighty, and of the neglect and evasion of responsibility: ".. establish worship for My remembrance" (TA-HA/14), and the ladder of ascension and flight of the worshippers. Emphasis on the five times of praying is insistence on discipline and avoidance of procrastination.

Prayer is the most beautiful and realistic image of thanksgiving from the beloved and the Lord. In fact, this worship is a kind of unending bondage and the attainment of true peace in the turbulence of life: ".. Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest!" (AR-RAD/28).

It renews the spiritual powers and rescues the feeling of emptiness, despair, and depression caused by the lack of spirituality in daily life. The high concepts of prayer are the highest spiritual and ethical teachings that lead the worshiper to human values, ethical virtues, and out of any sense of self-loathing, arrogance, and the need to respect the rights of others. With full attention, the worshiper liberates himself from any dispersal of mind and distress and attains the concentration of spiritual powers in personal and social life, while when praying with other believers at the same time towards one qiblah, feeling unity is a shared identity in the worshipers in the world.

Therefore, the true prayer reduces laziness, and contributes to the growth of capacities and the continuation of the endurance and tolerance and motivation of the person, leading to spiritual well being.

## Fasting (Siyyam)

Fasting of the faithful is one of the other rituals in which the protection of spiritual health by the saint has been taken seriously.

In the philosophy of fasting, the Qur'an reminds one of attaining virtue as a virtuous person: "... Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those before you, that ye may ward off [evil]" (AL-BAQARA/183). In another verse, he introduces fasting as a support for believers to attain mental

comfort in difficult conditions of life: ".. Seek help in steadfastness and prayer" (AL-BAQARA/153).

Some traditions have also stated the relationship between fasting and spiritual health. The Prophet (Pbuh) has stated: Fasting is heaven, or is said: take fast to be healthy. Although in the primitive sense of health, which is itself a consequence of fasting, the health of the body is understood, the concept of health in the Prophet's words is mental and physical health. The author of Jama'at al-Sa'adat says in his statement of the truth and the main purpose of fasting: "... The ultimate purpose of fasting is to act based on the attribute of divine ethics, richness and needlessness (samadiyyah), and to follow the method of angels in the abstinence of lust and desire as much as possible."20 It is clearly mentioned that spiritual well-being is not only a secondary goal but one of the most important goals of fasting.

Obviously, fasting has both overt and covert sides. Some take fast to avoid worldly lusts and libido. And the other group, who, in addition to adherence to the above-mentioned point, tend to control and restrain their eyes, tongue, ears, hands, and other organs from committing the forbidden. And the last group who, in addition to the previous onesavoid any desire and vicious character and vile thoughts.

In fact, fasting eliminates the lusts and desires of the self, illuminates the heart of the human being, cleanses the organs and ultimately nourishes the appearance and the interior of the human being; thanksgiving on blessings and opportunities is practically facilitated. And it guarantees the care of others and the forgiveness and acceptance of ethical responsibilities in the face of others.20 This function means full intervention of fasting as one of the rituals in controlling and managing the psychological tendencies and safeguarding of human spiritual health.

Thus, if we consider the background or factors such as impatience, fleeting and short-term enjoyment, lack of self-esteem, evasion and irresponsibility to cause laziness to spread and persist, fasting is able to overcome obstacles, according to its customs and mysteries and, activate the capacities and talents to come out of this mental illness.

### Hajj

Another way of worship, which is associated with many rituals and is one of the five pillars of Islam, is the Hajj. <sup>19</sup> Contemplation in its contents, its components, and its rituals show that, in addition to the supreme mystical, educational and social goals, it is intended for the spiritual health of believers as a result and another product of this great divine command. This worship is associated with its various rituals encompasses the content and other practical functions of worship such as prayer, migration (Hijrat), jihad, charity(Infag), and even fasting.

The Holy Quran says in AL-E-IMRAN/97: ... " And pilgrimage to House Mecca is a duty of mankind". This must be considered one of the most comprehensive and effective rituals in Islam. Perhaps this is why Hajj is considered to be the standard of living faithfully and any failure to perform it is forbidden (if they can afford it) and is unjustified. In the explanation of verse 50 /AI-dhariat Imam Baqir (as) has stated: ... To understand and receive extensive advice on this obligation, one must refer to the sources and works of scholars who have examined the Hajj in detail. 22

In this essay, the author intends to briefly examine how this worship intervenes and affects the attainment and maintenance of the spiritual health of pilgrims. To achieve this, it is important to consider a few keywords related to the Hajj and its rituals. Such as: Qiyama Lelnas 97 / Maeda (a blessed place, a guidance to the peoples): "Lo! the first sanctuary appointed for mankind was that at Becca, a blessed place, a guidance to the people 96 / Al Imran; another word is Amna 96 / Al Imran; the other one is equality of human beings 25 / Hajj: ... is absurd; 3 / Repentance.

From the Holy Qur'an's point of view, Hajj and its related rituals aim at proclaiming the oneness of God, displaying the glory of the community of believers, acquiring inward and outward purity from esoteric manifestations, abhorrence of apostasy, uprising for equality, avoiding evil desires, practicing self-sacrifice, and rejection of selfishness. All of this shows well that a pilgrim of Hajj begins with his Ihram and ends with sacrifice (sheep) by being present on this unique spiritual journey. He has done his utmost to curb selfishness and impatience, fleeting pleasures, lack of confidence, irresponsibility to other humans, and disrespect to God and other creatures that are the grounds for laziness, by doing the rituals of the Hajj. And in turn, to adorn his soul to the characteristics like: dignity and the need for endurance in the right path, seeking lasting bliss and long-term pleasure, meeting the God, a sense of responsibility and commitment to other -regardless of their color and race, and the need to rise up for human equality, which are manifestations of pure life.

A closer look at the moral educational teachings of Islam leads us to other health-related remedies for laziness:

Deep Thinking: The first thing to be reminded of in remedies is to pay attention to the limitations of opportunities and inability to compensate for lost golden opportunities. The wise man must think to himself, what positive feedback is there from laziness? How many times does one experience blissfulness in this world? If one analyzes those losses and the consequences of lazy living with deep thought, he will inevitably make a new decision and will never be satisfied with the continuation of laziness.

Imam Hassan (AS) encourages the believers to look to salvation and prosperity and seize the opportunities: "And before the coming of your torment and death, which is the crushing of joys, act so that the blessings of the world do not endure and its calamities will not be safe."<sup>11</sup>

- B. Opportuneness and avoidance of Transient look at Opportunities: Human pleasures from the Islamic point of view have often not been denied as a manifestation of worldly life; believers have been called upon to manage this spiritual demand in a way that it allows one to relax, achieve eternal blessing and true happiness. In faithful life, it has always been urged to distinguish between enduring and endorsed Shari'a pleasure and unstable and desperate pleasures. In our mystical teachings, being a child of time and taking advantage of it has been supported, but being capricious has been rejected. Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (AS) expressed surprise to some people who do not think about the consequences of instant pleasure in the range of impurity: I am astonished at the one who is aware of the harmful effects of pleasure but does not give up and enjoys it!<sup>23</sup> And he has introduced the sign of human happiness to abandon mortal pleasures to achieve lasting pleasure.<sup>17</sup>
- C: Fighting self-justification: One of the preventing factors in honestly facing oneself in the path of self-improvement and the correction of bad moralities is self-justification. When it comes to justifying one's behavior, one is able to wear a religious hat with his infected mind while considering any wrong behavior beautifully and favorably. This self-justification has dangerous consequences, such as a kind of consolidation and reinforcement of inappropriate behavior. The Holy Qur'an considers this self-justified group to be the closest to damages<sup>24</sup>: In the saying of Imam Ali (AS), the manner and nature of the self-justifying group has been scrutinized<sup>12</sup>: the end of his career has truly hidden him and his desire, Satan, too, is his client to make his sinfulness beautiful for him.
- D: Practicing Invincibility: Due to mental and intellectual limitations and physical limitations, man is always faced with obstacles in the way of progress that sometimes cannot be overcome, and in fact he is left out of purpose. In fact, this is the state of failure. After observing the failures through careful study of the subject and the circumstances, the believer identifies the blind spots and takes steps to provide them with backgrounds and lessons learned from previous experience to overcome problems through trust in God. However, people with weak wills leave the life in favor of triumphant failure

because of their weak mentality from the beginning, considering the first signs of failure. Imam Ali (PBUH) says of the necessity of invincible practice: So appreciate the rest of your life opportunity and do not do it tomorrow and then tomorrow.<sup>12</sup> The important point in addressing the suggested remedies is to pay attention to the typology of the lazy and afflicted groups, as some in the face of this phenomenon actually have some kind of fascination or compound ignorance and this makes the treatment issue more complicated. These include solutions such as boosting self-esteem, prioritizing the tasks, taking action powerfully, counteracting fantasies, and applying therapeutic integration methods.

#### **Conclusion**

Spiritual health is, in fact, the base of every society for material growth and moral virtues. Weakness and lack of health in any of the human contexts threatens the mental and psychological well-being of the individual and society, and the sense of peace and security that signifies a healthy and desirable life becomes a scarce phenomenon Ethics and the normative and belief system of every society is the mainstay of the backing of stability and sense of security and peace of the citizens. The normative and belief system of every society is the mainstay of the stability and sense of security and peace of the citizens. Therefore, it is essential to institutionalize faith and moral values to develop and deepen the beliefs of citizens.

Islam enjoys a tremendous amount of knowledge and enormous capacities in the epistemic, belief, and ethics domains for a healthy life. By utilizing an efficient part of its capacity, the dimension of worship and religious rituals, and also cognitive solutions, Islam provides accurate definitions of the concepts and components of a healthy life and, next, offer practical solutions to achieve and prepare spiritual health.

Religious rituals are, in fact, practical ways to enhance the components of spiritual health; on the other hand, they are a methodical tool for controlling the factors and contexts that cause some harm. For example: prayer, fasting, and Hajj are among the most exemplary practices of religious rituals. Each and every one of them, depending on the capacities and characteristics of worship, can be effective in preventing laziness and interrupting it for the individual and society. This process of efficiency on the one hand, by weakening laziness factors and backgrounds, and on the other by enhancing the necessary spiritual talents and capacities such as Hope, Self-esteem and self-confidence, Realistic view of oneself and others, Reasonable relationships with others, organizing one's expectations of the society, and restoring one's own critical and responsible morale will contribute to eradication of laziness.

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