



ahimsa
meditation

AhimsaMeditation.org

**Insight
Meditation:
Vipassana**



About Insight Meditation

A big leap in development of your meditation practice lies with vipassana or insight meditation practice, which is going a bit further from concentrating on the breath. Please make yourself comfortable with our basic meditation instruction before you start developing and cultivating your insight meditation practice.

The general structure of insight meditation practice resembles already familiar meditation practice on concentration on breathing.

At Ahimsa Meditation we invite to contemplate on nonviolence, its meaning and how it feels inside of the body.

With time, this knowledge becomes more comfortable as we invite to approach it with self-acceptance and curiosity.

These contemplations give way to various insights.

Everyone can deepen their insight meditation practice by contemplating such universal truths as impermanence, importance of letting go of our ego and existence of never ending unsatisfactory feelings caused by various desires.

- impermanence
- letting go of our ego
- desire-driven unsatisfaction

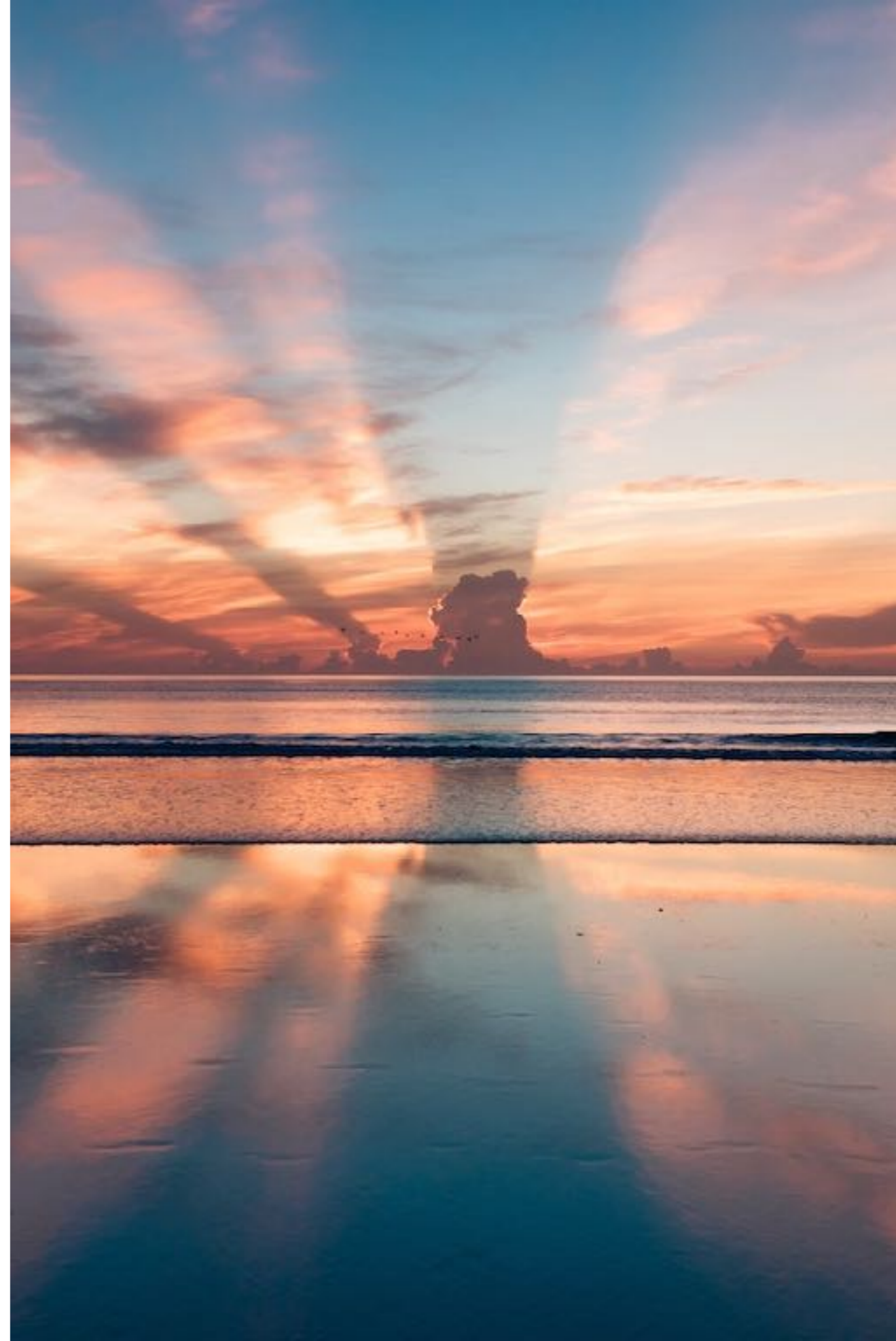
These characteristics of our lives are universal because we all experience them.

Here at Ahimsa Meditation we invite everyone to practice insight meditation in order to accept them fully.

Insight Meditation

Practice or Vipassana

- Find a quiet place and set your alarm for an initial 10 minutes (more if you feel comfortable to start with a longer session).
- Sit cross-legged on a floor (use a mat and a cushion to level your hips with your knees), place your arms on your lap. Only sit on a firm chair if cross legged position is very uncomfortable. In general, your posture should be fairly relaxed but not sluggish, so you won't meditate yourself to sleep. Full lotus is the most stable and firm posture, but you can adopt half-lotus or a simple cross-legged position too.
- Take a few really deep breaths as so other people would be likely to hear you breathing. It should make you feel relaxed fairly quickly.
- Close your eyes and start paying attention to sounds, smells, your posture and breathing. Simply make a mental note on what you are observing. No need to judge it or dwell on it.
- Pay attention to how your body feels. Start doing so by scanning your body from top to bottom and notice how even the smallest parts of your body feel. Don't try to change anything or judge. It's all good, you are being attentive, that's it.
- Move the focus of your attention to your breathing. Do not try to change it, just let it be. No judgement please. Notice where in your body your breathing starts, how it flows and how it ends. To help you settle with this pattern, you can start counting your breaths from 1 to 10 and then revert back to 1.





- If your attention shifts to something else, notice the very fact of this happening and then gently get your mind to count the breaths again and again. These 'jumps' happen all the time, so be kind to yourself. The more skillful you become, the less monkey-like your mind learns to be. Every single time your mind gets back to counting breaths, it also gets stronger. This, in effect, gives your mind a proper training.
- When you have established a good concentration on your breathing, ask yourself what nonviolence means to you. Is it the millions of saved lives, is it your own better physical and mental health state or something else? Reflect on your thoughts, do not judge them, just contemplate as it is. Look at these questions with curiosity and acceptance – you can ride the wave of nonviolence when it is a storm in your mind, but equally you can appreciate when your mind is still. Spend as much time as you feel comfortable contemplating peaceful and nonviolent living for yourself, your family, society and all living beings. Your reflections might trigger some emotions in your body, can you feel them as physical sensations? Note where you feel them and try to make friends with those feelings, they might be both pleasant or disturbing.
- Other important themes of contemplation include an understanding of constant impermanence, non-existence of a fixed self and suffering that arises because we cling to things and do not want to let go. These themes further enhance our nonviolence value – we understand how interconnected we all are and how harming others we ultimately harm ourselves. This flow of change and the absence of fixed self is clearly recognised by noticing our fleeting thoughts and emotions. Simply placing a fix note as 'there is thinking' or 'there is feeling', no need to judge it or to do anything – they will simply pass as you let go. It is all about cultivating an awareness of reality 'as it is'

- Continue for your set amount of time. When finished, allow your mind to rest for 30 seconds with no focus on anything at all. Just observe and let it simply flow.
- Finish by making a mental note how you feel now and open your eyes. You have just completed an insight meditation session.

Some people find it useful to get a piece of paper and a pen nearby, so they can write down their insights or simply a flow of thoughts after their meditation practice. This is completely optional, but such a brain ‘dump’ can sometimes help with either letting go or meta-awareness.

Noting technique is very helpful for those who are just developing their vipassana practice. Every time you are being carried away from breathing by your thoughts and feelings, it is beneficial to make a mental note about it and sometimes even non-judgmentally to put a mark whether that was a feeling or thinking and whether it was positive, negative or neutral.

You are not there to evaluate it, but simply be aware of an underlying feeling or thought processes.



Loving - Kindness Practice

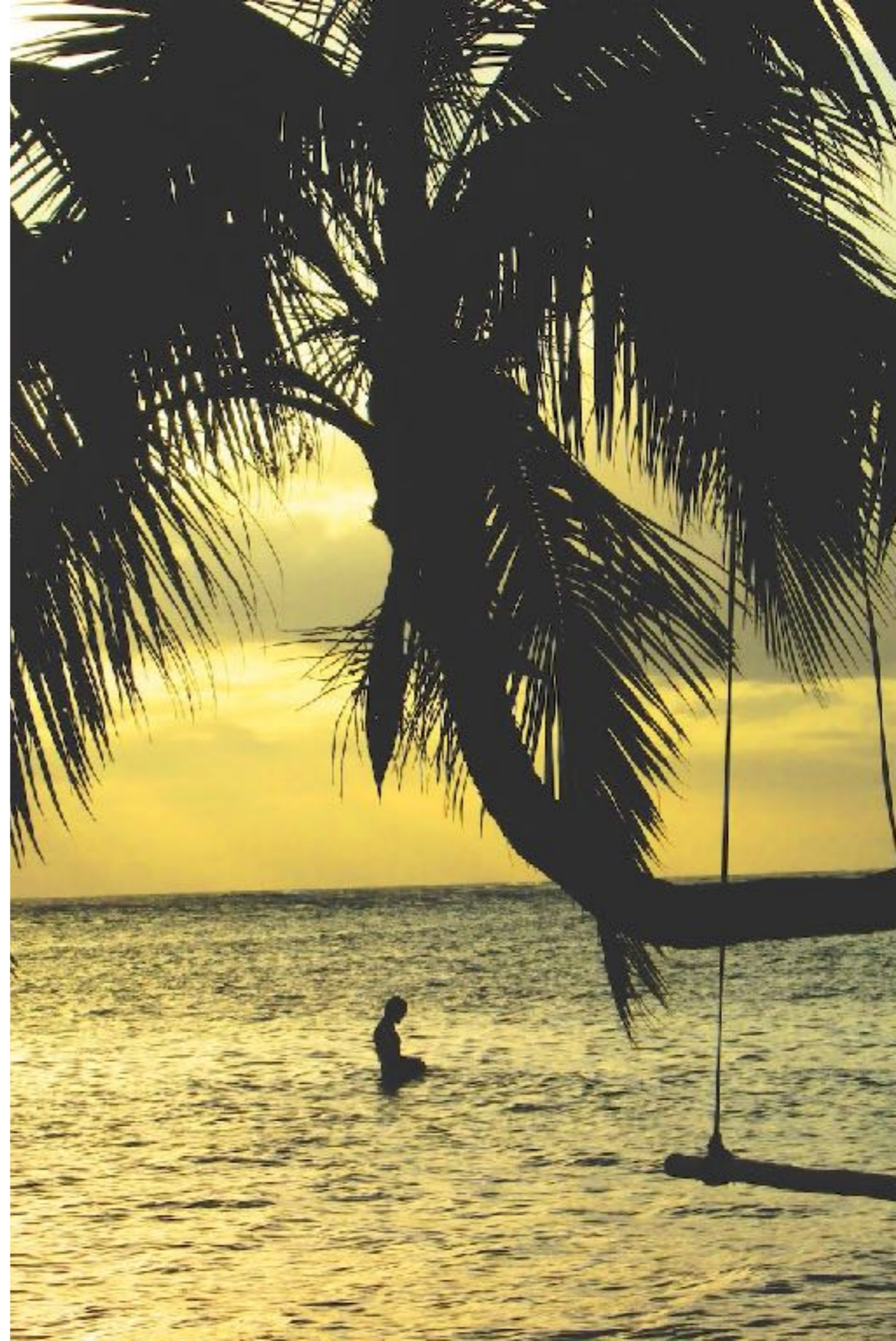
When you are comfortable with meta-awareness, self-acceptance and letting go of your ego, it is recommended that you incorporate loving-kindness (metta) practice into your meditation.

For us at Ahimsa Meditation it is important that we spend some time actively practicing nonviolence in your mind. We can all send wishes of health, happiness, safety and peace to yourself and then to your family and close friends. We can then extend it to our pets and people you know less, followed by sending these wishes to people we have difficulties with and, finally, to all living beings.

This is a very essence of loving-kindness meditation as you start reflecting on your own well-being, health, happiness, safety, peace and nonviolent life, but then gradually extend it to all circles of your life to include people and living beings you do not like or do not even know. It is a wonderfully warm and pleasant state that you will develop.

Similarly, your loving-kindness practice can be practiced longer with deeper appreciation and gratitude to everyone in your life including friends and family, pets, acquaintances, but also difficult people and the entire world. You can contemplate on the four beneficial states of mind: loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. It is beneficial to start with loving-kindness and gradually 'work' towards feeling a total equanimity, so you feel calm and stable.

Acceptance and compassion practice begins from contemplating and wishing well for yourself and then the practice extends to your family, friends, acquaintances, people you do not like or indifferent to and then the whole world. We all want well-being which is about living a rich, full and meaningful life. Peace in our lives represents true acceptance.





Insight Meditation by Ahimsa Meditation

Vipassana meditation enables us to realise a very curious paradox in the Buddhist psychology: the more fully we can embrace the unhappiness, the deeper and more abiding our sense of well-being.*

In this sense we are being on the journey for the well-being of ourselves and others through a clearer outlook on the reality.

Our meditation practice becomes to look like cleaning the eyes from dust.

There is no right or wrong in meditation practice and there is no aim either. It is a journey for each one of us to cultivate wholesome seeds in our minds. Quite naturally, these seeds will grow and your life becomes calm, kind, peaceful, full of gratitude and virtue.

Letting go of our ego, 'specialness', realising how impermanent all things are and that we suffer from time to time, allow us to live in a true freedom and at home with ourselves and others.

It is a way to a true nonviolence that start from everyone of you.

The beauty is in its simplicity.

Nonviolence in the world starts with learning how to be more kind to yourself.

Allocate regular time for your meditation practice, know that you are working towards a bigger goal of self-improvement, self-realisation, but also bringing kindness and compassion to the world.

* "Mindfulness and Psychotherapy" 2nd Edition by C. Germer, R. Siegel, P. Fulton

Benefits of Meditation

Nonviolence meditation for a healthy, mindful and peaceful living



Meditation helps to train our attention, wide awareness, compassion and kindness



Emotional stability, better ability to cope with stress factors



Increased inner peace, calm and composure when it is not going your way, or joy when you are happy



Better health, energy, vitality, mood and productivity in whatever you do or how you live through training your mind



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