

2023 Forum on Aging in Rural Oregon

Out Here on My Own:
**Using Creative Engagement to Reduce
Loneliness and Isolation**

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Thank you to our partners:





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Using Creative Engagement to Reduce Loneliness and Isolation

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WASHINGTON COUNTY
OREGON

Department of Health and Human Services
Disability, Aging and Veteran Services

TimeSlips™



Oregon
Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative



LET YOUR IMAGINATION SOAR.

TimeSlips opens storytelling to everyone by replacing the pressure to remember with the freedom to imagine.





Why Connect Using Creativity?

Social Isolation is a global public health crisis

- Health risk equivalent of 15 cigarettes a day
- Greater collective empathy and awareness of it after being on lockdown

Creativity is Calming

- Reduces stress and anxiety

Positive Reciprocal Care

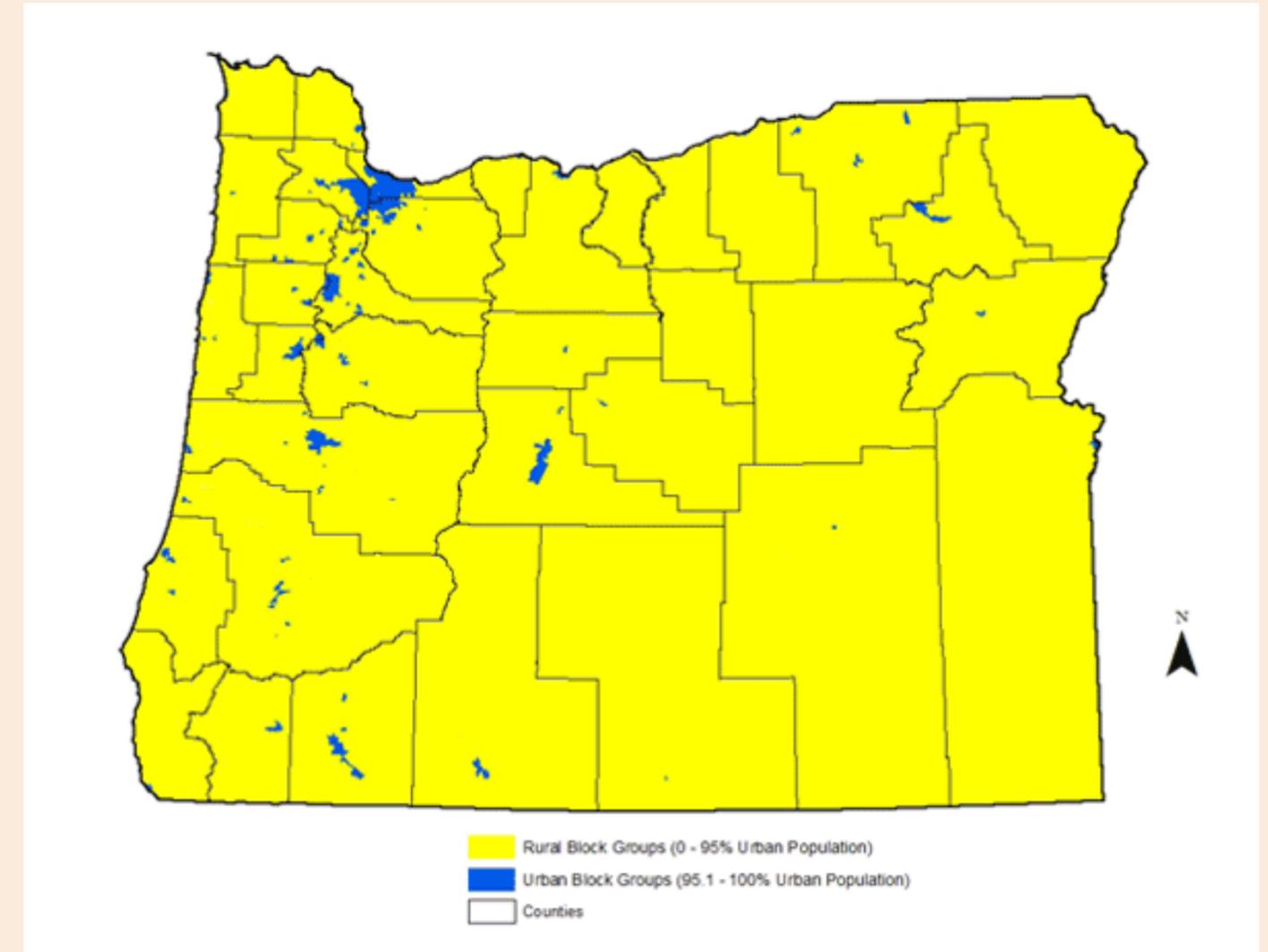
- Adds purpose + something to look forward to
- Increases well-being for facilitator and participant
- Reduces feelings of loneliness and isolation



Older Adult Isolation in Rural Communities

- 25% of older adults socialize with another person less than once a month
- Stigma and stoicism - self-reliant, resilient, resourceful
- More distance between neighbors, weather, road conditions, limited access to cellular activity and broadband internet, lack of transportation, less access to health and social support and services
- Increasing aging population in rural areas

(Henning-Smith, Journal of Rural Health, 2017)



What is Creativity?

- Who here is creative? How are you creative in your everyday life?
- Creativity is an innate human characteristic.
- Creativity is “adding something new to the world that has value.” – Gene Cohen



An invitation to creativity...

An Introduction of TimeSlips Key Concepts





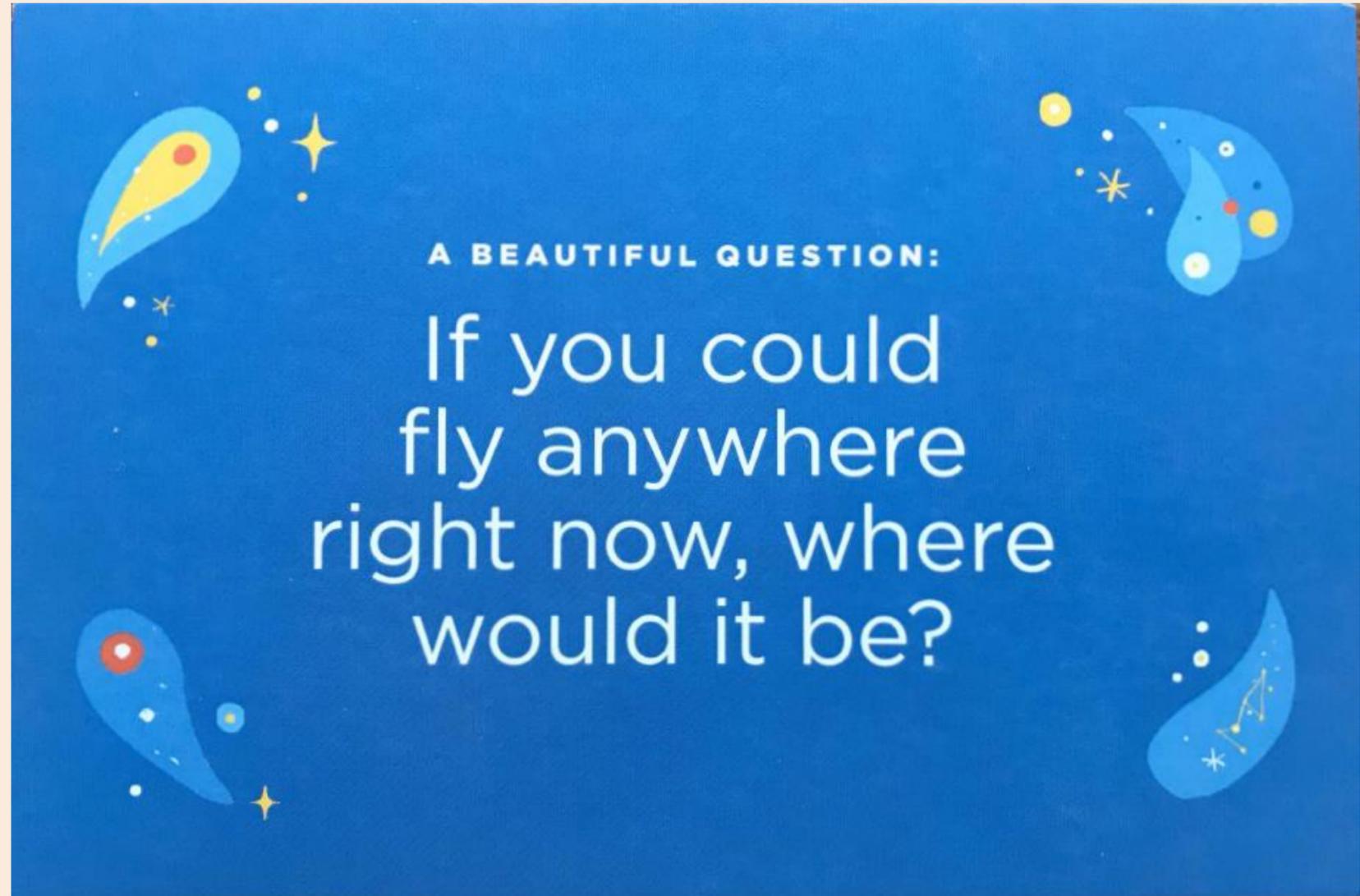
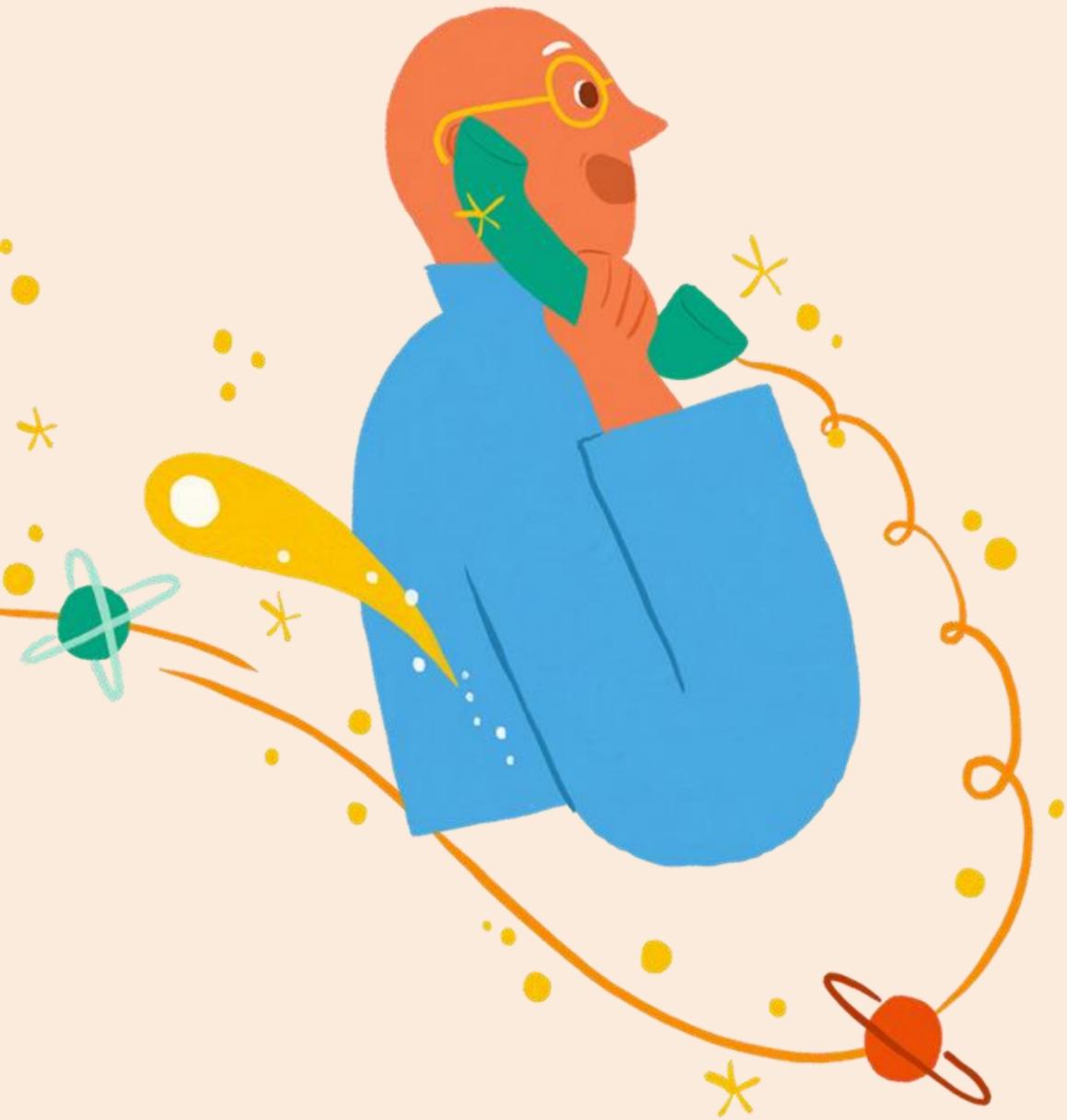
Beautiful Questions

A Beautiful Question is one that opens a shared path of discovery.

It is an open-ended question that has no right or wrong answer.

Beautiful Questions can be simple ways of reframing conversations.

Or profound.



Yes, And...

Yes, And... is the golden rule of improvisation.

It asks you to respond to the person you are caring for as they are now, not who they used to be, by accepting and affirming their contributions.

It's a radical concept for healthcare as it asks you to respond to everything that's being given to you.



Proof of listening

- Make and keep eye contact
 - Echo all responses
(words, gestures, sounds)
 - Be enthusiastic!



Beautiful Questions

Yes, And...

Proof of Listening

Repeat



If you could see anything
outside your window, what
would you like to see?



I'd want to see
children playing.



Children playing sounds
like a lovely sight. What
sort of game might they be
playing?





Demo Session



Micro Moments of Imagination



How might we use these techniques in everyday situations?

From Memory... To Imagination!

- Now that you know a little more about creative engagement, you are ready to shift from memory to imagination!
- It is a natural impulse to go towards fact and memory. Learning to shift to imagination can take time, but you will soon feel the joy and connection that can blossom with it.
- Know that you are an important part of ending the isolation and loneliness that can wrap itself around those in late life, or those experiencing dementia.

"Can you pass the..."

Imagine you are having lunch with a friend and they struggle to remember the name for ketchup. Rather than tell them the name, you could say:

A: What do you want to call it?

B: Red bottle.

A: "Red bottle." Okay, here's the red bottle.



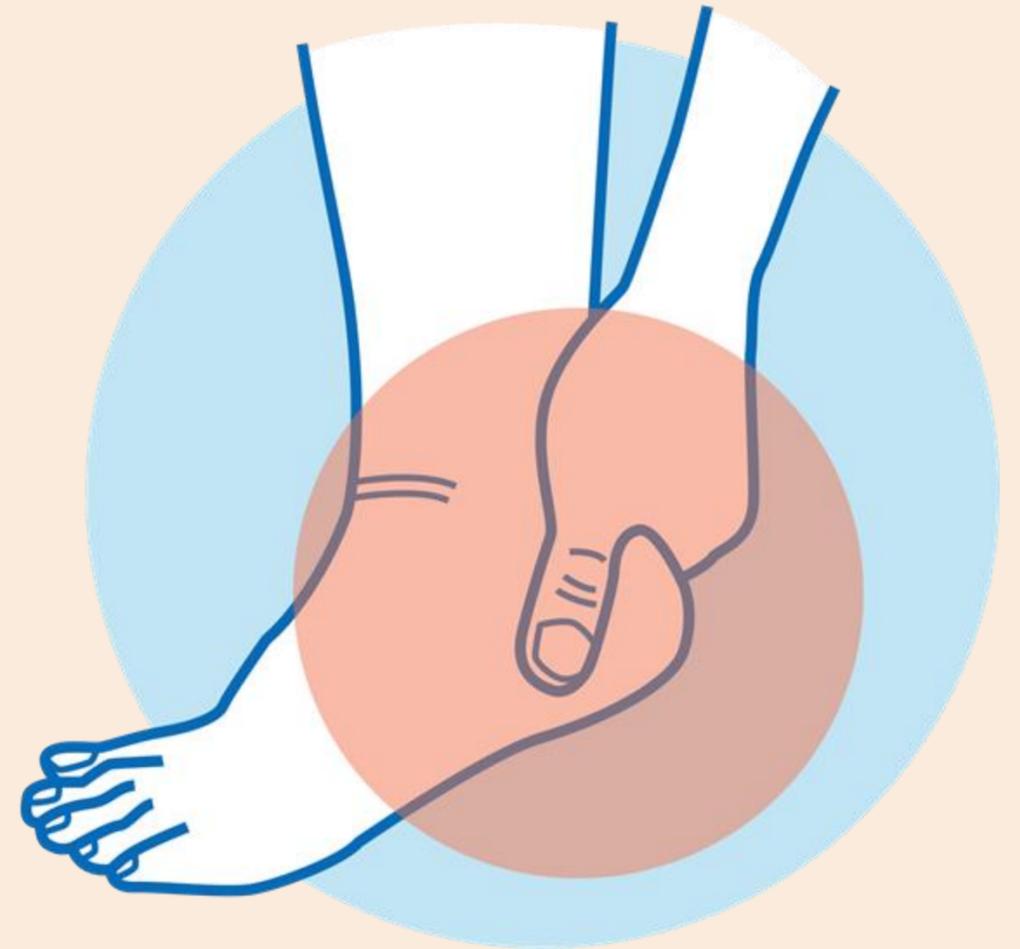
"My foot hurts"

Imagine you are doing a wellness call the person continues to say their foot hurts. Rather than trying to distract them, you could say:

A: If your foot could talk, what would it say?

B: I'm tired.

A: "I'm tired." Okay. What can we do to wake your feet up?



4 Innovative Solutions for Rural Communities

1. Intergenerational Programs

2. Reciprocity

3. Personal Interactions

4. Social media and remote programming solutions

(Henning-Smith et. al, Evidence-based recommendations for rural communities, 2017)

1. Intergenerational Programs



2. Reciprocity

Utilizing time and talents of older adults in the community

“I don’t know who is having more fun - me or the participants!”

- Marilyn Sanguinetti, Retired Volunteer



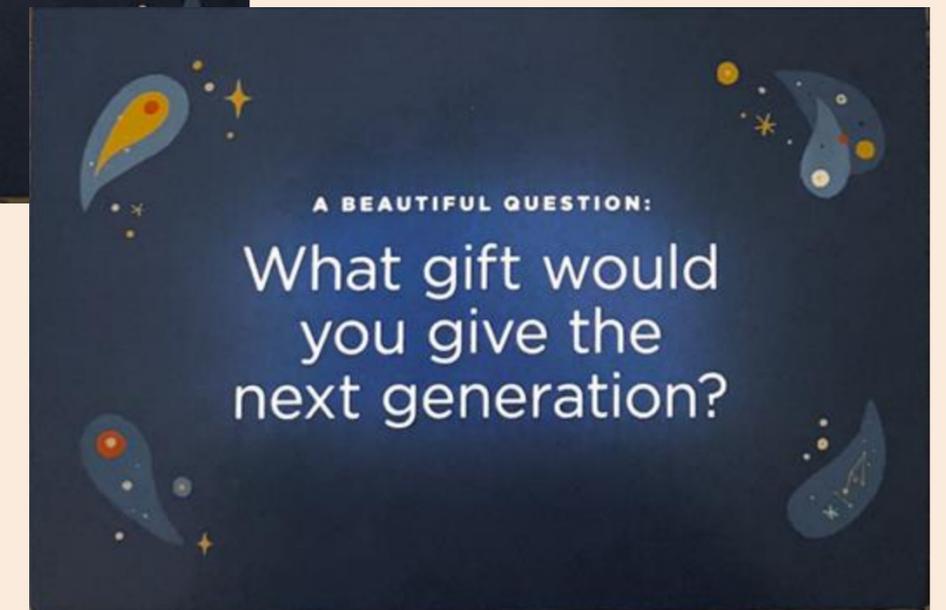
3. Personal Interactions

- Are there existing opportunities for more meaningful connections?
- Home delivered/Meals on Wheels drivers, friendly visitor phone calls



4. Creative remote programming

- Tele-Stories
- Social Media
- Timeslips Website
- Postcards



https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rlryNkK8Wnzg7DXx0ta6UauAFa016AWB/view?usp=share_link



Friends & Family Resources

Created in collaboration with family caregivers:

- Free Friends & Family Online Training
- 45 minutes long
- Requires free membership

How to access the TimeSlips Friends & Family Resources

- Visit www.timeslips.org
- Sign up for a FREE MEMBERSHIP with limited access – including Friends & Family Training



Want to learn more?

Consider becoming an All Access Member!

There are different membership levels for individuals and organizations that fit any budget and or need.

Paid Membership Includes:

- Customized coaching time with a Certified Trainer
- Additional training modules, tools and creative prompts to better support your practice
- Professional development opportunities
- Increased visibility on our website as a certified facilitator or organization



... and much more!



Q&A



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Thank you!

