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Embracing implant dentistry

It's impossible to stay on the sidelines, writes **Andrew Dawood**. Working with dental implants benefits your practice and your patients

We are told all the time that 'dentistry is changing'. But for me, one of the great joys of dentistry is that it is always changing: there are new ideas, new techniques, new materials, new technologies, new ways to share ideas, and new ways to communicate.

Dental implants are no longer new, but they have forever changed dentistry.

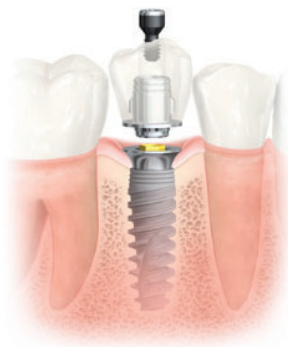
In the past implants were reserved as a solution to intractable problems that could not be addressed in any other way.

Today, many dentists rightly or wrongly see implants as a first line treatment, and in a world so heavily influenced by Instagram and social media, many patients will also be the first to suggest an implant to replace their missing or failing tooth.

Understanding implant dentistry

Most dentists leave undergraduate education with a rather limited exposure to implant dentistry, yet engaging with it is essential.

It is impossible to stay on the sidelines any longer: whether we are actively carrying out surgical or restorative implant procedures, or referring elsewhere, all of us need to be able to plan appropriately, and to offer the patient the treatment options that best suit their needs.



If implant restoration is suitable, it must be offered as an alternative option to bridges or dentures.

More and more patients will attend your practice with implants already in place, whether you participate in implant treatments or not – and these implants need maintenance and review.

For the right patient, dental implants are an ideal treatment.

Tooth-borne solutions (I do not much like the term 'conventional', as after more than 50 years of clinical use, I see implants as being pretty conventional), also have an important role that should not be overlooked.

Recognising what is best for a given situation and presenting alternatives to the patient is something we should all be able to do.

Armed with factual knowledge, providing implant restorations can be straightforward – perhaps remarkably so, even when surgical aspects of the treatment are challenging.

Single tooth implant restorations and short-span bridgework are absolutely practical for the enthusiastic general dental practitioner. We have seen many of our referring dentists develop thriving implant restorative practices with the right support and mentorship.

Bringing implant treatments to your practice is not only beneficial to your patients.

Engaging with implant dentistry can provide a stimulus for every member of the dental team to up their game, flourish and grow their skillsets. Meeting and overcoming new challenges also has a wonderful way of motivating and uniting the team.

Avoiding problems

It is alarming to see that quite a number of new patients to our practice present with entirely avoidable implant problems.

When planning implant treatment, you are starting with a blank canvas.



After more than 50 years of clinical use, I see implants as pretty conventional

You have the opportunity to make sure that every aspect of your patient's implant treatment has been carefully thought through.

You and your patient need to know that implant surgery should take place with a mainstream implant system, supported by a good body of evidence, and that a predictable long-term result can be anticipated.

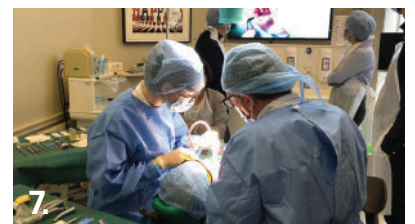
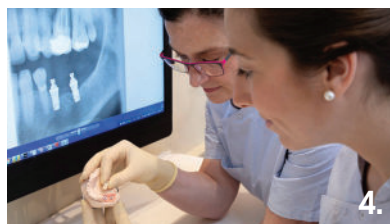
You need to know that ongoing maintenance will be straightforward, and that replacement parts and components will be available in the future.

You need to know that restoration can take place with a biologically sound restorative assortment, and that you can be well-supported through every aspect of the process. **D**

At Dawood & Tanner we hope that this supplement will help you in your quest to engage with implant dentistry, and to do your very best for your patients.

IN THIS ISSUE

4. Getting started in implant dentistry
6. My route into dental implants
7. Choosing a referral partner
8. Succeeding in implant restoration
9. Referring for treatment
10. Introducing Dawood & Tanner



Getting started in implant dentistry

Dawood & Tanner emphasises the importance of mentorship when starting in implant dentistry

We see our referrers as an extension of our own practice and hope that they see us in the same way. We are keen to constantly update and inform, and to discuss cases: training and education are part of life for every dentist in the UK, but they are ingrained in the culture of Dawood & Tanner.

We are trained to learn particular processes and procedures (of which there are many in implant dentistry), and educated to be wiser and more reflective on our treatments. We are trained to step back and see the bigger picture, and consider alternative options and long-term perspectives.

Satisfied patients who have implant treatments that are minimally invasive, frictionless in execution, long lasting and trustworthy are the best advertisement for a dental practice and will help it to grow in stature and reputation. A well-trained team will help the dentist to focus on their work, and this is something that our patients will always recognise.

Of course, a philosophy of continual growth and improvement not only benefits the clinician but will lead to improved business success and increased team morale – ultimately all to the benefit of our patients. At Dawood & Tanner, our desire to make sure that our own team and our referrers were well trained led to the inception of The Dawood and Tanner Academy.

Finding a mentor

Whatever stage that you are at in your career, starting out in implant dentistry can be daunting. Finding the right mentor will have a huge impact on your engagement with implant dentistry. They will share their experience, provide you with guidance and motivation, and give you the confidence to make first steps – and then encourage you to keep on moving forward.

A philosophy of continual growth and improvement not only benefits the clinician but will lead to improved business success and increased team morale

We have helped many of our referring dentists to graduate from restoring single-tooth implants, to restoring full arches

Your patients also need to feel well supported and certain of their treatment plan and treatment pathway at every stage. It is important for the mentor to bolster the confidence of the mentee and their practice as those first few treatments are undertaken. We have an open-door approach for our mentees and referring colleagues. Early on, restorative treatments can be undertaken under supervision at our practice with the assistance of one of our experienced nurses.

Later you may want another set of eyes to look through a scan or radiograph, or wish for surgical input into a particularly complex multidisciplinary plan. Over the years we have mentored many dentists, and they are always welcome to spend time with us at our practice to observe implant procedures of all kinds.

Identifying suitable implant patients

Dental implants of course permit the independent replacement of teeth. In circumstances where bridgework would require the preparation of teeth, where adhesive bridgework may be unsuitable, or where the patient cannot get on with a denture, implants may be a perfect alternative. In our experience, very few patients actually want to wear a denture – particularly in the lower jaw. When you have access to – and the confidence to use – a new tool, you will find many more situations where it can be applied.

In this day and age, patients are generally already familiar with the idea of replacing a tooth with an implant. As is often the case, fear and financial concerns are common obstacles to uptake, but we have certainly made the mistake of assuming that patients would not be ready to commit, when in fact they have been keen to move forward when their concerns have been sympathetically addressed.

A full periodontal and prosthodontic assessment and a survey of the available bone



volume is important, but it is unusual to find a situation where an implant solution cannot be found. At the Dawood & Tanner practice, we will generally find a routine solution even where there is extreme alveolar atrophy/resorption, which may include the use of zygomatic implants, short implants, grafting, or nerve lateralisation.

Understanding treatment planning

Each patient presents with a unique set of problems and treatment needs – no two cases are the same. Planning for dental implants must consider aspects of medical and dental history. We find patients who engage with implant treatment often do so with a determination to resolve other periodontal or dental issues at the same time, to prepare the way, and optimise the outcome.

At Dawood & Tanner, we follow a rigorous and systematic approach to treatment planning, and have even gone so far as to develop our own assessment tool – ‘The Dental Practicality Index’ (Dawood and Patel, 2017), which is one of the first such planning tools to be validated – and this process of validation



is ongoing. The tool does not just look at the endodontic state, the periodontal state, and the integrity of the tooth, it also looks at the 'context' of the tooth, giving an 'EPIC' score to help with and justify simple decision making.

Our philosophy is to use a prosthetically driven approach to implant surgery, always planning with the final restoration firmly in mind. Therefore, 3D imaging is an important part of the process, and will often be combined with modelling and planning in software, CAD, and the production of surgical guides.

Expectations, financial concerns, and time constraints are important factors to be carefully considered and discussed. Patients should be made aware of, and helped to understand, all possible risks and complications. We will try to plan for a solution to some of those potential problems even before we start treatment.

Knowing your own boundaries

Being comfortable with the treatments you provide is important. It is also important that patients receive the treatment that is most appropriate to their needs, which may mean seeking assistance elsewhere.

We have helped many of our referring dentists to graduate from restoring single-tooth implants, to restoring full arches. For dentists carrying out some surgical aspects of treatment, we are often asked to assist with advanced treatments such as full arch surgery for patients with atrophic jaws, bone grafting, sinus lift surgery, and zygomatic implants.

Our years of experience working alongside our referrers and our multidisciplinary team, and our access to technological and laboratory facilities, may help to remove obstacles to treatment, giving your patient the reassurance that they need to move forward.

What to do when cases appear too complex

We can work with you and your team from the earliest stages of treatment planning and will assist with case preparation and scheduling. When you refer a patient for the surgical aspects of their treatment to Dawood & Tanner, both you and your patient can feel reassured and confident that you are partnering with one of the best known and longest established implant practices in the

Starting out in implant dentistry can be daunting. Finding the right mentor will have a huge impact

UK. Ready access to diverse multidisciplinary opinions can streamline planning and avoid unforeseen changes to the plan later on.

Whilst we are of course pleased to help with all aspects of treatment, we will always provide you and your team with whatever implant prosthodontic advice and training is needed to help you feel comfortable to provide the prosthodontic phases of implant and associated restorative treatments. Our online referral hub enables you to share and retrieve patient referral data including radiographs, images and text securely and quickly. **D**

Reference

Dawood A, Patel S (2017) The Dental Practicality Index – assessing the restorability of teeth. *Br Dent J* 222(10): 755-758

Developing a thriving implant practice

My route into implants



Mark Rampersad explains how finding a trusted referral partner hasn't just kept patients happy – it's supported his own journey too

Mark Rampersad
Dentist



Tell us a little about your practice: what treatments do you offer patients?

Mark: I have been in practice for 25 years, the majority of it with Laura Lynch Dental Care in Beckenham, Kent.

We offer a wide range of patient-centered treatments with an eye on aesthetics. I did a masters degree at a time when composite bonding was in its infancy. That was the basis of my practical cases, and now it's a lot of what I do.

I benefit from substantial professional freedom, which has given me the confidence to find and push my limits – if I can't do something then I will find somebody who can.

What sort of work do you refer out?

Mark: The cases we send out of the practice tend to be complex endodontic treatment, unstable or advanced periodontal cases and surgical dentistry. I find generally patients don't thank us for these treatments.

What made you decide to find a referral partner?

Mark: I wanted to find someone who would do the things I don't want to!

I'm looking for one quality above all:

humanity, shown to the patient, my staff, and me. Of course, anyone you refer to must also do their job to the highest level!

My patient should receive the quality of care I would want for myself. If I wouldn't see this specialist, why should they?

Do you have any worries about referring patients out?

Mark: To be honest I have very few worries about this, as patients often associate the less pleasant aspects of treatment with other places. They are therefore usually more than happy to return to us for the 'nicer' treatment.

I have been using the same happy band of specialists for many years and I'm confident in their abilities and their ethics – which tells me I'm working with the right people.

How do your patients find the referral process?

Mark: It's remarkably simple and effective, at least with Dawood & Tanner, which is where I send my patients.

I write the referral, and the patient is contacted efficiently, often by email. I am able to share information such as radiographs, case details or medical concerns on a shared secure digital portal.

I can then access information about the case, implant type and restoration details.

How has having the support of a referral partner helped your own practice?

Mark: Andrew and Susan at Dawood & Tanner have been mentors on my implant journey. They built my confidence to tackle larger

cases and they have been at the end of a phone when I've needed extra support or answers.

Their generosity in allowing me to spend time at their practice means I learnt from them as they treat their own clients, and mine. I am fortunate to have a lovely cohort of patients who appreciate their expertise. It makes the journey into London worthwhile.

As a result, my implant practice has leaped forward.

What should practices look for in a referral partner?

Mark: Approachability, skill and communication. A like-minded colleague with a patient-focused attitude.

Why did you choose Dawood & Tanner?

Mark: Circumstances drove me in the right direction. My previous specialist had moved on, a colleague recommended I look at Dawood & Tanner, and then I saw Andrew host a lecture – it was a perfect storm.

Andrew provides sublime results from his surgery. He positions implants so well! That makes the restorations I provide look great. It really shows that he's also a restorative dentist.

How would you describe your experience of referring to Dawood & Tanner?

Mark: In a word, rewarding. It's satisfying to provide comprehensive care for patients. As a bonus, I have gained new skills for my dental toolbox. **D**

Choosing a referral partner



Andrew Dawood explains what to look for when reaching out for expert help in caring for your implant patients

Andrew Dawood
Principal,
Dawood & Tanner



As your implant experience grows you will find more situations where implants benefit your patient, will become increasingly familiar with the various components of the implant system with which you work, and will feel more comfortable undertaking greater challenges with the support of your trusted referral partner.

But what should you look for in a referral practice?

Experience

Of course, experience is essential; implants are an important addition to the restorative armamentarium, but implant dentistry is not just about placing and restoring implants.

Experience is essential; this requires expertise in all aspects of prosthodontics, periodontics and endodontics.

Dawood and Tanner's multidisciplinary team has been privileged to be at the forefront of implant dentistry for the past 25 years, building a reputation for excellence with our implant treatments. We have also been privileged to collaborate with many outstanding clinicians, and have helped to build their practices and watch their reputation grow.

We also have extensive experience in treating patients in challenging, sometimes

exceptionally challenging circumstances, and developed new techniques, implants and treatment concepts.

Latest tech

Dawood and Tanner have extensive in-house digital facilities, such as our state-of-the-art cone beam computed tomography, DTX implant planning software, laboratory CAD and surgical planning software, and 3D printers – all of which provide your patients with a friction-less and minimally-invasive experience.

Our use of technology makes advanced treatments, such as grafting and zygomatic implants, straightforward. When necessary, we have even made bespoke implants for our most challenging patients.

Support

Whether providing straightforward single-tooth treatments or assisting with complex full-arch reconstructions requiring elaborate grafting or zygomatic implants, Dawood and Tanner can provide surgical or prosthodontic expertise, as well as mentoring for practitioners wishing to develop their skills in implant dentistry.

Our goal is your patients will return to your practice for the prosthodontic phase of treatment after implant placement. It is always our pleasure to provide prosthodontic input or training and advice on all aspects of restorative care.

Our team will assist with case preparation, planning and scheduling; we will always offer

clear restorative instructions and guidance on the correct components to be used as part of the reconstruction. This also includes liaising with your laboratory as necessary to ensure the implants that have been provided are correctly restored. We will help tailor your professional development plan to suit your needs and develop a portfolio of patients.

Clear guidelines

Consider us an extension of your practice. We appreciate how critical it is that you are kept well-informed of your patient's journey and you can feel confident that by collaborating with the Dawood and Tanner practice we will support and reinforce your patients' relationship with your practice.

Be clear how much of the treatment you want to undertake. Once your patient has visited for a consultation, we will write to you and your patient with a full explanation and detailed costings of all proposed treatment options and alternatives to ensure your patient is comfortable and confident about the treatment.

Compatibility

We enjoy working with referrers and their teams throughout the surgical stage of the patient journey, and provide support through the restorative phase of treatment. Our dental implants and restorative components are supplied by Nobel Biocare.

If you are just starting out, we will make sure that you have the required instrumentation to treat your patients and detail what components are needed for each case. **D**

Making a success of implant restorations

Susan Tanner provides some top tips on how to complete an effective restoration

Susan Tanner
Principal,
Dawood & Tanner



According to estimates, as many as 80% of all implant restorations in private practice are single-unit or short-span cases. We believe the treatment protocols for the restoration of a single implant, or to provide a fixed bridge, are entirely accessible to the motivated dentist in general practice.

Restoring implants is an ideal first step towards entering the world of implant dentistry, allowing you to be engaged with your patient's treatment, widen your knowledge and grow professionally. Providing the restorative treatment also enables you to enjoy some of the potential revenue, while limiting the responsibility for the surgical aspects of treatment.

Understand medical history

A medical history is important for our patients, as is a knowledge of the potential impact of any associated treatment. We find that so many of our patients, even our younger patients are taking multiple drugs, which need to be considered when contemplating treatment.

Understanding the medical status of your patient will help you manage expectations, pre-empt problems, and may help identify avoidable side effects of medication that could impact on their dental health.

Understand periodontal state

We ideally want to see our implant patients motivated and able to achieve good levels of plaque control before treatment. Where necessary, preliminary periodontal care may be required. Losing a tooth and preparing for an implant may be a wake-up call to your patient to improve their ways.

Appreciate restorative space

Should adjacent teeth be investigated before implant placement? Has there already been some degree of compromise with overeruption or tipping of opposing or adjacent teeth? Is there adequate space available for the implant, an abutment and an implant restoration?

At Dawood & Tanner, we use high resolution 3D imaging to survey the site and provide information on adjacent teeth.



Figure 1

A failing tooth (Figures 1 & 3) restored with a post crown has been immediately replaced with an implant-supported crown (Figures 2 & 4). Implant placed by Dawood and Tanner, restoration by Dr Serge Kotok



Figure 2

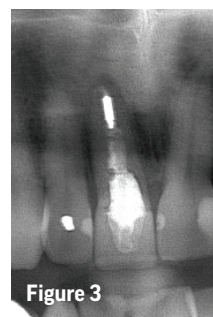


Figure 3

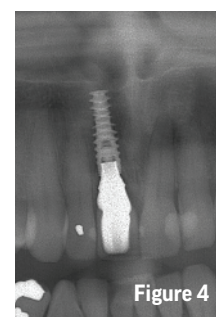


Figure 4

Plan the occlusion

So many of the single tooth implants that we provide replace teeth that have been lost as a result of restorative problems where the occlusion has been a major contributing factor. We must make sure we do not reintroduce the same problems when the tooth is replaced.

Taking simple steps to improve the occlusal ecosystem before providing the restoration will do a lot to improve predictability and longevity.

Understand your implant system

Several mainstream implant systems are on the market, with a great deal of research and scientific evidence to support their use. It is comfortable to work with a mainstream manufacturer, knowing a local representative will support you when necessary.

Understand the components and instrumentation that you will need; this should not be an extensive list.

Biological impact of implant restoration

Using the correct components is of supreme importance. Only connect titanium or zirconia to the implant, as these are implant materials. Only connect components to the implant that have been made by the same manufacturer as the implant. This will ensure the biological and mechanical integrity of the system and the all-important implant-abutment connection.

Laboratory understanding

Many of the problems we see stem from the fact the laboratory has innocently used components that seemed perfectly

acceptable at first glance, usually because they are substantially cheaper.

We see problems relating to the use of 'compatible' components with subtle mechanical differences which make them distinctly incompatible; fractured implants and infection due to an inadequate 'fit' or peri-implantitis because of the use of inappropriate materials.

Know your surgeon

If your surgeon has a deep insight into the restorative and prosthodontic aspects of treatment – not only implant-related aspects – then your restorative management will be straightforward and predictable.

At Dawood & Tanner our treatments are prosthodontically led, ensuring all patients are treated with a clearly defined end in sight. If you use an itinerant surgeon, retain copies of their CV, references and indemnity.

Empower your team

Everyone in your team has a role to play in implant dentistry; patients will respond to the confidence exuding from your receptionist, and a knowledgeable nurse can make treatment frictionless and can take on the challenge of managing stock.

Hygienists and therapists have a crucial role in explaining treatment and supervising maintenance. Dawood & Tanner Academy runs implant courses for all team members. **D**

Referring for treatment: which pathway is best?

Make sure you consider all the options when investigating the best route for your implant patients



Why refer?

- Less disruption to your practice
- No loss of surgery time
- Ability to continue with your routine dentistry and financial flow
- Less nursing support required
- No need to support an anaesthetist
- No need for a recovery room
- Mentorship and training.

Some practices may refer out their patients' entire implant treatment. Some opt to refer out for the surgical procedure alone – while others keep the entire process in-house, whether it's an 'in-house' surgeon carrying out the placement or not.

It's true that for some, bringing in an itinerant surgeon instead of referring out can feel like the best call.

But what is the ideal approach for the very best possible patient care?

Choosing an itinerant surgeon

In implant dentistry in particular, failure to plan is planning to fail, and planning takes time.

When working with an itinerant surgeon, make sure that they are able to meet the patient before surgery, have time to discuss options, obtain consent, and have time to make a full surgical plan that compliments

your restorative plan. Make sure that when referring, relevant photos, radiographs and models are made available.

The relationship with an itinerant implant surgeon has challenges for both the referring dentist and the patient.

Be prepared for the fact that patients don't always find the idea of a travelling surgeon a comfortable concept and have concerns regarding the procedure, aftercare, and accountability. This can be an awkward arrangement when treatment has not gone entirely according to plan.

Of course, there is always an attraction to keeping treatment in-house, and many dentists choose to undertake most aspects of treatment themselves, referring only their most challenging cases out of the practice.

In these instances it is important to ensure that your practice has a sufficient flow of patients – experience requires experience, and it can be difficult to gain that experience without a steady stream of patients.

Referring implant patients

There are some key factors to consider when referring patients out, too.

It is worth looking for practices where surgery is carried out by surgeons who work with implants 100% of the time. Can the practice offer custom-built operatories with every technical and surgical facility? Does it have access to a comprehensive stock of every possible implant or component needed?

Ultimately, as a referrer, you want to be confident that the practice you choose will be there for you – and any complications that might crop up with your patients. **D**

What to look for in a referral practice

- Dedicated surgical suites with surgeons working in their 'home territory'
- Comprehensive implant and component stock, biomaterials, retrieval instruments, and sterilisation services
- Highly trained surgical nurses and assistants
- Sedation services
- Customary protocols, onsite CBCT scanning, planning, guides, models, and lab as needed
- Prompt treatment
- Immediate availability for complications
- Mentorship and training with team
- Minimise referring dentist's responsibility and accountability for the surgical phase

Introducing Dawood & Tanner



The Dawood & Tanner surgical team

Have you considered the benefits of a referral partnership with one of the **best known and longest established implant practices** in the UK?

Dawood & Tanner has been at the forefront of implant dentistry for more than 25 years, building a reputation for excellence with our sometimes-transformative treatments.

Our long experience of implant surgery and restorative implant dentistry, working with a wonderful group of referrers and colleagues, has helped us to develop a holistic approach.

We care deeply about the longevity of our implant treatments, whilst also carefully considering non-implant options and the preservation of teeth whenever this is appropriate.

Experience and expertise

When you choose to refer your patients for treatment at Dawood & Tanner, we want you to feel that both you and your patients will benefit from a relationship with one of the best known and longest established implant practices in the UK. On those occasions when problems or complications arise, we are there to support you and your patients, every day of the week.

Also consider the potential problems of

copied with patients who are being treated today – particularly younger patients.

Doing everything possible to avoid peri-implantitis is of paramount importance; even without peri-implantitis, implants need to be maintained, replacement parts provided, and in the future older implants requiring updated prostheses.

You as the clinician need to keep this in mind when choosing an implant partner, implant system and when you plan your restorations. Compromising today could be disastrous for our patients tomorrow.

Many of our patients travel from across the UK and beyond for more complex or elaborate treatments.

We have the resources and expertise to simplify and expedite treatment for patients who travel from afar. We are able to maintain reasonable fees for many reasons – most importantly because implant treatment is what we do, all day, every day.

This of course helps with treatment uptake, and allows the overall cost (and the cost of surgical and restorative aspects of treatment) to be fair and appropriate.

Full support

Whilst we are perhaps best known for and take a great deal of pride in the management of some of our most challenging cases, the fact is that the majority of our patients require single-unit implant restorations or short-span bridge

solutions, and restoring these cases should be part of what you do at your practice.

To this end we will mentor and fully support you on an individual basis, with small-group courses.

Our popular three-day introductory restorative course and our full-arch courses are ideal starting points. Our referrers join us for workshops, lectures, and of course our yearly study day.

Even if you already offer some implant surgery within your practice, we are still keen to work with you to help you to develop your skills and to treat those patients who are particularly challenging and require treatment that might take you of your comfort zone.

Once registered as a referrer, our online hub enables you to send and retrieve patient referral data securely and quickly. The system accepts and digital files including radiographs, images and text. You will also have access to our resource library, full of helpful and useful information for you and your patients. **D**

We are able to maintain reasonable fees... because implant treatment is what we do, all day, every day

Dawood & Tanner

THE SPECIALIST DENTAL PRACTICE

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At Dawood and Tanner Academy, our advanced courses have helped many dentists looking to work with Dental Implants attain greater treatment success and patient satisfaction.

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