A Workbook to Expand Beyond Your Roles into a Joy-Filled, Guilt-Free Life

Reveal
THE REAL YOU

by Catherine Bruns

www.YourWiseVoice.com
About This Workbook

Who are you? As you begin to think about answering that question, likely you come up with things like: I’m a mom, I’m a sister, I’m a wife, I’m an administrator, I’m a music teacher, I’m a runner, I’m a good friend…..

You think about the roles you inhabit, but that’s not really WHO you are. Our roles are most definitely important, but we as women often make the error of mistaking our identity with the roles we occupy.

You are not simply a Nurse. You are a kind, creative, generous, fun loving, liberal thinking, relationship oriented, extroverted, a little loud in the mouth, lover of the Discovery channel, gardening, travel loving woman, who happens to be a Nurse. Get it?

You are not simply a Mom. You are a chocolate fiend, online shopper, art gallery lover, situational introvert, afternoon napper, super organizer, love to dress up and go out, seeker of new information, technology loving woman, who happens to be a Mom. Get it now?

You are way more than the roles you occupy. And it’s important to know who you are past your roles for several reasons.

1. Your role may/will go away. Children leave the nest and layoffs happen. If you are identifying yourself too heavily in the role of Mom or your job position, then what’s left when that role is no longer there in the same way?

2. You may not have chosen this role. Sometimes women look around at life and say, ‘How did I get here?’ You may find that you drifted into a role, or perhaps you got thrust into it by a life situation, but it’s not really what you had dreamed for yourself. If this is the case, then likely there is some discomfort on your part. Perhaps you feel like you’re not living your real life or you feel unhappy and then guilty for that unhappiness.

3. You struggle to make choices outside your role. It may be easy to determine what you as Mom or Nurse would want or choose, but it is likely harder for you to determine what YOU want. Test this. Right now – what do you want? Is there a little churning in your stomach, or a kind of blank spot in your brain? Or, perhaps you quickly know exactly what you want, and it’s not in line with your role, so you feel you can’t have it. Any of these reactions let you know that you have not been feeding YOU.
4. You try to change yourself to fit your environment. When something doesn’t go right, or doesn’t feel right, or isn’t working well, you judge yourself and consider that something is wrong with you, rather than considering that the situation might not be right for you. You try to fit yourself into a role or situation rather than creating the role or situation to fit you.

5. How do I know all this? Because as a Coach and Psychotherapist I’ve asked hundreds of women the question, Who Are You? And, I always get a similar answer - the list of roles. When I ask a woman to dig deeper and talk about herself without her role, I most often get a puzzled and somewhat blank look.

I know we’ve been trained this way. And I know you received some kind of family and social training to be a nice, caring, and helpful girl. If you were lucky, then your childhood grownups encouraged you to explore things you enjoyed and to become aware of your strengths and weaknesses, but it is likely that you were encouraged to fit in - to your family, your classroom, and your peer group. My guess is that you were encouraged (in subtle or not so subtle ways) to change yourself to make other people happy. In this way you began to learn that your own wishes, needs, and inner operations were less important than what those around you felt about you.

Your family did the best they could with what they had, but creating the expectation that you should fit in rather than be yourself is a drag! And, it doesn’t help when you’re trying to create a fulfilling and happy life. Living for others is the fastest way to feel unhappy, unsatisfied and resentful. But, living for yourself, and including others in your life, is the way to fill up that emptiness inside, that nagging darkness around the edges.

So, I’ve created this workbook for you to learn about the most important subject in the universe – YOU! When you know yourself inside and out, you are able to create a life that works for you. You can make choices and decisions that are based on your own Wise Voice – the knowingness of you. You will find greater satisfaction and happiness because you know what works for you and what doesn’t. You no longer have to fit your square peg into a round hole – you can create the square hole that fits just right.

Sound good? Let’s go.
How To Use This Workbook

THE MIRROR
The first section – *The Mirror* – is for you. Complete each question, but it doesn’t really matter in what order. I do encourage you however, to write your answers down. You can use these worksheets, or your journal, but it is good to have a record so you can go back and reflect on your discovery and evolution. This also becomes a living document, your personal owner’s manual. When you are making an evaluation, a decision, or are stuck in some way, you can turn to this workbook to remind you of what’s important about you and help to get clarification.

A note on answering the questions. You may be tempted in some cases to answer ‘I don’t know’. However, I want you to know. These questions are about you – there are no wrong or right answers and no one is grading you. So, if your knee jerk response is ‘I don’t know’, then close your eyes, take a deep breath, and quietly listen for the answer to the question. Allow the answer to bubble up from inside you - and try really hard to accept and not evaluate.

THE MIRROR REFLECTS
The second section – *The Mirror Reflects* – is for a trusted friend or family member to complete about you. If you are like most women, you do not have an accurate reflection of yourself. Likely you have more negative and judgmental beliefs about you than your loved ones do, and you are probably selling yourself short in the strengths and positive aspects department. You also may not be aware of the depth of the impact you make on your world.

It is important to choose the right person(s) for *The Mirror Reflects* section. Choose someone you trust, both to tell you the truth (you don’t want candy coating), but to do it in a way that is about you and not about him or her. You want to understand your impact and others' perceptions, but it is not the point of this exercise to get that person's agenda for you.

Consider who may know you the best. You also may want to give this to a few different people. You might be surprised that people in different aspects of your life may perceive you in different ways (and is that because you are wearing different roles in different parts of your life?)

The goal of this is for you to deepen your relationship with you. There are no right or wrong answers. There is no right or wrong way to be you. You’re perfectly fine just the way you are. And when you know yourself inside and out then you can choose what parts of yourself you would like to smooth out or evolve.

Happy Reflecting!
The Mirror - Your Reflection of You

ROLES – ONES YOU WANT & ONES YOU DON’T

Get really clear on your roles and how you came about occupying them.

List all the roles you currently occupy. *(Ex – biz owner, mom, sister, friend, artist, nurse, teacher, carpool driver, etc)*

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Of the roles you have now, which ones did you choose and which ones did you get, but not by your choice (you fell into it, you were born into it, you shoulded yourself into it, or someone else chose it for you)?

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE PAST

Who we are now is created by our past – those things people told us, what our family was like, how we grew up, etc. I want you to consider some aspects of how your past is shaping you.

What did you want to be when you grew up? Why? (My example: when I was a kid I wanted to be a veterinarian or a game show host)

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How do your kid dreams relate to what you’re doing now? Is there something missing? (Example: My theme is still watching and being with people, and helping at the same time.)

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What was (were) your favorite thing(s) to do when you were a kid? Did you like to play outside, read quietly, pretend like crazy, cook with your Mom, collect random things, ride horses, or other things?

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Do some of those pleasures from childhood still make it into your life now? Your kid activities can point you in the direction of how you like to play.

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What do you remember about what people (parents, teachers, friends, relatives, etc) said about you that was good? *(She's so creative, she's such a good reader, she's great at athletics...)* Some of these may be your current strengths.

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What do you remember about some of the negative things that people said about you (or around you) when you were a kid? *(She's too loud, she can't sit still, she can't follow directions, for example).* Consider whether you believe these things about yourself now. If so, how do they shape you?

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DREAMING IN REAL LIFE

Oprah talks a lot about having a big dream, something to look forward to and work towards. I want you to consider what some of your real life dreams are.

If you had a week of no responsibilities, an unlimited budget, and a choice of whomever you could be with, how would you create that week? Would you go to Tahiti with your partner for a romantic getaway? Would you send the entire family somewhere else, so you could have alone time at home? Would you stay put and take dance and art lessons every day?

Given a free hour, how would you ideally fill it?
What is (are) your big dream(s)? Go crazy – there’s no need to know HOW to make them come true. (Example: Mine involves a camper, my camera, a laptop to blog, and 3-6 months in the Western US.)

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YOUR ATTRIBUTES

There are things that are all about you, that make you you. It’s important to know those things that make you different from everyone else.

What do you love? Make a long list and resist adding things just because you think you should love it/them. (*My Example: bright colors – like the azure blue of the ocean, good wine, reading, fashion, hanging out with my BFFs…*)

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What are your strengths? Things you are good at, or come naturally to you. (and no – it’s not bragging, it’s just the truth) (*My Example: organized, good planner, very loyal, skilled communicator, to name a few.*)

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What are things you’re not so good at?

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What are your guilty pleasures? (Hint: one of mine is reality TV)

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Are you an extrovert or an introvert? (Clue: extroverts recharge by being around others, introverts recharge by being alone). PS- neither is better than the other.

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What do you love about yourself? (Think further than your hair or your earlobes.)

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CHANGING THINGS

I’m sure there are many things you would like to change in your life. However, I’m going to ask you to not just look at the obvious, but take a new perspective on how to look at change in your life.

If you could change or delete anything that’s occurring in your life right now, without consequence, what would it be? (i.e. a belief, situation, person, experience)

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If money was no longer an issue, how would you create your life?

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If other people (their expectations, needs, etc) were no longer an issue, how would you create your life?

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What gets in the way of you having the life above that you described –aside from money and other people? *(Hint – look for inner and outer roadblocks – fear, procrastination, negative people, etc)*

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What would you like to make different or evolve about yourself? Really think about this list. I want you to consider evolution and change that is possible and that you can actually create.

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How would your life be different if you made the above changes in yourself? Get specific. For example: How would you feel? Would you live differently? Would the people in your world be different? Would you treat others differently? Would others treat you differently?
SESELF CARE (FILLING YOUR BUCKET)

In my experience women are not that great at really taking self-care seriously. A bubble bath doesn’t really cut it if what you really need is 3 more hours of sleep at night. I call it filling your bucket – caring for yourself first and well, so that you have lots of energy to take care of your world and those you love.

What fills your bucket? What replenishes your energy? *(My example: good sleep, beach time, fun with friends, music, following my Wise Voice, to name a few.)*

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Do you incorporate the above noted bucket fillers into your life regularly? If not, what keeps you from doing that?

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OTHER PEOPLE AND YOU

The people you have around you affect you and your world in a huge way. We have a tendency to be like those we hang out with, so it’s important to create supportive and positive circles of other people. We also need social support and relationships are generally very important to women.

Who is (are) your closest friend(s) and support(s)?

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Who would you like to be closer to?

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What do others love about you?

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If you weren’t worried about what others would think, what would be different for you? What would you do?

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Are there people in your life who bring you down, are negative, or create drama or difficulty in your life? Who are they?

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Why do you have the above people around? What is the payoff that you are getting? (Example: financial security) Or, what keeps you from setting this person free from your world? (Example: scared that they will get angry or not like you any more)
THE BIG QUESTIONS

There are some deep and big subjects that I think are important to understand about yourself.

What are your gifts? What is it that the world cannot live without from you? (You have at least one.)

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What is your Big Why? Why do you get up every day, do what you do? *(My example: a passion to help women live Life Just Right™)*

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What are your top 4 values? (Go to the Values exercise in Appendix A)

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Are you currently living your values? If not, what needs to change?

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What are your beliefs about money? *(Example: money is the root of all evil, money grows on trees, money is dirty, men are better at money than women)* If you want to explore this more I recommend Suze Orman’s books.

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How do these beliefs impact your relationship with money?

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What are your beliefs about love? *(Example: love hurts, love makes the world go ‘round)*

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How do these beliefs impact your relationships and intimate partnerships?

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How do you get your spiritual juice or connection with the Divine? Meditation, prayer, church services, ritual gatherings, service, time in nature…..

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How does your relationship with Spirit impact your life? Is there anything about this relationship that you’d like to alter?

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If you had 3 wishes from a genie, what would they be?

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DAY TO DAY

One day, then the next, then the next and before you know it a whole year has gone by and that thing you said you wanted to do, change, or start, has escaped you. Your day to day is important in your vision of you.

With nothing in your life being different than it is now, describe your perfect day.

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Now, describe your perfect day if you could make it any way you would like.

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What’s different between the two?

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Complete the Pie Exercise. Draw a big circle on a piece of paper. Now divide it into slices by the time and energy you currently spend in each of the following categories: work, chores, family/friends, spiritual life, self care, fun, and any other that is important to you.

Now draw another circle and divide it into slices by the time and energy you would ideally like to spend in the same categories.

What’s different?

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PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

What have you learned from completing these questions?

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What area do you feel pretty good about?

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What area would you like to choose to make some changes in?

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Likely you have discovered that the life you would like to have is not the one you do have. What is one change you can make right now to get closer to your ideal life? What would be the next change?

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How is knowing this information about yourself helpful?

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The Mirror Reflects – This is for Your Loved One

Complete this worksheet for your loved one. Take your time and really think about the answers and how they relate to her. She is asking you to do this because she trusts you and your perspective and she'd really like to know how you see her. Try hard not to give your opinion or judgment, but simply the truth and facts as you see them. Be truthful and don’t candy coat, but try hard to put the critical truth in a way that will be helpful and not hurtful.

You are completing this worksheet for:

Name ________________________________

What are 3 words you would use to describe this person?

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What do you most love about this person?

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What are this person's strengths? Is she using them? If not, how could she?

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What are this person's weaknesses?

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If you could wave a magic wand and change anything in this person's life to create more confidence and happiness for her, what would it be?

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What do you see in this person that she doesn't see in herself?

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What one thing do you think this person could change or improve that would make her even better?

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Is this person being less than she is capable of being? How does she do that?

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What is (are) this person’s dream(s)?

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What is your dream for this person?

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What else would you like this person to know about herself?

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CONGRATULATIONS!

It is a lot of work to complete this workbook and I commend you on taking the time and spending it on such an important topic – You!

Now that you know all this about yourself, what needs to come next for you?

Are you ready to make some changes?

Is it time to create new habits, kick some unhelpful people to the curb, or learn some new tools and skills that can help you do those things?

Maybe you’ve already made some changes and have incorporated some aspects of your ideal life into your current life.

But, this workbook all by itself won’t make your life different.

You have to do that! That’s the good news – you’re in charge! Sometimes women find that to be the bad news too, because, guess what? You’re in charge!

So, take control of your life. Wrangle your power back from whomever and wherever you’ve left it. It’s yours.

What are the 3 things you can do right now to move yourself closer to your Life Just Right™?

1. 
   
   
2. 
   
   
3. 
   
   

Now, make a plan for each of these items that include:

- When you will do them – either singly or repeatedly
- Who you will be accountable to
- How you will move yourself back on track as you start to slide back into old uncomfortable comfort zones (it usually happens!)
- Who you need to ask for help

**NEED MORE?**

Sometimes it’s hard to do this all by yourself. I know, I tried, and then I asked for help.

I can help you.

I can be your guide, your accountability, your teacher. I can help you learn the tools and skills to create your Life Just Right. I can help you uncover the barriers, negative beliefs, and roadblocks that keep you from your success and joy. I can be your cheerleader and be the gentle hand on your back that keeps pushing your forward.

Schedule a free 20 minute check in call with me and we can evaluate what would be the best way for you to put what you’ve revealed about you into action.

During that time we will:

- uncover what you learned from completing Reveal the Real You
- create your top 3 priorities, wants, or needs
- outline a plan of action

If this sounds right for you then go ahead and reserve your check in time now by sending me an email at Catherine@YourWiseVoice.com

I really am thrilled that you took the time for yourself and I hope you plan to do more of it.
About Catherine Bruns

Catherine earned a Masters Degree in counseling and served for 20+ years as a licensed marriage and family therapist to support individuals and couples struggling along their journeys to live authentic, happy lives. Today as a graduate of Coach U, Catherine’s focus is serving as a workshop leader, speaker, author, and coach on a mission to guide frazzled, frustrated women who want to move from funk to fabulous and enjoy Life Just Right™.

Catherine lives on Oahu (in Hawaii), nestled in the back of a rain forest valley. She has been part of a women’s spiritual circle since 1996, loves traveling the world with her husband, nurturing and chronicling her love of books in a diary she has kept since 1993, and walking her two dogs. Essentially a human lookie-loo, Catherine often cries when she watches her favorite reality TV shows like What Not to Wear, American Idol, and So You Think You Can Dance. Watching people reach for their potential and transform into their best fills Catherine’s heart to the brim.

Catherine would love to connect and explore how she can help you discover your Wise Voice and enjoy the guilt-free and joy-infused life you crave. Please call (808) 263-1244 or email Catherine@YourWiseVoice.com or just poke around at www.YourWiseVoice.com.
Appendix A - Values Exercise

DEFINITION:  **Values are ideals that are personally important to you and move you forward in action in your life.** Every person can have different values. Cultures and groups often share values. Whereas people can judge certain values to be right and wrong dependent upon social rules, values inherent in themselves contain no element of right and wrong. They just simply are important to you.

**Values can change.** While values don’t change frequently, they often evolve as we do. Think back to when you were a teenager. Do you still have the same values? Perhaps some are the same and some are different. Perhaps you have a deeper understanding and resonance with those older values. And, perhaps you have developed into a different person, with different values.

**Values are a tool by which you can make decisions and choices.** When you are making a choice that doesn’t seem clear or accessible, by measuring your options next to your values you can often times come to a more meaningful decision.

**Do you know what your values are?** If you’re not clear on your values, then they are not a useful tool for you.

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**EXERCISE: FINDING YOUR VALUES***

On pages 40-41 you will find a list of words and phrases that describe values. Refer to these pages as you complete this exercise.

1. Go through the Values Word List and circle all the words that appeal to you and feel of importance to you. Resist the urge to choose words that you think you should, but choose ones that ring true to your spirit. Please add any words or phrases that you feel are missing for you. Don’t think hard about your choices, just take a deep breath and go from your inner wisdom.
2. Now review your words and phrases and narrow the list down to ten:

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3. As hard as it sounds you are going to narrow this list further to your most important four words or phrases that best represent the true spirit of you right now. It may make it easier to look over your list of ten and find words that may encompass one another.

1) _________________________
2) _________________________
3) _________________________
4) _________________________

4. Look this list of four over and really savor and feel each word or phrase. Close your eyes, find your quiet center and ask your inner wisdom if these are the four values that are your truth at this time. Make adjustments if you need.
VALUES WORD LIST

Abundance
Accomplish
Acquire
Adventure
Alert
Alter
Arouse
Articulate
Artistic
Assemble
Assist
Attain
Attentive
Attract
Augment
Awe
Be accepting
Be amused
Be awake
Be aware
Be bonded
Be connected
Be integrated
Be joyful
Be linked
Be passionate

Be present
Be sensitive
Be spiritual
Beauty
Bliss
Bravery
Build
Calm
Capable
Cause
Coach
Comfort
Community
Conceive
Consume
Congruent
Connection
Contentment
Control
Courage
Danger
Dare
Dedication
Delight
Dependable

Design
Detect
Devotion
Direct
Discern
Distinguish
Drama
Dream
Educate
Elegance
Emphasize
Encourage
Endeavor
Endow
Energize
Energy
Energy flow
Enjoy
Enlighten
Enroll
Entertain
Excellence
Exhilaration
Experiment
Expert
Explain

Facilitate
Family
Foster
Freedom
Fun
Gamble
Glamour
Govern
Grace
Gratitude
Greatest
Guide
Have fun
Health
Holy
Honest
Honoring
Humor
Imagination
Impact
Improve
In touch with
Influence
Inform
Ingenuity
Inquisitive
VALUES WORD LIST continued

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