

Stop Overparenting!

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SUMMARY

In this episode of "Parenting and You," Dr. Shaali explores the challenges of parental control, particularly in the context of screen addiction and the emotional struggles of parents. Through discussions with two mothers, she emphasizes the importance of connection over control and the need for parents to manage their own anxieties to foster healthier relationships with their children.

- *The desire for control often stems from parental anxiety rather than the child's behavior.*
- *Screen addiction is a prevalent issue affecting parent-child connections, leading to frustration and helplessness.*
- *Children communicate their feelings through their behaviors, indicating when something isn't working.*
- *Parents must recognize that their expectations may not align with reality, leading to cycles of guilt and frustration.*
- *Connection and presence are more beneficial than micromanagement; children thrive when they feel seen and understood.*
- *Breaking the cycle of control requires parents to change their approach and focus on emotional connection.*
- *Parenting is a journey that involves healing one's own emotional struggles to better support children.*
- *The episode encourages parents to prioritize being present over doing, fostering a nurturing environment for their children.*

[Music] on this episode of parenting and you with me Dr shaali we are going to deconstruct this whole topic of parental control which every parent I know struggles with you know I have to confess that the topic of control was really a huge topic for me in my early years as a mother I felt that it was my job to control my child and I didn't have any other tools besides

micromanaging her every move it was only later when I began to develop conscious parenting that I realized that this mindset of control actually was toxic because it had very little to do with my daughter and all to do with me I soon discovered that it was my inner anxiety my own inner helplessness that was in the driver's seat of my desire to control it wasn't my child's Behavior it

was my anxiety and that's what we're going to go deeper into today in this episode coming up I'm going to be speaking with two mothers who are really struggling with how much control they need to have with their children and I'm looking forward to helping them and you I can't tell you how many parents come to me in my practice complain complaining in angst over their children's use of screens it's almost as

if this screen addiction has become a modern epidemic it is a plague eroding the connection parents feel they can have with their children I'm joined today by a mother who is suffering from her child's screen addiction she

is helpless she doesn't know where to turn so let's welcome Molina who who is going to be sharing her struggles with her 8-year-old son welcome Elina hello thank you Dr fly I'm very happy to be here and

find better tools to support my son we are having challenges with video game time he loves video games we don't mind that he loves that what becomes a challenge for us is how he's really managing the anger when we set the limits for him to turn it off the the TV or the video game and so that becomes such a big thing and I was a preschool teacher so I have worked with many kids and I've done the self of regulations

with him like those of regulations to help him but it feels like nothing is really helping I know like I wanted him to be expressive but I want also him to find tools to control his emotions and need be the support for him as a mother so how long has this been going on it's been going on a while well we also went through separations I believe like it has been two years that start really with the TV and video game what do you

mean by we've been going through separation between our families we have like separation their father and I so we find like sometimes a TV it's kind of a cope mechanism for him so you're saying that his father and you have been separated for how many years now four for four years and this problem has been escalating in the past four years yes I would say like in the past two years it has escalated that's when he really start playing video games

and watching TV okay and when you have to Now set the limit say on a Monday or a Tuesday can you describe the typical scenario what happens yes he has such a long day at school so we get home around 700 p.m. and then after like he needs to do his things before you watch TV or play video games so let's say if he has like an hour an hour and a half of it video game and then I tell him oh we'll

have like 30 more minutes and then we're going to turn it off the TV then just to tell him he has 30 more minutes it's already makes him feel like very anxious and he has been able to say I don't like when you tell me because he already like feels the emotions so we have like try to talk like what else could I do to help you so you know it's time to turn it off we have a time limit

on the video games and a TV that turns off by you know at certain time then when it's past the 30 minutes and it's time to turn it off he starts like screaming and like really like throwing himself on the floor or he will like kick and just like a really really mad and like is screaming I understand when you're observing this what is happening to you what are you feeling in your body so in my body I feel like that

burning sensation that I wish she would stop because also like I feel for my 13 years old daughter because she sees all of that and she wants to stop that as well so sometimes she wants to walk in in the situation I have to remind her like I am handling this it's I'm his mom I'll take care of this but she wants that to stop she wants him to stop screaming and I want that as well so

sometimes I'm like I will say to him Max you can be angry but you were screaming you need to stop talking to me like that okay how many times a week are we seeing this it happens very often I would say like it happens

three times a week sometimes two times a week and sometimes we can manage that okay so so let me ask what part of Molina is holding on to a

fantasy that today is going to be a different day is Molina thinking he's more grown up than he is showing Is Molina just too exhausted Molina's hoping because she's too tired I think just Molina whole pain because she's tired after like a full day and I just want the things to go smoly so this little respite she gets when her son is watching TV and then

also like I feel that guilty of like okay after a full day of work I want to have that time with them too and that we can exchange between us and like maybe even can try to play a little bit of video game with him so we can make that connection but that's not really what happens and that's mother guilt inside of me that our day is short like our time together is not very long like it's

during the day I mean and then that time we have or we have like a argument because of the TV right or he is just on the TV and I feel like it did not have that time between us you're yearning for a connection but you're also exhausted and then you end up just fighting so is this plan this the way it's continuing now is it helping your relationship or creating more stress and anxiety more

stress and anxiety right more is stress and exciting yes correct so we need something to change right that's why you're here today yes but like many parents you too keep hoping that Dr shaali or some other person is going to tell you the three magic things that will magically change your son is isn't it yes I don't think I I will change him and I don't really want to change him I

want to find tools to help him or maybe even help myself beautiful so if your child could talk in all the fighting in all the screaming in all the kicking if he could really say what he's really feeling don't you think he would say something like this mommy I'm out of control correct those are the words right he's showing you he's out of control so each day passes and you're

hoping he's going to fall in control but the story is rinse repeat right the same thing happens so the child is clear mommy I'm out of control but mommy keeps thinking that the child will get in control tomorrow so she does the same thing the same TV the same schedule and again the child is saying I'm out of control so there's a mismatch between what you're seeing and

how you're processing it isn't it yes big time right the child is quite consistent isn't he yes he is very consistent you're right so I want you and parents listening to really stop in their tracks and realize our children are clearly communicating to us they clearly telling us when something is or isn't working is your child without even using words clearly telling you

something isn't working for me yes okay that's is you are hoping like all of us parents that your child will grow into you know having an adult brain that will be able to regulate that'll be able to organize that'll be able to shut

the dopamine addiction off right but your child is clearly saying that he can't and guess what your child is developmentally appropriate he's not

wrong that brain that 8-year-old brain cannot say no to the dopamine addiction that the screens are giving him so we are putting our children we're throwing them into a pool of candy and telling them to stop after the first two licks it's like that you're throwing your child into this ocean of dopamine of this drug and then you're saying O time's up got to stop licking got to get up and go on to the next task and his

brain is on dopamine it's fired up and you're saying oop time to go well like anybody who's addicted to sugar or to a drug his brain is going into withdrawal and he's screaming for help so it's not your son you're fighting it's your own resistance to realizing that his brain cannot take this addiction now what does that mean for you that'll mean

that you have to handle your child without that scapegoat without that surrogate without that Nanny so as I say this what comes up for you right now you're listening so carefully so tell me it's like feels like all right take it because he can't handle it it's not something good for him but at the same time if I take it away completely it's also how good am I doing

you know like it's more about like okay the resistance that I'm having it's like okay maybe take he's having that take it easy like how you're going to handle in this situation he's going to have the reaction right if you take it away so what are you going to do but I think there's a fear in you to not rely on that so when your son says give me the TV and now you've seen that this is something

dangerous for him this is something negative for him I sense that you're afraid of entering that parent role the adult role and saying no this is not good for your brain and body so I can't give it to you so take a moment and let's imagine that the day is today that you're going to say no just imagine okay you're not going to but let's just imagine because you've realized that this is dangerous for your son he cannot

handle it it is eroding your connection it is destroying your family life it is a negative influence it has not been positive correct so imagine today is the day you're going to say no now tell me what's showing up in your body right now oh it's like uh okay here I come I have to deal with the screaming and all the fighting and all of this I'm tired exactly and I don't know how to do that

so one more day I know I know so giving that candy so to speak giving that TV let's just call it candy that sugar in the moment when you're tired it just feels like it's easier in that moment right yes yes yes and you're afraid because in that moment to say no you're like I can't handle it I'm too tired it just feels easier to give in doesn't it always feel easier to give in right yes

but then you have to pay for it in an hour and a half yeah right so either way you're I'm going to deal any way I have to do exactly what the begin exactly so you think it's easier to deal with it after giving in because there's

this hope in your mind that today he's going to get it right so he can be happy and Mommy can be happy and it's a win-win situation but it's not

happening this is what happens with us parents but I think it happens with us humans that our expectations stay stuck as our fantasy but reality is completely not working out but instead of realizing hey our expectations and reality are fighting with each other we instead keep on trying to match it but it's not matching and in fact the distance between your expectations and reality are just growing wider and wider

and that Gap is your suffering so you have only two choices all of us as humans only have two choices either change the expectation meaning expect that we're just going to fight so then there's no problem okay or we change our reality and that's what I'm asking you to do do here you have to change the reality because you're not changing the expectation because the expectation is that he becomes an adult right with an adult brain well he can't do that so you

have to drop the expectation and that reality is in my opinion that's where your resistance is and I think you're really afraid of dealing with him and yes for the first few days he'll be clinging to you or he'll be asking for your attention but eventually it will change with your connection but I think you've gotten so used to relying on the TV as your Nanny that you're afraid to show up as you are you know and be there

and you be present and take your child back right now the screens have your child abducted and it's almost like you have to take your child back from the screens and that is causing you some stress some fear some resistance what would it mean for Molina to be in a screen free house for a few weeks and really show up for her kid and that is the challenge that's a big challenge

because I feel like when we like have to like know screen time and they have to find other things to play with it feels like they don't know what to do anymore and they were like they used to be like so playful and it's something funny because I always was like very involved on like their activities in playing with them but they were also able to do things uh create things and now I feel they say they are bored all the time and

I'm like at some point I wanted to take that word away you know I wanted to tell them we don't say that word anymore okay so here's the thing here's the thing you said it this is it why are you upset when they use the word bored because when they are bored Molina gets anxious doesn't she yeah oh yes they can use the word bored bored is as good a word as cold and hot and up and down it's just a

word but their boredom and this is not just you it's most parents when our children are bored the fixer in us the anxious fixer in us the people pleaser in us feel oh okay okay I better entertain them I better find something to do but you're so busy so then you have to put on the entertainment you see and your children know that they know as most children if I just say I'm bored over 25 times my mother will crumble

because we know she's busy and we just know that that's a hot button that's her trigger and we'll act really whiny

complaining and bored and she's going to panic because she's so sweet she wants to fix our boredom see you even tell them don't use the word boredom they know it's your trigger so the fix are like when they said I'm bored and I feel like oh okay I have to do something because I have done outside of the house

so I have to do an aide out that yes that guilt eats you up but here's the cycle the toxic cycle that we get on because of guilt right plus the separation right that creates mother guilt then Mommy's working all day that creates mommy guilt then mommy's tired that creates mommy guilt and then when we see our children unhappy the pleaser and you out of all that guilt just wants to give them the candy you want them to

be happy but you see it's actually causing more dysfunction so we have to somehow manage our guilt and that's big and I'll give that to you you know every working mother has that but the answer to Mommy guilt is not feeding them the candy because that creates this other dysfunctional cycle then they're fighting with you you're fighting with them then there's guilt so we have to break this cycle and this cycle is coming from your guilt so the answer

really is for you to find a way to realize that your presence your being there for them without fixing without giving them Perfection and candy is the answer to your mommy guilt they need mommy just present showing up and we as parents because we're so guilty we want to give them presents and the TV and the Trinkets and the bobles and the jewelry but all they want is Mommy to sit on the

floor with them for 20 30 minutes and play so this is the time your child is saying mommy help me I don't like this cycle your 13-year-old is saying can you please stop getting on this roller coaster every single day so it's time for Molina to watch how her mommy guilt is feeding this extra Indulgence of candy and it's causing this toxic cycle so I hope this helps today when your child comes home

instead of giving him the candy giving in sit with that guilt soothe that inner guilt and realize that your child doesn't need your guilt your child needs your presence yeah makes sense I think your your child knows that you are very anxious when he has big emotions or is bored or is whining or complaining and he knows that that's his way now to

manipulate you that's his way to get what he needs you know he's not doing it in a conscious way but that's what he's understood from you that the minute I show a lot of emotions Mommy's going to get really anxious and feel really guilty and then tomorrow she'll give it back to me because she feels really bad that she fought with me you see so this cycle is feeding on itself and it has to break by you nobody else can break the

cycle but you he's doing what he should do which is being himself being who he needs to be to get his needs met how is Mommy showing up differently so that's what you need to practice and it's going to take time and he's going to resist and he's going to test you but this is where your boundaries come into play and your anxiety needs to be checked so that you don't give in so try it for a week

where you show up in a different way and break the cycle but thank you so much I hope this has helped you a little bit to break out of the cycle that you're in thank you very much I will like really show up different like make some change that can be helpful for our family wonderful Molina thank you so much for sharing thank you ah mommy guilt so many of us mothers especially us working mothers have felt that haven't we where

we feel so guilty because we aren't making our children happy you see we parents fall into this trap that at every moment we need to entertain our children or give them what they want God forbid they complain or they whine or they're bored boredom just feels so unimaginably anxiety-provoking for us but here's the thing and I say this to all parents we are not here to micromanage every mood and feeling are

children have and in fact it's really quite healthy for our children to experience frustration to experience boredom and to find a way to Resource themselves into their next actualization they can find their own way out of their boredom out of their unhappiness and by us not stepping in we actually allow them to have the practice to do so coming up next I'm going to talk to a

mother who's really struggling with her 11-year-old daughter and is trying to find a way to better connect with her I think one of the hardest things about the parenting journey is when we are unable to connect to our children it's every parents fantasy to have a deep emotionally attuned connected bond with our children and we keep hoping that this Bond will strengthen but

sometimes as they become teenagers especially actually this Bond weakens and it causes us so much anguish and pain I am now joined by Shiloh who's experiencing this pain she's experiencing the frustration and the disconnection that we parents sometimes feel and all the helplessness that comes with it so welcome Shiloh I know you're here to talk about your struggles with your 11 year old daughter yes thank you Dr shaali what I've been experiencing is

as she gets older and she's sort of struggling to be her own person more now right and she and I have been quite close because it's been just the two of us in the house for five years six years you know seven nights a week and we do we for the most part we get along quite well but when it comes down to just the things that I'm sure so many parents experienc you know just making sure she

brushes her teeth and picks up after herself and takes a shower all of those things that she needs to kind of really become more independent on she's struggling with that and I struggle with part of it is that even though her father's been out of the house for so long it was a very difficult relationship and I have also been having to work on sort of healing myself from that what I'm finding is I'm get overwhelmed so I get short my temper

gets short she struggles with that her dad gets angry very quickly if you yell or get very Stern with her she can shut down she can cry she has a reaction to that as well so I'm really trying to find that balance between taking care of myself enough so that I can approach her in a way that works for her so that we can get her to be able to do what both of us need her to do yes so first let me

just you know validate that this must be so hard for you you're almost a single parent with the bulk of the burden of taking care of a child and I want all single parents out there listening to realize that you're caring a lot it is such a burden to raise a child on one's own and you're doing it so I can only imagine the burden you feel and the stress you feel and then when things don't go well or she's not progressing

I'm sure that brings up a lot of feelings in you so let's go there when you observe and witness that oh my goodness she didn't brush her teeth again and oh goodness she's not doing her homework or What feelings come up in you as her mother ah there's a variety I get frustrated because partly I want to do the dishes and not tell her to brush her teeth or right you know I want to do

something that I have to take care of instead of trying to help her with what she needs when I want her to be doing it on her own I also feel resentment sometimes even though that's a constant something I'm working on because I am doing it on my own and there's nobody there to back me up or you know I can't say can you go help her while she brushes her teeth while I'm packing lunch for tomorrow or something you know

so there's that part of it and then there's just the exhaustion part like you know we talked about this yesterday and the day before and the day before and the day before tired of it yeah you're exhausted I feel guilty for having all of those feelings so talk about that guilt a little bit in my head and in my heart I have a good idea of what it takes to be a decent parent you know certainly not a

perfect parent but a decent parent I understand what she needs I understand what I should be doing but sometimes I'm just at that point where I I don't want to you know I think maybe I'm the child in me sort of is coming out and I'm like ah I want to throw a temper tantrum right now but I have to be the adult and give you what you need and so I feel bad I want her to have everything she needs

to be a successful human mhm and I know when I'm not giving it to her sure sure so it's this cycle right you know you're so busy you give her instructions she you know typically doesn't follow them you lose your temper then you feel guilty and it starts again right and this is the cycle and you don't know how to get off it you know I tell myself I think I have ideas but I have to have

the and the patience have to be ready to put those ideas into place yes you know for most parents but especially I can imagine for single parents the burden to create this responsible competent almost near perfect adult you know you're raising this child who you hope will grow up and be successful and Achieve great things is all that burden is on you so I can only imagine how you have this checklist of things that you want

her to do every day and you're trying to make it all work and here's the thing we think that that's what our children need from us but in essence that is the furthest thing they need from us they need something completely different can you guess what that could be what do you think she's really wanting to get from you that she's not getting I think just me and that connection yeah so how do you think she's not getting you because

I am so busy trying to take care of other things I guess when I get frustrated I'm not connected to anybody right I'm just I'm kind of in this other space where I'm just trying to survive and get through it and make her do what I want her to do so if mommy is in survival mode if mommy is exhausted if mommy is not being taken care of mommy is burning with resentment then how do we expect our daughter to be any

different right our children begin to vibe off our energies they absorb our anxieties our stress so here's mommy you know trying her best but obviously at the edge of her sanity really you know holding on tight to her good humor to her good spirits but it's tough and the daughter can see that and then Mommy puts all this burden on herself and on the daughter that hey I've got to fix

you I've got to make you Kind of Perfect because it's just the two of us in this world so everything will fall on me so you better launch fast right and on top of that the daughter has also experienced a lot of upheaval in your home right you've separated from your partner you're working all the time the father doesn't see her as much and then as you said loses his temper on her so here's a child who is kind of little bit

Swiss cheesy right a lot of holes now and she's obviously showing you that it's really hard for her to regulate her feelings yes it is that is true for her in many situations yes so give me a typical stressful evening How does it go just quickly illuminated for us it's usually towards the end of the night we've had supper she's had some downtime it's time to sort of wrap things up and she needs to you know stop what she's

doing she needs to you know stop this show she's watching or if she's talking with a friend on the phone or something you know she needs to stop doing that and I'll give her a warning you know we've got 10 minutes you've got five minutes and then I might say like I have to go clean the litter box and I try to leave her to stop what she's doing and move on to the next thing but it's just

like I can count on her to not do that right right so let's stop there for a second so is she predictable pretty predictable though right is she consistent yes I would say so right isn't that amazing I always tell parents our children are so clear they are predictable and they are consistent but guess what so are we we're doing the same thing each and every day expecting different results right we are that saying you know trying the same thing

and expecting a different result but doing the exact same thing every single day so that's the definition of insanity not that you're insane but that's just the saying so here's where parents need to do it differently we need to ask ourselves okay this is the predictable cycle this is the loop we are on rinse repeat who is going to make the change here is it going to be the child or is it going to be me and each day we expect

our child to change yet we don't make the change that we need to see in the house so what is something that you need to do differently that you you've never done before at least let's do a new pattern rather than the same pattern I think that's where I get hung up you know I tell myself that maybe if like I won't go do the litter box I'll stay and make sure that she's done what she needs

to do or you know oh if you were not going to shut the TV off I'll do it for you kind of thing but at 11 years old I also I don't want to be doing that I want her to shut TV off see you're still stuck in the level of doing right doing is it I who's going to do or is it she who's going to do but if we stay stuck there we're still in a power struggle so

let me help you here so in order to shift the dynamic we need to shift away from the instructions the commands the doing because that hasn't worked and we need to shift gears into a different place and that gear change is to a place of connection so what would that look like for you it's the of the night you're tired she's tired she's watching a TV program she's all snuggled up on the couch and now here's the moment of

Reckoning right we have two choices the one is the old way mommy comes in and says turn the TV off time for bed and this is the start of that downward spiral or we can do something completely different like we can join her on the couch we can snuggle with her we can ask her a few questions we can engage with her for a few minutes and use that time to bond to connect to soothe to

massage to touch to gently begin to wind down and then when you've bonded and giggled and laughed and told a story and yawned and hugged her and stroked her hair don't you think she'll be a little bit more open to continuing the same in her bed right and you can gently then gently take her to her bed soothingly tuck her in and give her what every

child wants the most which is the presence of a safe soothing parent that's definitely something I've noticed is that if we've had time together then she is quicker to do what she needs to do and you know kind of does it even without my asking sometimes because we've had that F beautiful so you've observed the power of connection so now my next question which is really an important one for you to answer is if

you've seen that that works and control doesn't work what stops you from putting in that effort at the front end to give the connection rather than give all your energy and be exhausted at the back end when control doesn't work it makes so much sense when you say it that way I think it's just so easy to get caught up in everything that I'm trying exactly exactly I mean you are no different than

I have been and no different than most parents we get so caught up in the doing of parenting and the doing of life that we miss that children do not operate well in too much doing children are still in their being State they need connection they need soothing they need safety they need to be seen and we think you know she's 11 come on how much do you want me to see you and you're so consumed with your own need to be seen

you're exhausted you just want to get to bed so your goal is get to bed well what you're missing is her goal her inner need is to be connected with and until that bucket gets filled the children will make us pay price you know I always tell parents you can either pay the price at the front end or at the back end so decide which end you want to pay it but if you pay the price at the front end and connect

with your children at the start you will get the prize of their cooperation of their connection of the ease of a

tuning with each other and that's what you're missing and ultimately of course you know this it comes down to you healing from this resentment and guilt you have cuz that's really at the source of your fatigue and your stress this underlying resentment and guilt yes I think that is a big part of it and it's but there's a

question of you know finding the time to do to that as well which I'm sure I mean I know I'm not alone in this when we talk about healing the inner self it's not necessarily carving out an hour a day to do that it's really a shift in your Consciousness to realize that actually much of the busy work you're doing is distracting you from being with yourself you're actually perpetuating your own busyness and therefore you have

more resentment and therefore you have more guilt it's not finding more time and putting that on the checklist now like oh find time to heal from resentment and guilt no it's really realizing that you have been distracting yourself from your own connection to you the dishes are not important the bed can be unmade the food can be you know ordered in it's Mommy coming back to herself so

as I said that I noticed you got a little emotional so what came up for you I think actually in my head I was trying to imagine doing that mhm and I think there's the part of me that knows that true you know but in my head all of a sudden the thing was overflowing and I don't have money to order in so I won't be doing that I guess that resistance even to saying that I can do it better

I'm already doing all I can but I'm I'm not right right so here the invitation has come to you that Shiloh you need to connect to yourself more so that you have more to give your child and look at your mind it came roaring down with this this resentment saying no I have no time to give to myself I have the dishes she doesn't understand these are the stories we tell ourselves to keep ourselves away from being present to ourselves it is

not true you don't have money for a bagel it's not true that your child needs fancy meals cooked by you it's not true that the dishes need to be cleaned every night if you're exhausted what is true is that you are hungry for a connection to self and your daughter is reminding you to do that to connect to yourself she's saying mommy I'm hungry and I need you to show up for me connected to yourself and when you do

you will fill me up yes yeah that makes a lot of sense many of us parents get afraid to stop the doing and enter being because for so long we've been trying to be in control and we're trying to control our children we're trying to control our exes our marriages and we're trying to control the future but the greatest gift your child needs your daughter needs from you is the gift of your presence in the here and now in

this present moment so if you can remember that then that is how you fill your day how can I give her my presence and that'll just completely revolutionize your entire entire relationship well thank you so much for sharing Shiloh yes and thank you for your time Dr chaalia it was a real treat to get to to hear your perspective so in both these sessions we saw two overworked mothers single raising their children carrying all the burdens of

parenting on their own this is such a common predicament for so many parents out there and it's quite typical

that these parents fall into the habit of doing doing doing they believe that if they don't fix and micromanage and produce and Puppeteer every mood emotion thought and behavior of their children their children will fall apart and that means they will have failed at being

good parents here's what I want to tell all parents our children need less of our instructions our fixing our control and our micromanagement our children instead need us to show up present able to attune to them and ready to reflect their inherent Essence every child like every human longs to be seen

to be heard and to be understood as worthy let's give this to our children if this has been helpful to you don't forget to to subscribe and share this with your friends and family and I will see you next time on parenting and you with me Dr shaali parenting and you with Dr shaali is for educational and informational purposes only it is not intended as a substitute for professional medical

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