

On 2/15/2009 2:37 PM, David Bolthouse wrote:

We had our teen (Brent) in this program and we know much about it. It is a loving program with counseling and mentoring. It has a very strong policy against corporal punishment of any kind. The facilities are first-class. Our teenager was there for one year and we attribute this program with both improving his self-esteem and correcting self-destructive thinking. If you need more information about this program, I welcome your call. You can see more information on their website at <http://www.heartlightministries.org>. Their phone number is 903-668-2173.

David Bolthouse  
903-220-9014

On 9/2/2010 8:55 AM, David Bolthouse wrote:

Your information about Heartlight Ministries is just plain wrong. They are not associated with any particular church, nor Kannakuk Camps. And neither of these entities you say they are associated with have anything wrong with them anyway, but you make it sound like they do. Heartlight is completely independent and it adheres to the highest ethical and state standards. Their staff are highly qualified and dedicated, loving individuals who only want to help teens, not hurt them in any way. I sent my son there for a year and it was a lifesaver. He was involved with drugs and methods of self-harm, and talked about suicide. He was headed for disaster. Today, he considers the staff at Heartlight his friends. In fact, he talks to them quite often, and will probably have some of them in his wedding. Heartlight helps kids in a loving and relational way, it is as simple as that. You might want to get your information right before posting it, or at least provide my response under your statement. That is the ethical and fair thing to do.

David Bolthouse  
Former Parent

On 9/2/2010 3:45 PM, HEAL wrote:

Dear Mr. Bolthouse,

Thank you for contacting HEAL. We appreciate that you believe you had a positive experience at Heartlight Ministries. We feel the most appropriate venue for your comments would be in Heartlight Ministries promotional materials or on their website. We have received reports

regarding suspicious and/or abusive practices at Heartlight, and, we cannot in good conscience suggest a program that is unregulated and reported to us as abusive, is anything other than that.

We do offer programs an opportunity for review and removal. The details for how to make such a request are at [www.heal-online.org/helpteen.htm](http://www.heal-online.org/helpteen.htm). The request will need to be in writing and contain all requested information. Upon review, if we find no signs of illegality or unconscionability in the complete paperwork submitted, we will edit our site accordingly. We feel this is reasonable given the high levels of deceptive marketing and abuse throughout the teen program industry.

If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely,

The HEAL Team

On 9/2/2010 2:09 PM, David Bolthouse wrote:

Thanks for your note. All anyone can ask is that you be honest. Your current article is not. It holds no truth. No one is asking you to recommend Heartlight, but just to be truthful and only share the true facts, or remove the listing altogether. Though I don't speak for them, I'm sure Heartlight doesn't feel compelled to submit anything to counter blatant lies. That's just feeding your website and your ego. Since if you don't deal in the realm of facts, their facts wouldn't be listed or listened to either, so what's the use? You have the right to say whatever you want, but take care not to be libelous. Recent court cases have held websites accountable for libel. Again, I am not on the staff of Heartlight, and don't claim that I am their representative (just a past resident parent), but you might want to take care in what you say, such that it is backed up by facts.

By the way, if you'd like some really great testimonials of all the good that Heartlight has done in kids' lives, then I'm sure they can send you hundreds of those, including from hundreds of past residents. It is such a good program that it amazes me that anyone would want to tear it down or say bad things about it. That's really sad.

Again, if you were honest, you'd post my note along with your note and allow people to make their own decision, not force a decision on them. That's unconscionable.

David Bolthouse

On 9/2/2010 4:28 PM, HEAL wrote:

Dear Mr. Bolthouse,

The issue we have is that many programs in this industry use deceptive marketing practices and dupe parents and abuse children. We have received reports about such abuses at Heartlight. Based on what we know and have reason to believe, we cannot in good conscience remove Heartlight from our watchlist without seeing some evidence that Heartlight is not as they have been reported to our organization to be.

While this is in regards to another program, New Bethany, we want you to take a look at an exchange we had earlier today. You can view it at [www.heal-online.org/arbitelle.pdf](http://www.heal-online.org/arbitelle.pdf). David Arbitelle, formerly with New Bethany and currently reported to be working for Amelia Christian Academy (aka Amelia Academy) claimed outright that Amelia Academy didn't even exist. We know it exists and such is easily proved. The point being, programs and their supporters (such as yourself) often lie to us about what they do and we can't trust or take anyone's word for anything. Too many children and families have been harmed.

We are acting reasonably. And, Heartlight is welcome to request review. Anyone who has done even the slightest research into this industry will know that deceptive marketing and abuse are common-place at programs falling under the same category as Heartlight. Yes, we do not wish to post false information and do our best to guard against that by requiring news reports, sworn statements, etc., before we post programs as confirmedly abusive. But, based on reports, we do highly suspect Heartlight and for good reason. If they wish to be reviewed and removed, they can request that by following the instructions at [www.heal-online.org/helpteen.htm](http://www.heal-online.org/helpteen.htm). And, if they have something to hide, then, they have something to hide.

We are very transparent and provide all the information and data and reasoning behind our statements. We will review if a request for review is made and we have removed about half a dozen programs from our site so far who have complied with our review requests. Others who have submitted information were found to continue to cause us concern and remained on the list.

We suggest you stop threatening us with legal terms since you are not in the position to file any kind of suit anyway. And, we recommend you submit the information we request, omitting your personal information, assuming you have a copy, for our review or forward the suggestion to request review to Heartlight. In any event, this discussion is bordering on pointless and you can always post to one of our message forums as long as

you follow the guidelines of not attacking HEAL or survivors and families. This would mean only telling your positive story and not denying the statements made by others regarding Heartlight.

Sincerely,

The HEAL Team

On 9/2/2010 4:56 PM, David Bolthouse wrote:

I didn't threaten, nor am I in any position to do so. I am not on staff, so I cannot file any kind of report nor file suit. I just asked you to be honest, because I know that in the case of Heartlight, you are demeaning and libeling a very good program. The information currently on your website is not honest nor even close to being true. That's my last word on the issue. It's none of my concern other than that I just find the falsehoods you mention to be the very thing you say you are against -- falsehoods, deception and dishonesty. And you're the one being abusive. Hmm...who's the kettle calling black?

Dave

On 12/27/2011 5:54 PM, David Bolthouse wrote:

**Please note the following on your website about Abundant Life Academy, as listed in your website.**

First, ALA is under completely new management. Craig Rogers and most of his old staff are no longer associated in any way with the academy, and his ways and procedures and contracts are also gone. The school was bought by the parent of one of the girls currently in the program, who is completely redesigning it to eliminate some of the past issues you talk about on your site, and make it a truly remarkable program.

I hope you will applaud the school and its new owners for this move, and indicate in your notes that all of the abuses are of the OLD program run by Craig Rogers in Kanab, Utah, not the new one located in St. George, Utah (the new owners also moved the entire program to a new facility in beautiful St. George, Utah).

Also, please note that the articles about "Abundant Life Academy" are MIXED UP with other schools by the same name. For instance, the lawsuit and some of the requirements of registrations and so on are relating to a completely different program and school on the east coast that is in no way affiliated with the school in Utah. In fact, no other schools by the same name are in any way associated with the program in Utah.

Please differentiate the programs in your notes so parents aren't misguided. Such misleading would be akin to the same practices you are saying these programs do, so I'm sure you wouldn't want to participate in such deception.

For some very good reasons, programs cannot always change their name when they are bought out by new more caring owners. Such is the case with ALA. So, again, I hope you will congratulate the NEW Abundant Life Academy for it's improvements, and clean the slate for them on your site. Perhaps you could say that the old school is closed, and start a new page for the program located in St. George? Your own work of revealing past issues is helping such programs get better, but they won't have the opportunity to show how much better they are if your site continues to set them up for failure by scaring parents away. Parents deserve to know that, partly as a result of your revelations, the program has been completely changed, for the better. In this case, the parent of a student got tired of the way it was being operated by Rogers and decided to buy out the program, so he could make it better. He is investing a great deal of money and time to do so.

Thank you for your consideration.

### **A personal request for a meeting...**

Since we represent a number of such programs who are trying to get better, I would like to begin a dialogue to discuss ways that we can help you accomplish your goal of "creating change" in these programs. We can make the industry better, working together, and you can get all the credit. Yes, like *Consumer Reports*, you may still want to show past mistakes and problems, but I also hope you can show how these programs are changing for the better. That will give your site more credibility and it will actually reinforce what we are trying to do as parents who had a teenage boy in a really bad program first (where he was nearly killed) and then in a very good program (where his life was saved because it got him off drugs and self-destructive behavior). So, our goals are alike, and after living 13 years in Seattle before moving to Texas, I'd love the opportunity to come have a discussion about this with you. Please let me know if you might be open to that. It will be your opportunity to relay the kind of **change** you would like to **create** in these programs.

Sincerely,

**David P. Bolthouse**

CEO, The Envoy Group | [dave@theenvoygroup.com](mailto:dave@theenvoygroup.com)

118 Woodridge Estates, Longview, TX 75602  
Phone: 903-220-9014

On 12/27/2011 10:40 PM, HEAL wrote:

Dear Mr. Bolthouse,

Thank you for contacting HEAL. We will go through each of your statements below in this message and respond to each of them. In addition, we will provide you the format required for suggesting changes to our website. And, if you would like your request to be posted on our "Requests" page with our response, please let us know. We can keep our exchange private or make it public in the interest of transparency. It is up to you. Our Requests page is located at [www.heal-online.org/requests.htm](http://www.heal-online.org/requests.htm).

First, your website at [www.abundantlifeacademy.com](http://www.abundantlifeacademy.com) includes references to Abundant Life Academy's history (as recently as 2009, and while under Craig Rogers' leadership) in a positive light. One page that shows this is <http://www.abundantlifeacademy.com/about-us/community-service.html>. The site no longer appears to have a list of staff. So, it would appear impossible to verify your claims that Craig Rogers is no longer affiliated with the program in any way. And, given the associations with the 2009 (Kanab, UT) histories, we are not, at this time, persuaded that Abundant Life Academy has effectively changed. In addition, the NAAS accreditation claimed on the current website for the program is bogus and this raises serious concerns regarding the legitimacy of the program as it currently operates.

[NAAS was forced to change their name to NWAC](#) after a lawsuit was filed for misappropriating the name of a legitimate accreditation agency. NAAS was also a co-defendant in a lawsuit against the World Wide Association of Specialty Programs and Schools in 2006. (Case Citation: Bruce Dungan, et al. v. World Wide Association of Specialty Programs and Schools, Inc., NAAS, et al., United States District Court, Northern District of New York, July 25th, 2006) The attorneys representing the plaintiffs in this case were Hancock & Estabrook, LLP. The lawsuit was filed as a class action. Academy at Ivy Ridge was the basis of the lawsuit. NAAS "accredited" this school. Quote: "[Ivy Ridge Academy accreditation rejected](#): The Academy at Ivy Ridge will not be allowed to resume issuing high school diplomas. The State Education Department has rejected the Academy's application, according to stories Friday in St. Lawrence County newspapers and *The Watertown Times*. A letter from the State Education Department to Ivy Ridge quoted in the *Watertown Times* says, "**The Department's review revealed that AIR is principally a behavior modification program and not a school...**" **For complete story, [click here](#).** So, NAAS/NWAC accreditation does not provide effective assurance that the credits "earned" at Abundant Life Academy are transferable.

We understand that the new location of Abundant Life Academy is the location of the now closed Aspen Education Group program known as SunHawk Academy. SunHawk Academy was listed as confirmedly abusive on our website and we were glad to see it close. It is not particularly confidence-inspiring that Abundant Life Academy now operates on the site as a formerly abusive program, now closed. And, this is compounded by the association with Abundant Life Academy and Craig Rogers.

In regards to "mixed up" articles regarding Abundant Life Academy, please provide the links to the pages and articles provided that you believe are mistaken and/or erroneous. We will be happy to make corrections to evident mistakes. If possible, please be as specific in regards to the articles, content, etc. that you believe are in error. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Our policy for editing requests requires those making recommendations to follow the following format:

Link: (i.e. [www.heal-online.org/abundant2.htm](http://www.heal-online.org/abundant2.htm))

Quote: (Copy/paste erroneous/inaccurate/etc. statement(s) here as found on our website, should they exist.)

Suggestion: (What would you like to see done to the information? What changes do you recommend?)

Craig Rogers does claim on his "blog" at <http://craigstephenrogers.com/archives/craig-wendy-rogers-abundant-life-academy-chapter/> that he and his wife are leaving Abundant Life Academy. But, it does not claim they have left. And, it is our experience that programs will hide staff that they feel will detract from enrollment. So, we would need a more firm confirmation that Craig and Wendy Rogers are no longer part of the Abundant Life Academy. And, it appears Craig still supports/advertises for Abundant Life Academy on his own blog and this too is too close a relationship for HEAL to be comfortable that Abundant Life Academy has truly "changed".

CAFETY (Community Alliance For the Ethical Treatment of Youth) works to improve the industry's image. However, HEAL would prefer that families work

together and keep children close. We generally oppose residential facilities and the act of scapegoating youth when a family is struggling. And, we would like to see a ban on all wilderness programs due to the inherent lack of ability to effectively provide oversight to mobile programs. Our recommendations to parents are available at [www.heal-online.org/parent.htm](http://www.heal-online.org/parent.htm) and we support the work of people such as Janet Heimlich, Dr. Peter Breggin, Dr. Margaret Thaler-Singer, and similar professionals.

In order to re-consider our position regarding Abundant Life Academy, we would require the following:

1. Signed letter from current owners stating that all information provided is true and accurate in detail.
2. Letter (see #1) should include a statement confirming that Craig and Wendy Rogers are no longer associated with, benefiting from, in leadership, nor otherwise involved in Abundant Life Academy.
3. Copy of the Parent and Student Handbooks.
4. Detailed description of any level-system and the privileges and consequences that apply to each level.
5. Copy of the enrollment contract, including any and all assumptions of risk and other waivers.

We will review the information requested and be happy to leave any concerns off-line until the current directors/owners have had an opportunity to address any concerns raised by the materials in our review. However, if Abundant Life Academy leadership/representatives do not or can not provide adequate responses to any concerns that may arise, we will continue to share our concerns publicly.

Please let us know if you would like all or any portion of this exchange and your request posted at [www.heal-online.org/requests.htm](http://www.heal-online.org/requests.htm). We will respect your wishes in that regard.

Sincerely,

The HEAL Team

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [David Bolthouse](#)

**To:** [HEAL](#)

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 28, 2011 12:16 AM

**Subject:** Re: Abundant Life Academy

Thank you for your lengthy response. Though I have not read it all, please know that the website is currently being redesigned and all content is being changed. A few changes were made to "clean it up" while the website company is redesigning it. So, I didn't mean to imply that the site now says what it will need to say, or represent what it will soon represent. It just hasn't been possible to change it yet (though some pages were changed in the interim). Even the site, when it is complete, will represent the excellence of the new ownership, and that takes longer to complete, just as the new owners are totally rebuilding the facility and have hired an excellent new staff of highly qualified people. All of that will come to light very soon. I'll now read on though your note and I look forward to helping you get the information you need.

**David P. Bolthouse**

CEO, The Envoy Group | [dave@theenvoygroup.com](mailto:dave@theenvoygroup.com)

*Because there's nothing more costly than chasing a great idea with bad promotion.*

118 Woodridge Estates, Longview, TX 75602

Phone: 903-220-9014

On 12/28/2011 8:59 PM, HEAL wrote:

Dear Mr. Bolthouse,

We look forward to hearing from you. Please send the requested enumerated materials from our initial reply to: HEAL, 126 SW 148th St, Ste C100-422, Seattle, WA 98166-1984. Thank you and please let us know what page(s) include erroneous information and provide links at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

The HEAL Team

**From:** [David Bolthouse](#)  
**To:** [HEAL](#)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 28, 2011 11:33 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Abundant Life Academy

Thank you again. I am pulling together the information you requested, but it could take a couple weeks. I will fully document everything, so there is no question. And if you do have a question, please feel free to ask and I'll get the answers.

I also would welcome your thoughts in relation to ten standards that we could promote among therapeutic programs (something they would have to agree to), to make them line up with what you would consider a "good" program. This industry isn't going away, but maybe we can work together to make it better. I know that we have a pretty big influence with a number of them, so maybe we can band together to make change happen.

**David P. Bolthouse**

CEO, The Envoy Group | [dave@theenvoygroup.com](mailto:dave@theenvoygroup.com)  
118 Woodridge Estates, Longview, TX 75602  
Phone: 903-220-9014

**From:** [HEAL](#)  
**To:** [davidbolthouse@gmail.com](mailto:davidbolthouse@gmail.com)  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 29, 2011 12:36 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Abundant Life Academy

Dear David,

We look forward to receiving the requested information and will ask you any questions or voice any concerns after we've reviewed the materials. We don't agree that the industry is going to last. But, for the sake of creating an understanding, here are ten standards we would like to see adopted:

1. All children enrolled must be enrolled voluntarily. No child should be placed in a program against their will. The only exception to this would be if there were a court-order (i.e. an adjudicated youth).
2. All children have access to and permission to use a telephone from day one of enrollment. And, by any and all telephones should be listed the numbers for Child Protective Services, Child Abuse Hotlines, and Law Enforcement. Phone calls home and to authorities are not to be monitored by staff.
3. Incoming and outgoing mail is not to be read, censored, nor monitored by anyone other than the sender and/or intended recipient.
4. All programs must be properly licensed and accredited to perform the services they claim to provide.
5. All staff at programs must pass an extensive background check, including sex offender background checks. This means no staff can have a history of physical or sexual assaults. And, this should be applied even to those staff who do not have regular contact with the children (i.e. maintenance, groundskeepers, etc.).

6. Children's constitutional rights of freedom of speech, free assembly, freedom of religion, and privacy shall not be violated. No program shall use a child's photo for self-promotion unless and until the child has reached the age of majority and has willingly, without coercion or duress, chosen to permit his/her photo to be used by the program.

7. All contracts must adhere to fair-dealing standards and not include blanket liability waivers absolving the program for any crimes/torts the program may commit. This includes that all contracts must not be on-their-face unconscionable or illegal. Contracts are not to include disclaimers regarding promotional materials (i.e. websites, brochures, etc.) used by the program.

8. No program can accept a child from another State.

9. No program can use transport/escort services to bring children to the facility or return them home.

10. Children 14 years and older must have the right to sign themselves out of any facility and/or be released upon request to Social Services or their families, depending on circumstances.

HEAL will continue to watchdog the industry and work to close all offending programs.

Sincerely,

The HEAL Team

On 12/29/2011 3:14 AM, HEAL wrote:

Dear David,

Upon further reflection, we realized 10 standards were not enough and that we have additional requirements/suggestions. We have copied/pasted the original list below and have added to it. We appreciate your time.

1. All children enrolled must be enrolled voluntarily. No child should be placed in a program against their will. The only exception to this would be if there were a court-order (i.e. an adjudicated youth).

2. All children have access to and permission to use a telephone from day one of enrollment. And, by any and all telephones should be listed the numbers for Child Protective Services, Child Abuse Hotlines, and Law Enforcement. Phone calls home and to authorities are not to be monitored by staff.

3. Incoming and outgoing mail is not to be read, censored, nor monitored by anyone other than the sender and/or intended recipient.

4. All programs must be properly licensed and accredited to perform the services they claim to provide.

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8. No program can accept a child from another State.

9. No program can use transport/escort services to bring children to the facility or return them home.

10. Children 14 years and older must have the right to sign themselves out of any facility and/or be released upon request to Social Services or their families, depending on circumstances.

11. There can be no level system of "privileges" and "consequences". Programs must be respectful of children as individuals and put the children's needs above those of the program.

12. No child shall provide labor or act as staff for the benefit of the program or local businesses. No child shall be placed in a position of authority over any other child in the program.

13. Children shall not be strip-searched.

14. Children shall not be sedated, physically abused, nor verbally assaulted by staff nor at the direction of staff. If a child is in need of psychiatric intervention or medical intervention, they must be immediately taken to a licensed psychiatric or medical hospital.

15. Physical restraint must only be used when actual, imminent severe physical harm to self or others is apparent. This is not something that should be twisted or relaxed to allow for the misuse of restraint by programs for their convenience and/or to intimidate, harass, or otherwise control children who are not a legitimate physical threat to self or others. By "severe physical harm" we mean the child to be restrained must have already punched, kicked, pushed or physically attempted to harm self or others and that the violence is so escalated that no verbal de-escalation techniques would or could work. This means someone who is literally out of control with rage. And, the program should not be operating in a manner that is likely to induce such a rage.

16. Therapeutic environments must follow the respectful guidelines for treating adolescents as is outlined in "Reclaiming Our Children" by Dr. Peter Breggin.

17. Children shall not be denied contact with their families, with the outside world, or basic necessities as "punishment" or "consequences".

18. Children shall be listened to and have their needs and concerns addressed respectfully. Family disfunctions that the child reveals in therapy shall be considered valid and family members who have been neglectful, abusive, or otherwise remiss in duty shall be made aware of their own issues and the program shall require parents and other family members to get counseling to address their own short-comings and needs for improvement.

19. Therapy should consist of developing appropriate communication skills for all family members. And, all family members should be counseled to respect and validate each other's concerns and needs without defensiveness or judgment. Children should not be scapegoated by their families and the programs must

adhere to a strict policy of respecting the children as individuals and requiring families to work on better communication and addressing the needs of all family members with the greater responsibility being that of the parents. Parents are adults and have legal duties to provide for their children.

20. Large Group Awareness Training or other "cult-tactics" shall not be employed. Group therapy must be optional and not forced upon any individual. And, programs should not attempt to indoctrinate children into any particular faith or belief-system, but, be set up to provide a safe environment to learn healthy communication skills, heal from trauma, and learn critical thinking skills that encourage questioning authority, self-reliance, and independence.

If we come up with additional guidelines, we will send them along. Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

The HEAL Team

On 1/3/2012 9:48 AM, David Bolthouse wrote:

Thank you. We will add these to our list. When I say that, I mean to say the list of standards that my company is preparing to encourage our client programs to adhere to. I am not saying that Abundant Life Academy (one of our clients) will agree to all of these, though many of them are already part of what the new ALA owners have expressed.

Perhaps these standards you've listed below (per my request) are simply something you can have in a chart and then list "yes" or "no" in relation to whether each program agrees to this standard, then allow them to provide reason why, if they say "no". Certainly not all programs are alike. Some are for juvenile offenders, for instance, and they will likely say "no" to #1, #2, #8, #9, for instance, but they can give reason why (ie, "We are required by the state to not allow residents to leave", or, "According to state guidelines, we cannot allow a juvenile to leave our program without a parent or guardian escort," etc.). Others cater to extremely self-destructive or suicidal kids, which cannot be allowed to leave and may not want to be there, but for their own good, they need to be. So, it isn't all black and white. These aren't just "misbehaving" or "nuisance" kids that we are talking about -- some are seriously needing professional counseling or to get off drugs, before it kills them or they kill themselves. Others are

so deep in gangs (maybe not even by their own choice) that they need a break away to get out of those circles. Allowing them to go on and end up dead on the street or from an overdose would be the real tragedy (and it happens every minute of every day, sadly). Our son was like that. He was headed for disaster. We say he must have nine lives, like a cat, because he should have been dead so many times from drugs and severe alcohol poisoning (hospitalized 3 times). He didn't want to go to a therapeutic program, but today he says it saved his life and we agree. In fact, he now wants to be a counselor for such a program is in training to do so. At the time he was in it, he didn't see the value of it and wanted out, but today he is very grateful and often visits the people in that program who helped him.

But I totally agree...there are good and bad programs. So, if you could be objective and allow programs to give reasons for what they do, I would even be willing to help you program such a comparison system online. Like I said, it could be like Consumer Reports. Allow the parents to discern based on the standards the program stands by, and the reasons they give. For one thing, it would really help these programs think through some of these issues. Then, you could have a "stars" method of ranking. If you have 20 standards, then you can list the programs agreeing to all 20 has having 20 stars. Those who agree to less, they would have fewer stars. I think that would make what you do very credible. Just a thought. I would even be willing to help facilitate getting their answers, because they may be reluctant to respond to anything from you.

It will be a couple weeks before I can pull together the other information you requested for Abundant Life, so please be patient with me. The delay is totally on my end, since I have been on holiday for the past two weeks.

**David P. Bolthouse**

CEO, The Envoy Group | [dave@theenvoygroup.com](mailto:dave@theenvoygroup.com)

*Because there's nothing more costly than chasing a great idea with bad promotion.*

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