COMMAND LINE CULTURE

How Leadership Writes the Code for Team Culture

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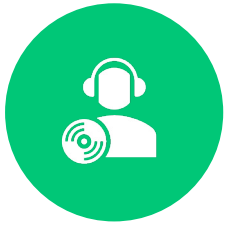
About Me

BACHELORS DEGREE IN COMPUTER INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

CERTIFIED EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY LEADER (CETL)

CAREER HAS BEEN SECURITY FOCUSED

SAINTCON CO-CHAIR UTAHSAINT BOARD OF TRUSTEES



RUN A DJ BUSINESS ON THE SIDE

HUSBAND

FATHER

BORN COUNTRY

HAM

MILITARY BRAT

“Real leadership is about understanding yourself first, then using that to create a superb organization. Leaders must free their subordinates to fulfill their talents to the utmost. However, most obstacles that limit peoples potential are set in motion by the leader and are rooted in his or her own fears, ego needs, and unproductive habits. When leaders explore deep within their thoughts and feelings in order to understand themselves, a transformation can take shape.”

Michael Abrashoff – It’s Your Ship 2002

“Know thyself”

-Socrates

In order to lead, each of us needs to truly know ourselves…

My Journey...

In this talk I will discuss:

One aspect of my personality, that if left unchecked would significantly impact my team

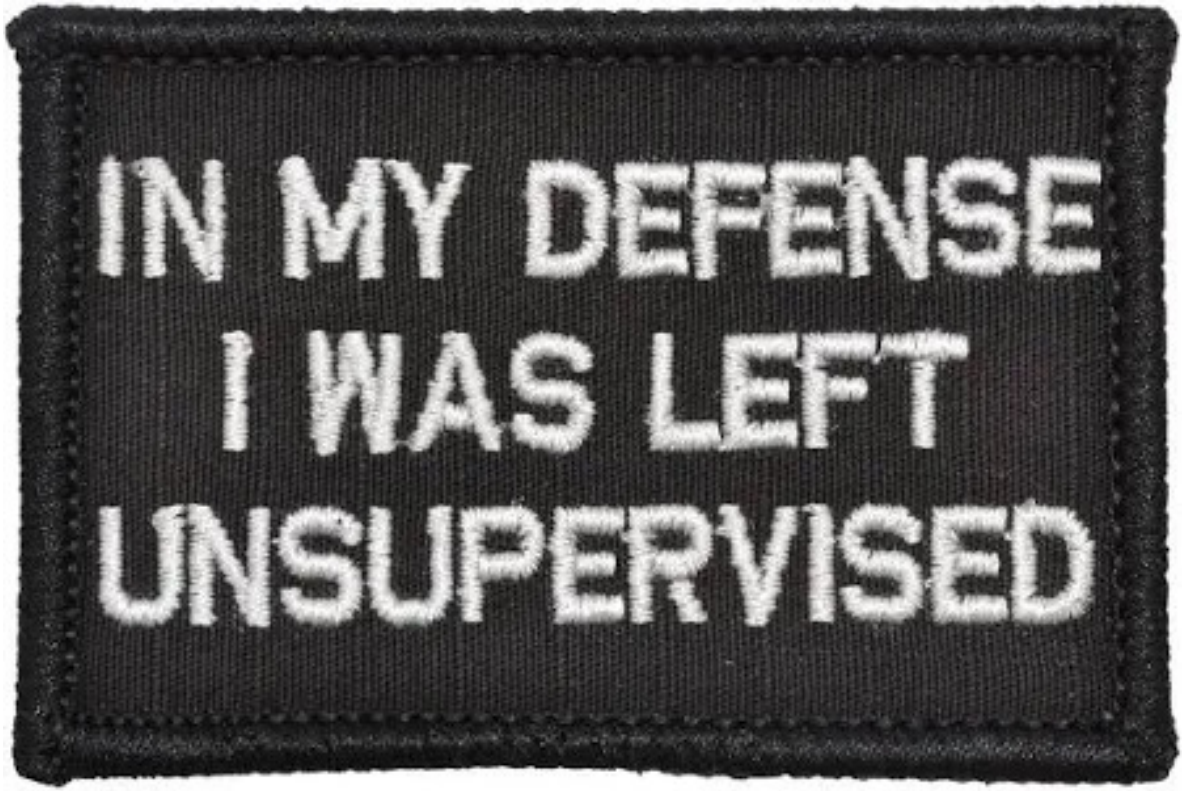
I like to Fix Stuff

And if I don’t know how to fix stuff, I tear it apart and figure it out...

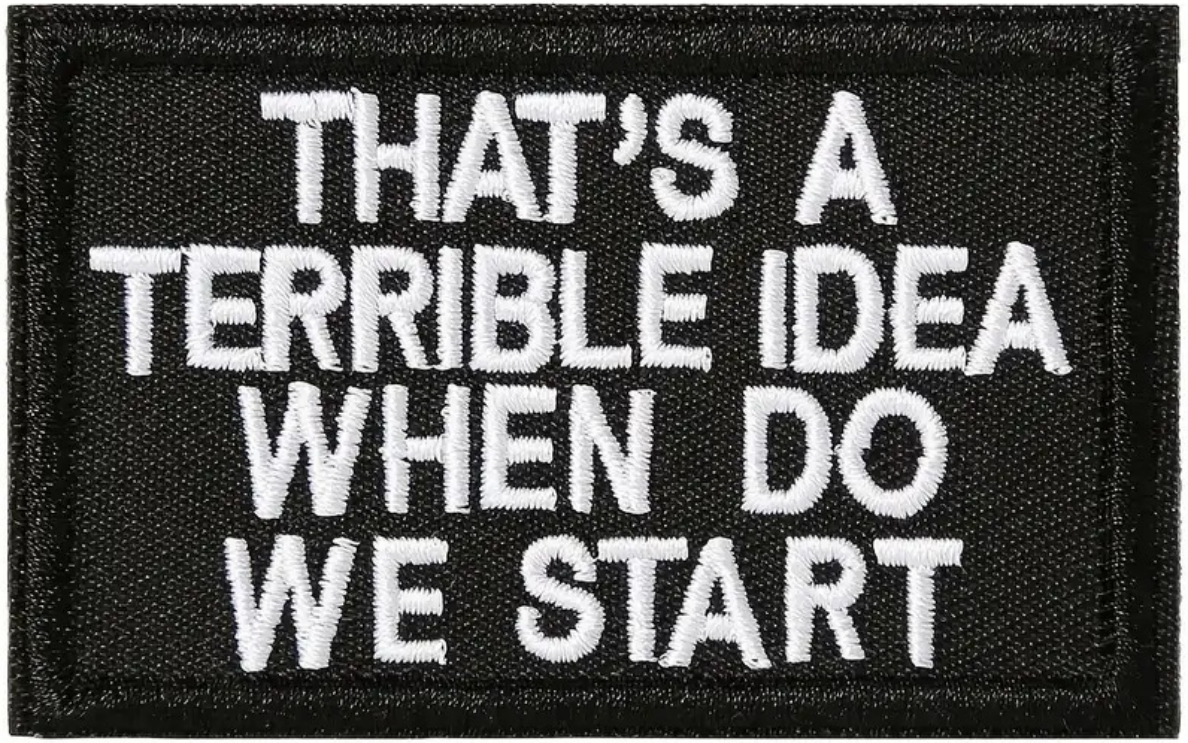
And most of the time I can figure it out...

Fixing stuff is where I find satisfaction and if I'm being honest, base a lot of my self worth.

And I think that many of us in the technology industry have this in common



When something breaks, we passionately and persistently exec while(broken){fix;}



Unfortunately this method of solving problems can have undesired results in leadership roles

16 years ago I realized that you can’t solve people problems like technical problems

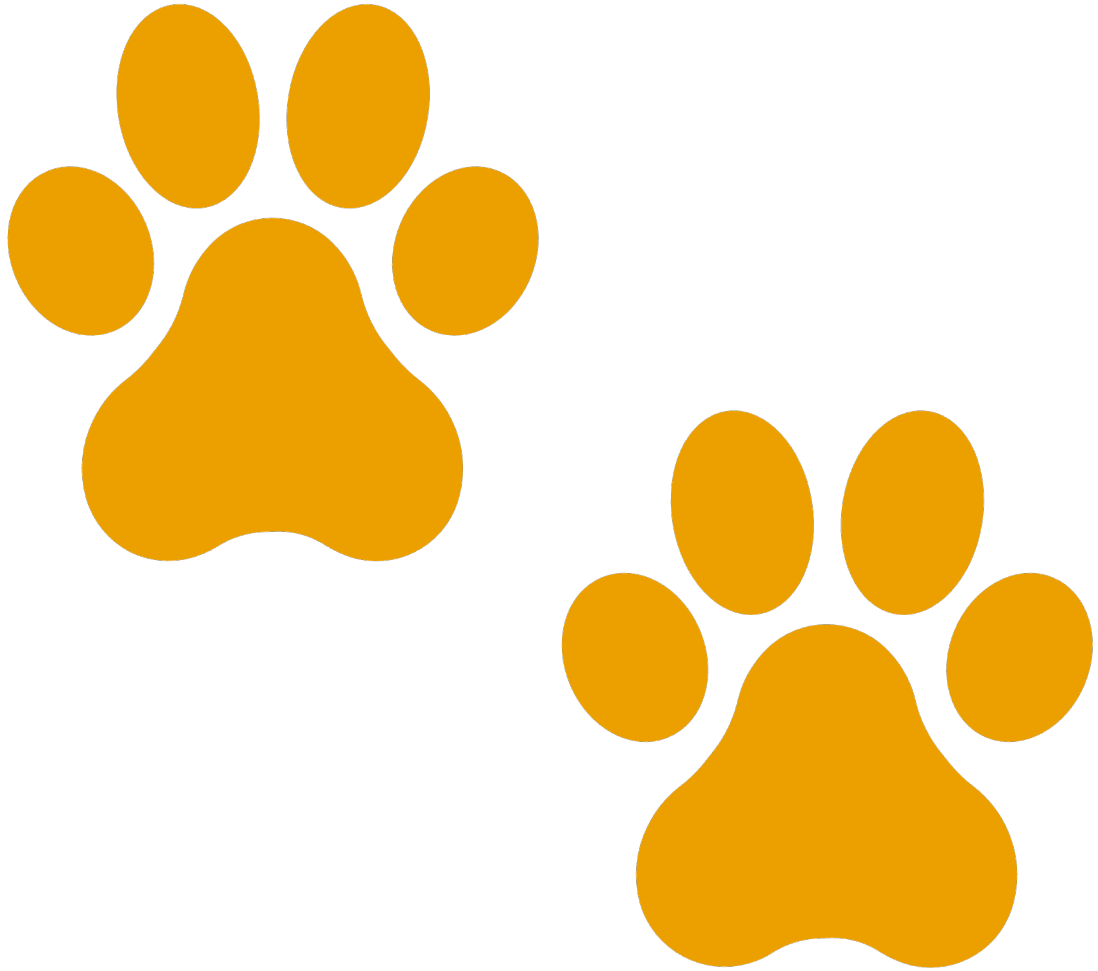
Leadership Goals

1. Want them to know that I really care
2. Feel valued and supported in their responsibilities
3. Innovative
4. Collaborative
5. Expect accountability that is focused on personal and team growth, empowered with personal choice
6. Integrity

Personal Story

Let me introduce you to Fizz

Years ago, my daughter decided she wanted a dog for Christmas...



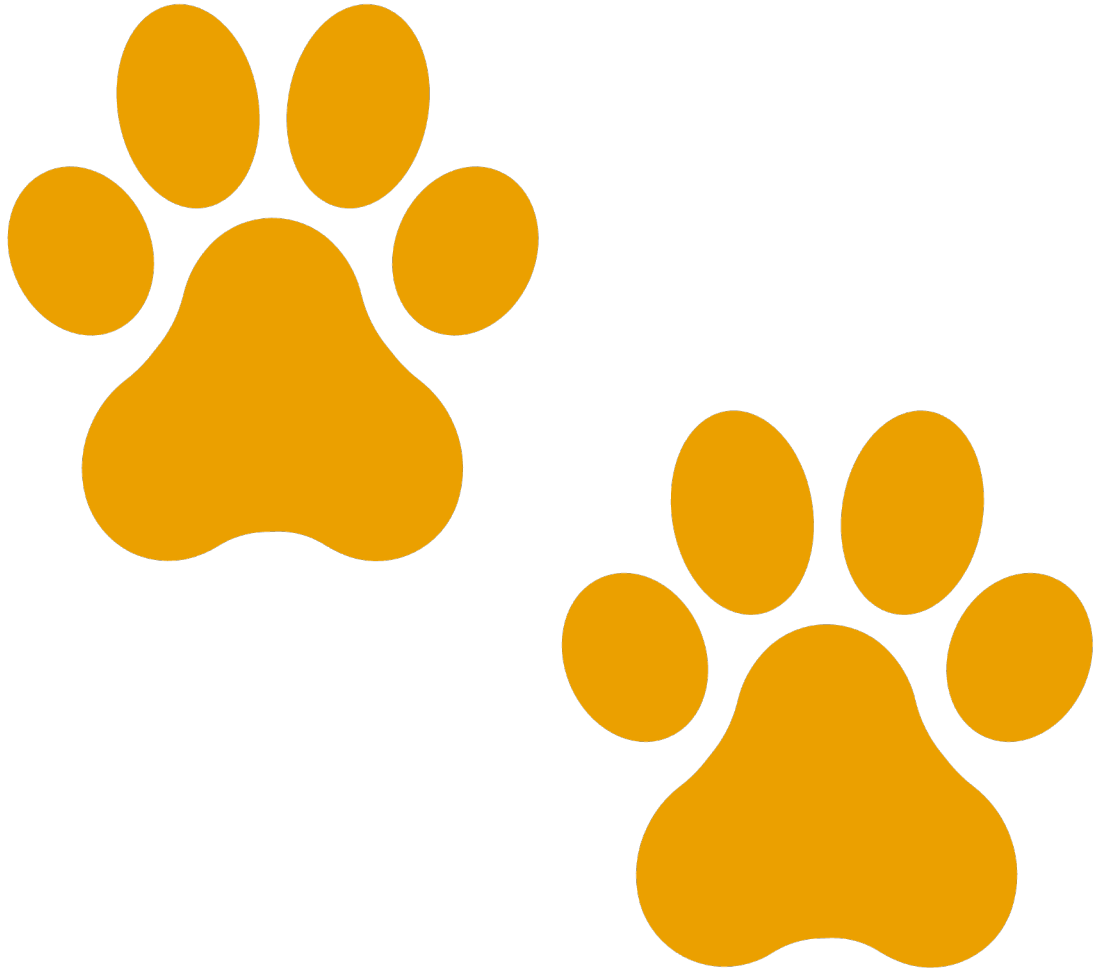
But we already had a family dog...

So began the search for the perfect dog...

Best Friends

OK Google

Even small amounts of Vitamin D can be deadly for dogs.



PANIC

MORE PANIC

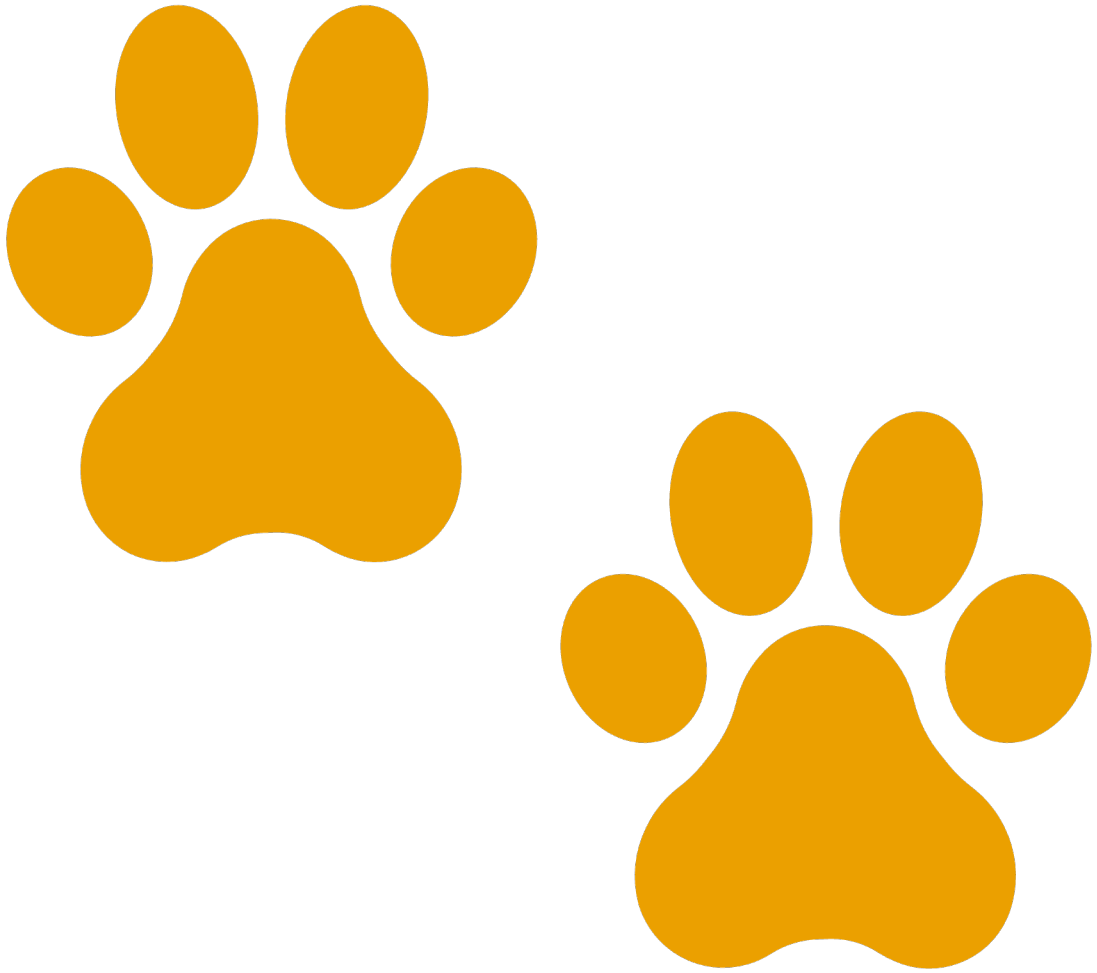
EVEN MORE PANIC

YES, NOW SPREAD PANIC

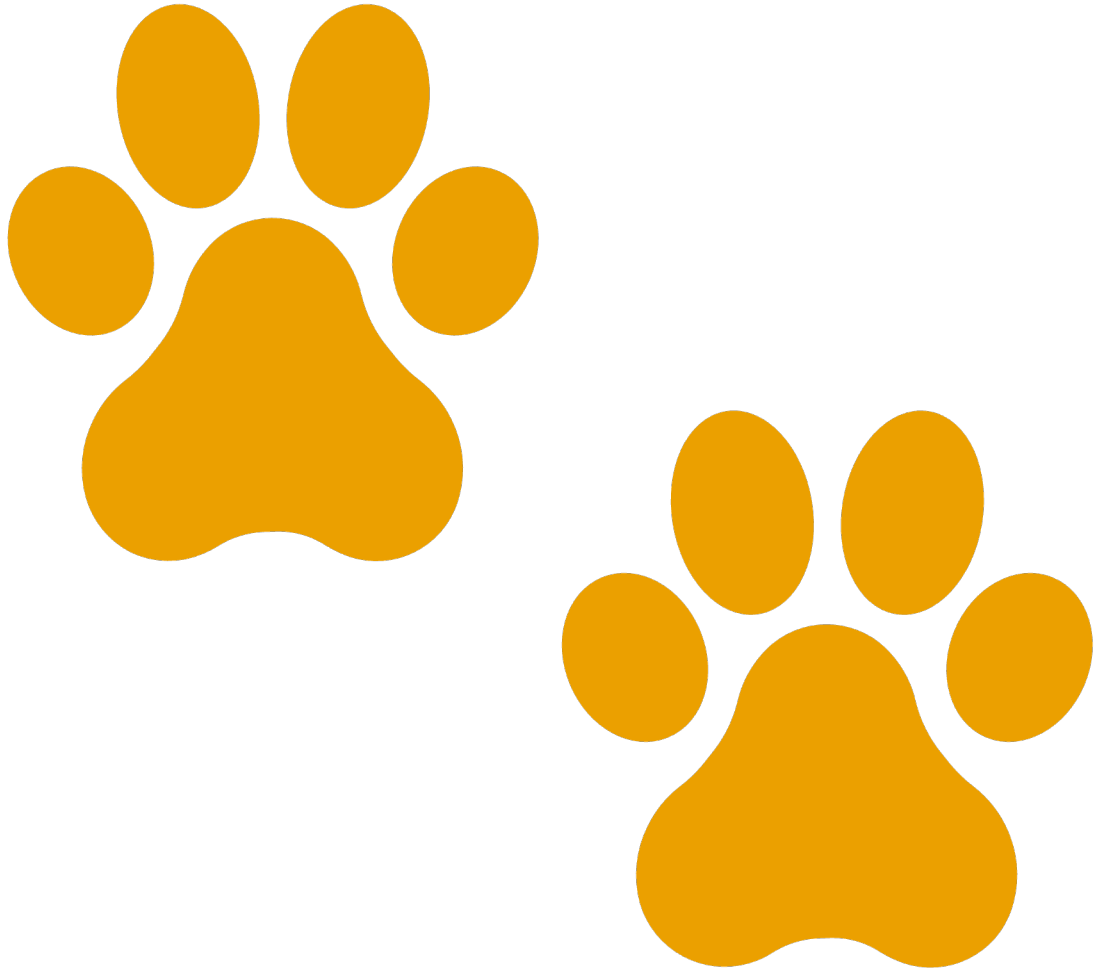
I've killed my daughter's dog!

```
Panic {
disable(Prefrontal Cortex);
return(Amygdala());
};
```

We need help!
Maybe we can get her to throw up?



While my wife and I try and get help…

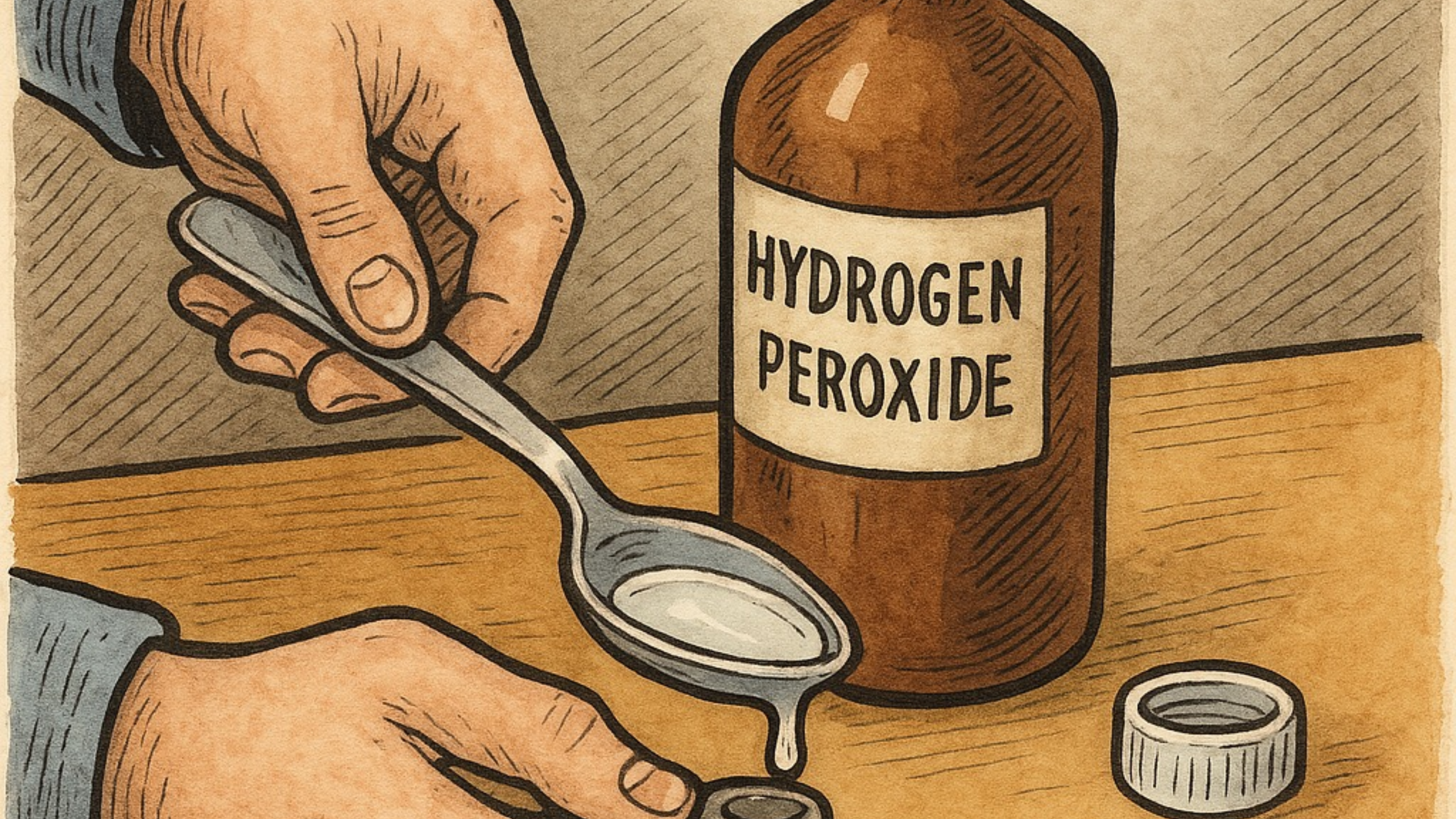


POISON
CONTROL

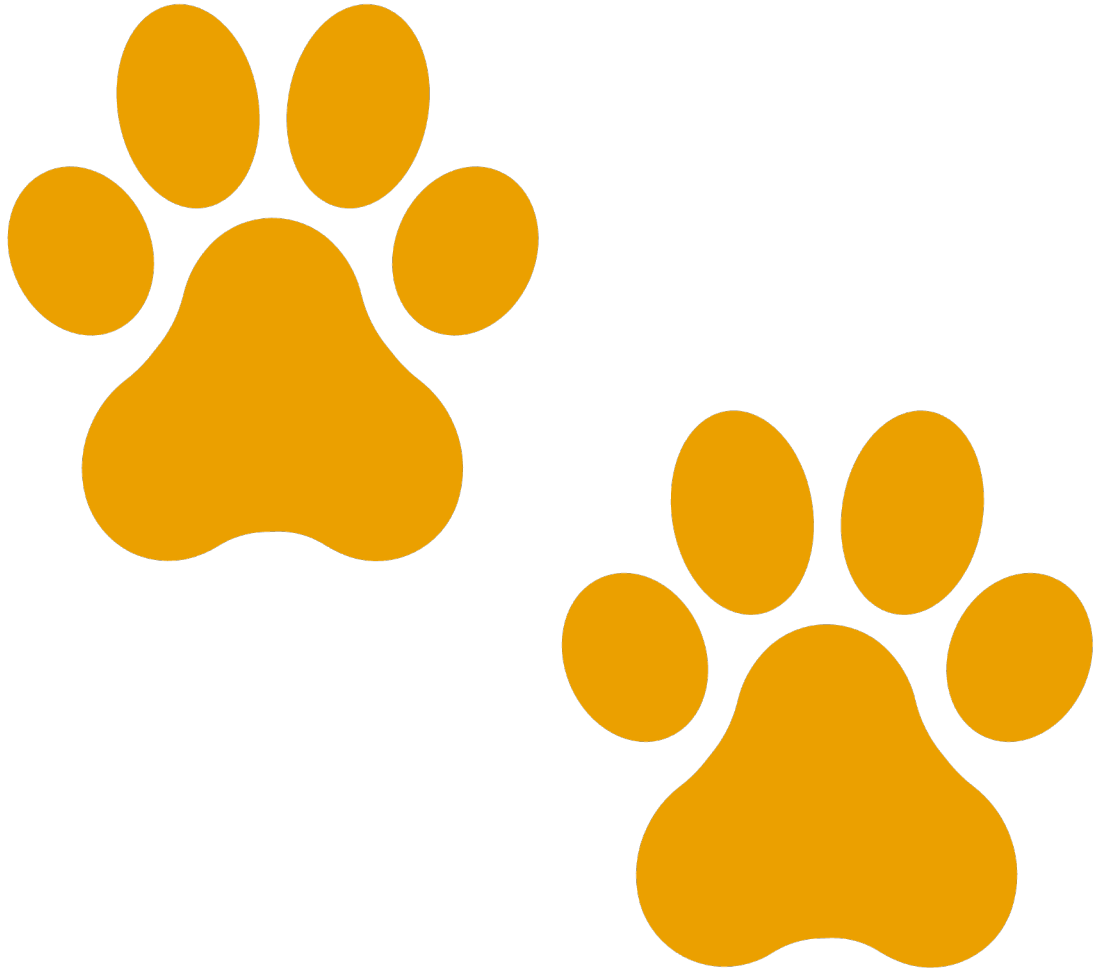
ChatGPT
my dog ate a 50mcg Vitamin D supplement, what should I do?

3% hydrogen peroxide (1 teaspoon per 5 pounds of body weight, max 3 tablespoons)

60lbs = 3 tablespoons

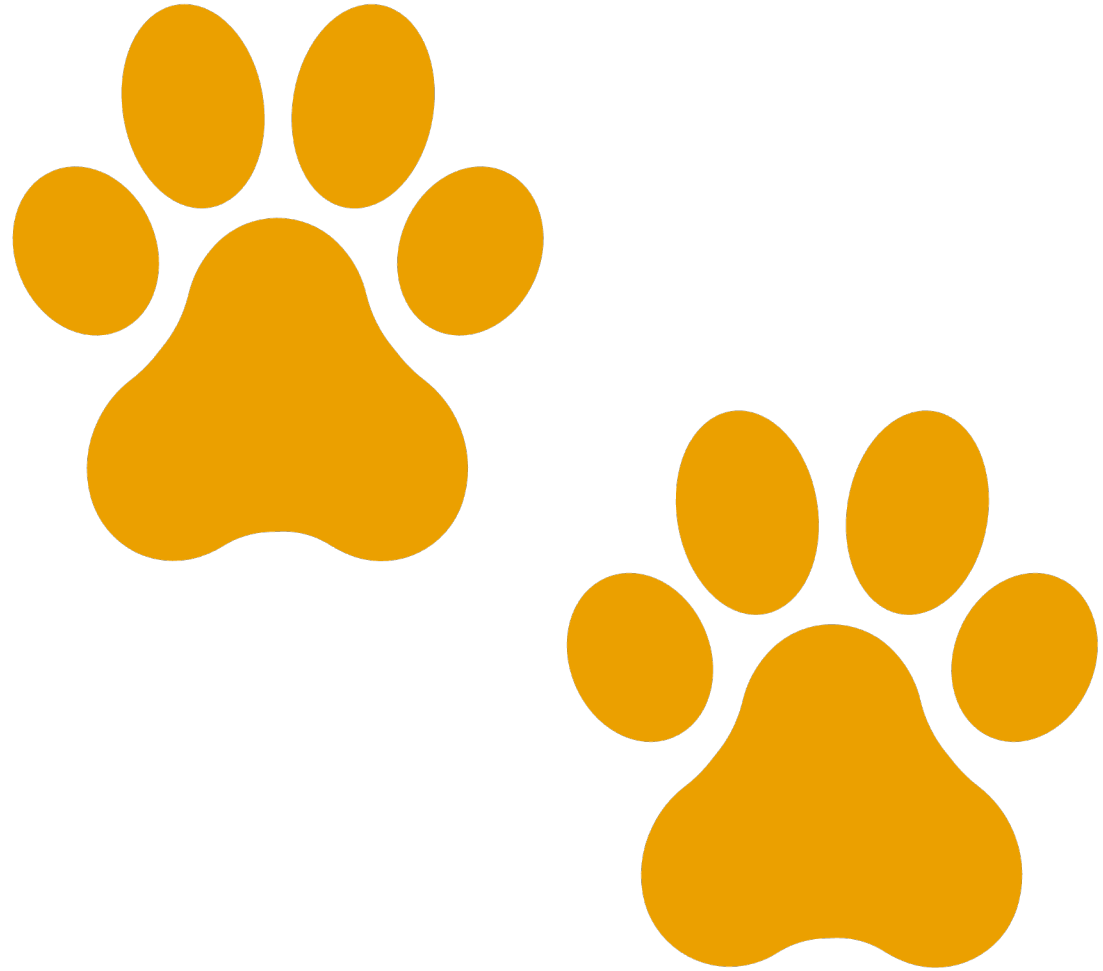

HYDROGEN
PEROXIDE

Meanwhile, my wife is attempting to contact animal poison control.

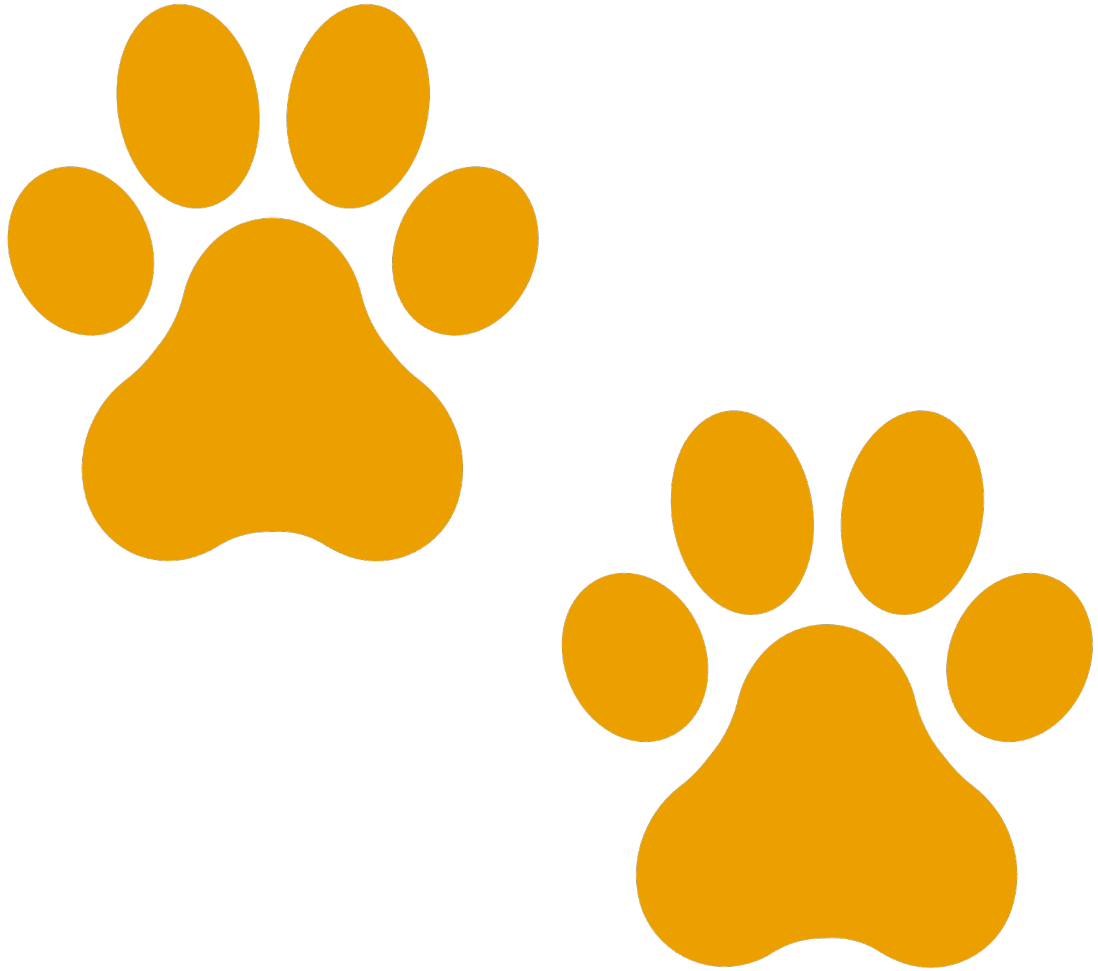


HYDROGEN
PEROXIDE

My wife then asks me, should we pay $35 to get help?



Leaving the kids to continue working with Fizz, I go check on my wife...

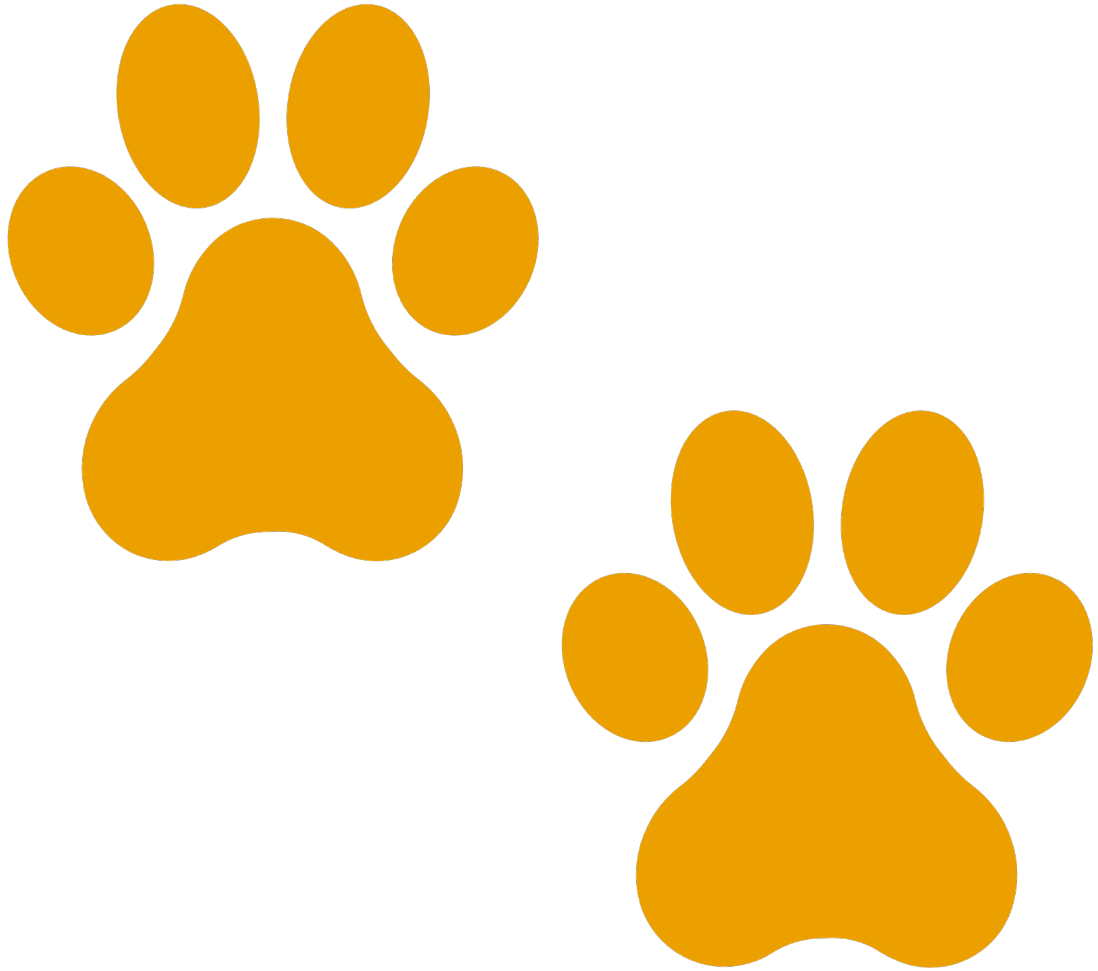


When I check on her, I find that she hasn’t contacted the animal poison control, rather she has connected with a chat service...

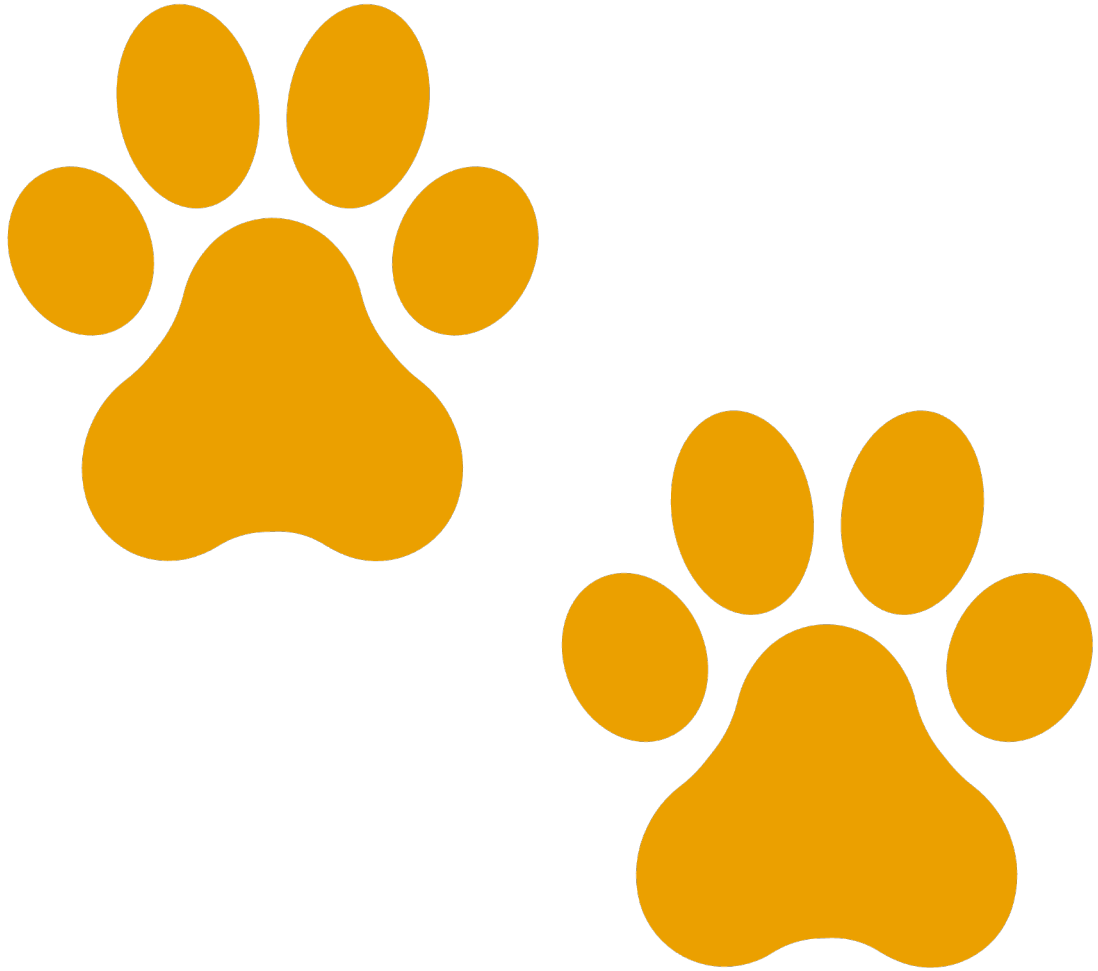
SECURITY
ALERT

MORE PANIC

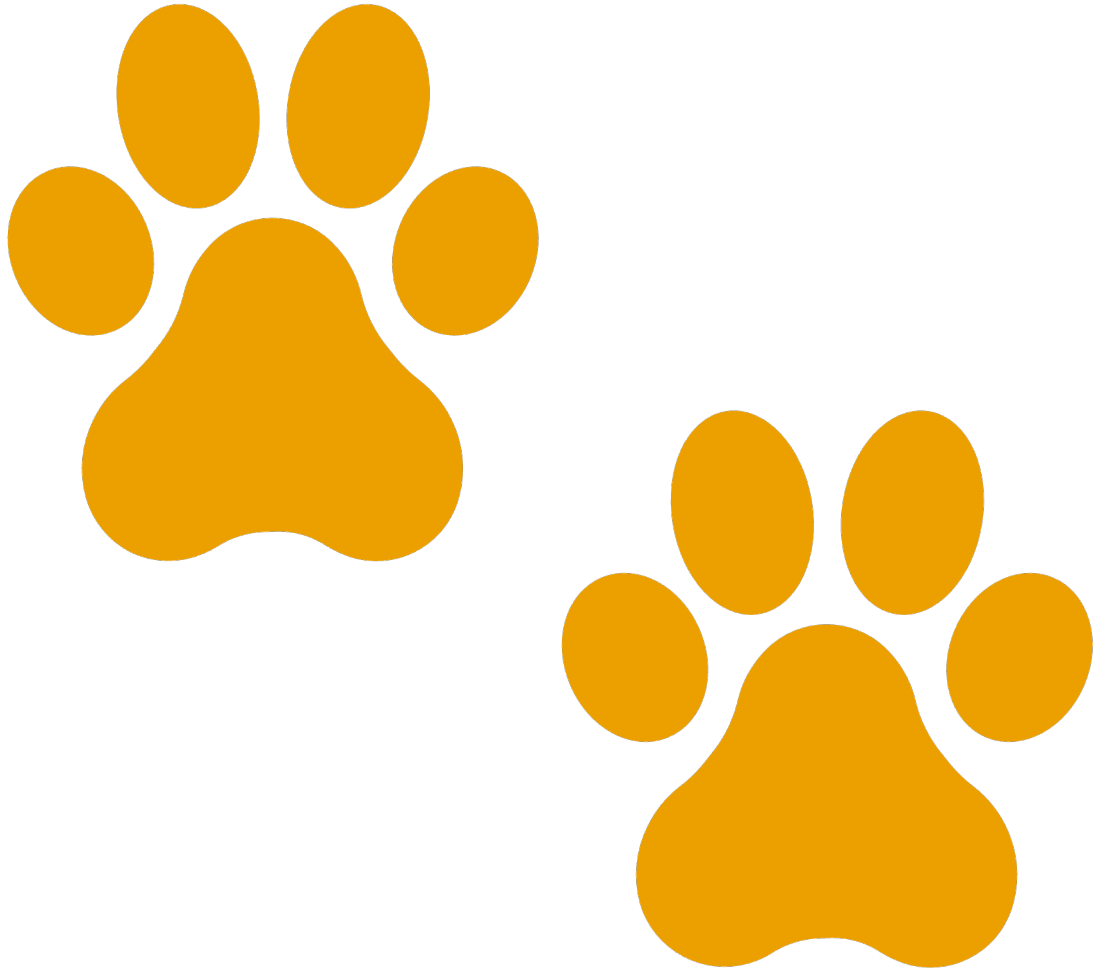
So now that we have already paid $35 to a chat service, lets increase our odds at getting help...



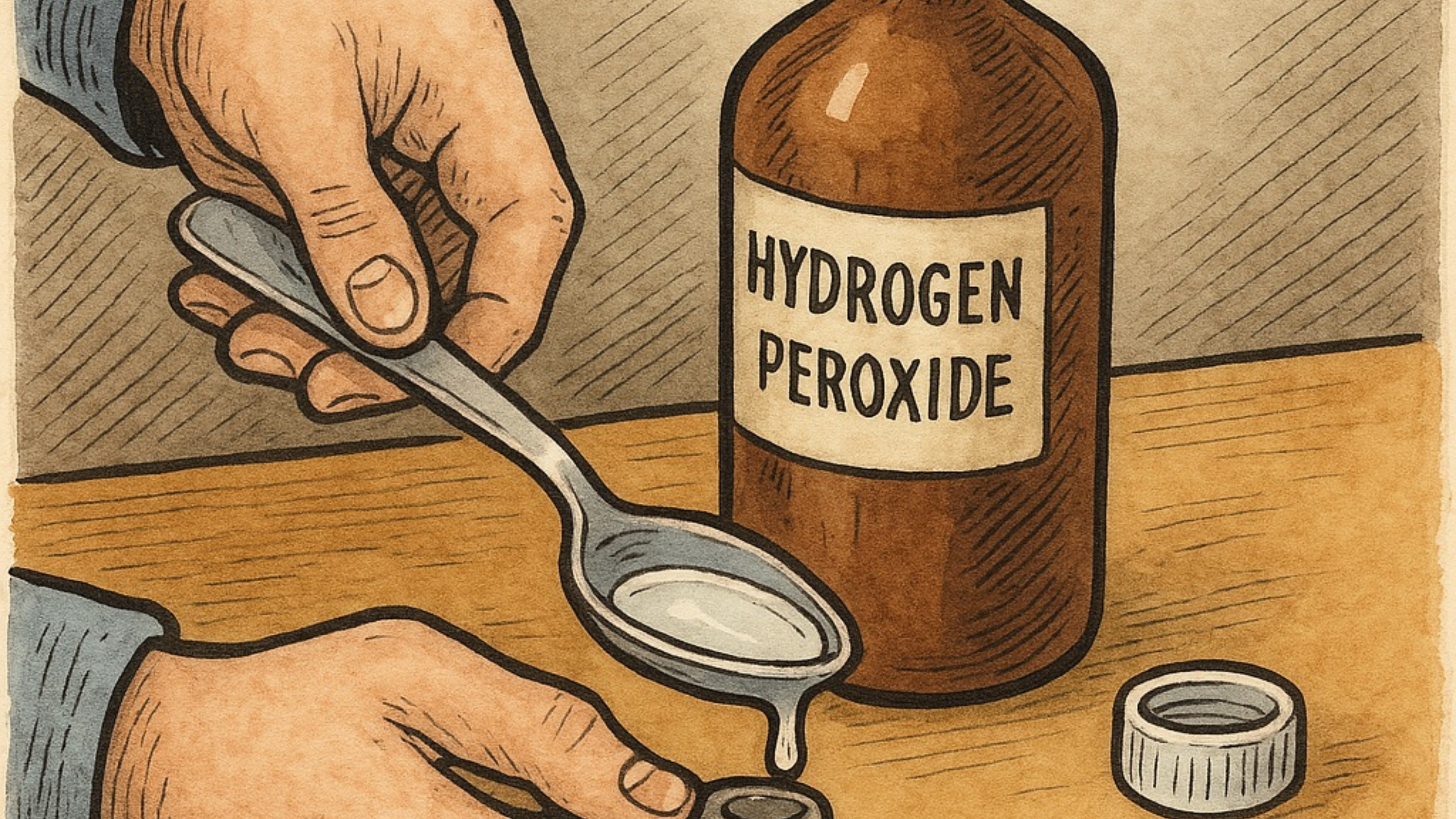
I then call one of the two actual poison control phone numbers



And it asks me if I want to pay $85 to get help

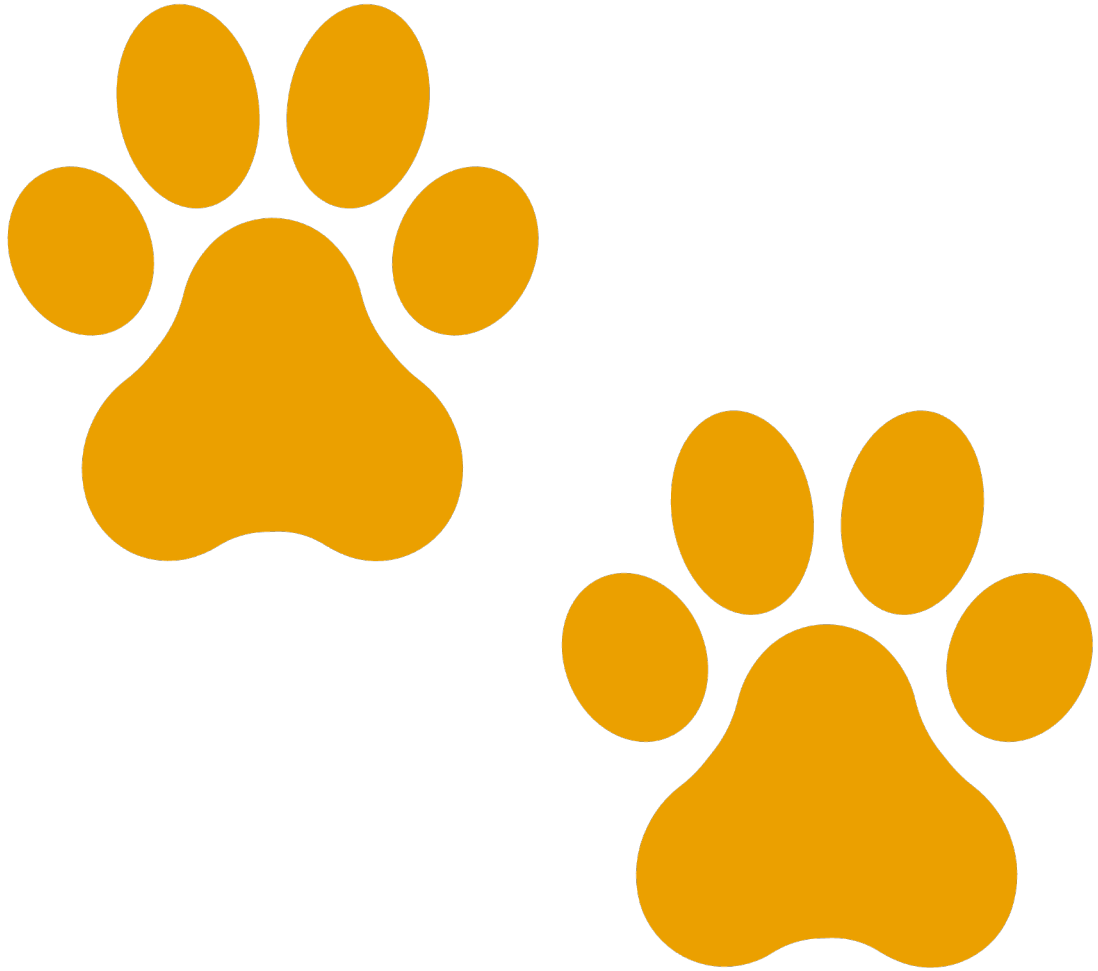


POISON
CONTROL
ON HOLD

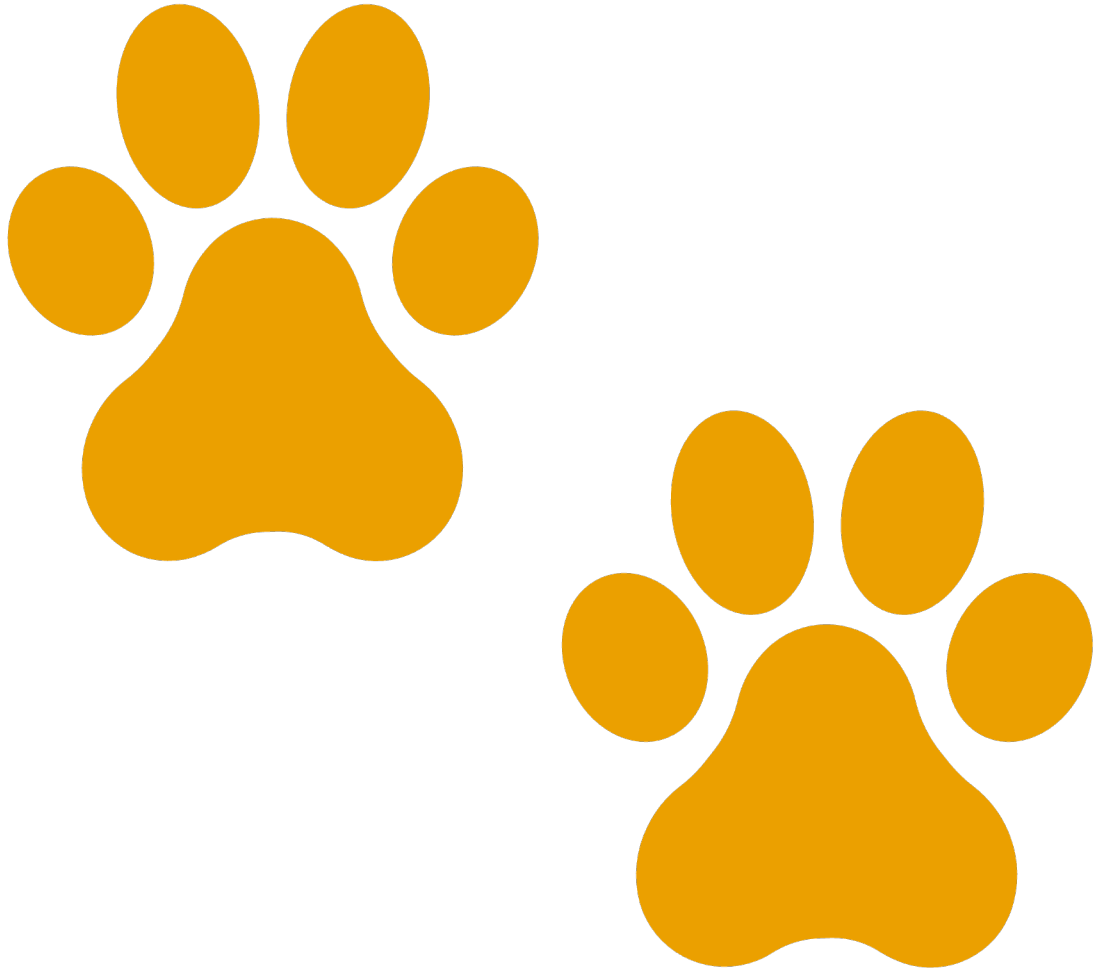

HYDROGEN
PEROXIDE

Then the chat service starts responding...

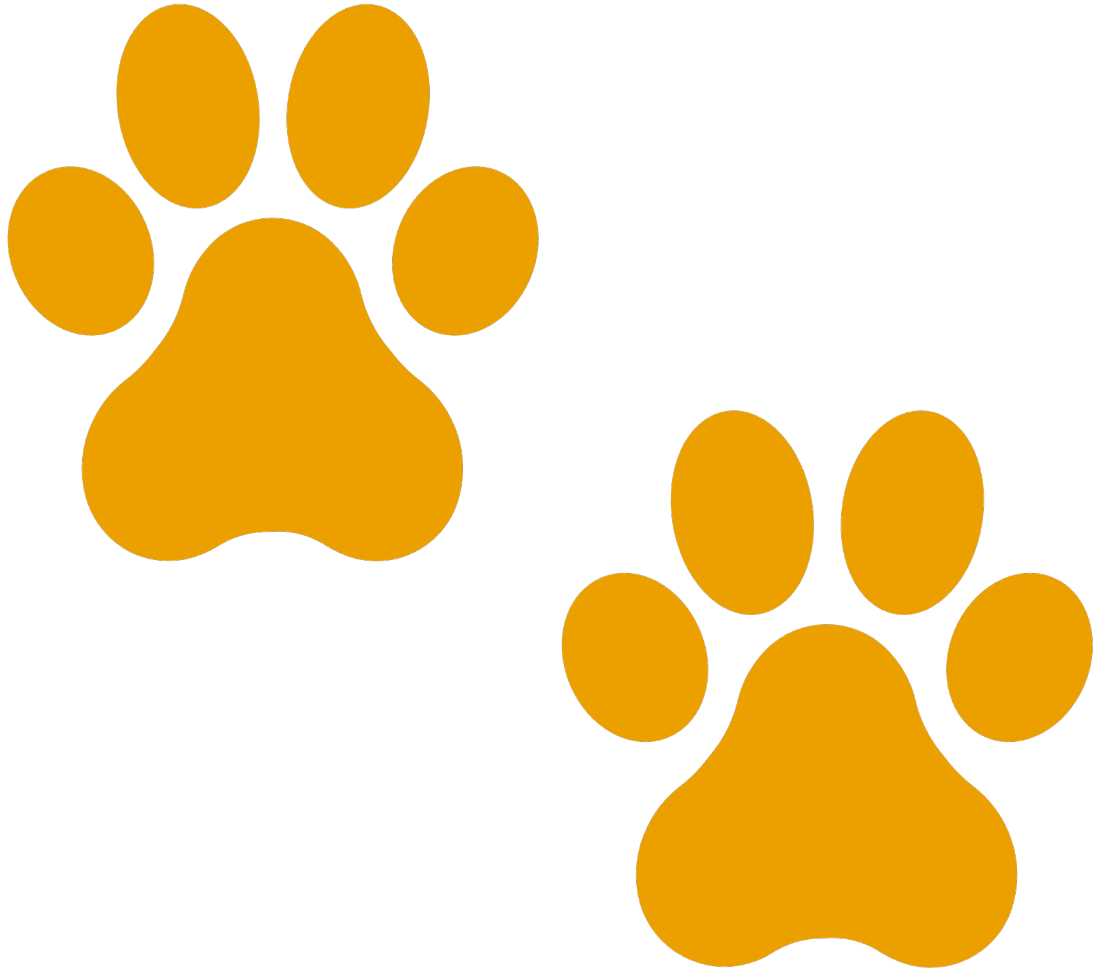
And it says its connecting us to a vet.



The vet confirms to us that the Vitamin D may kill her.



Then the vet tells us to give her Milk, Pumpkin, and Activated Charcoal to prevent it from being absorbed.



And..

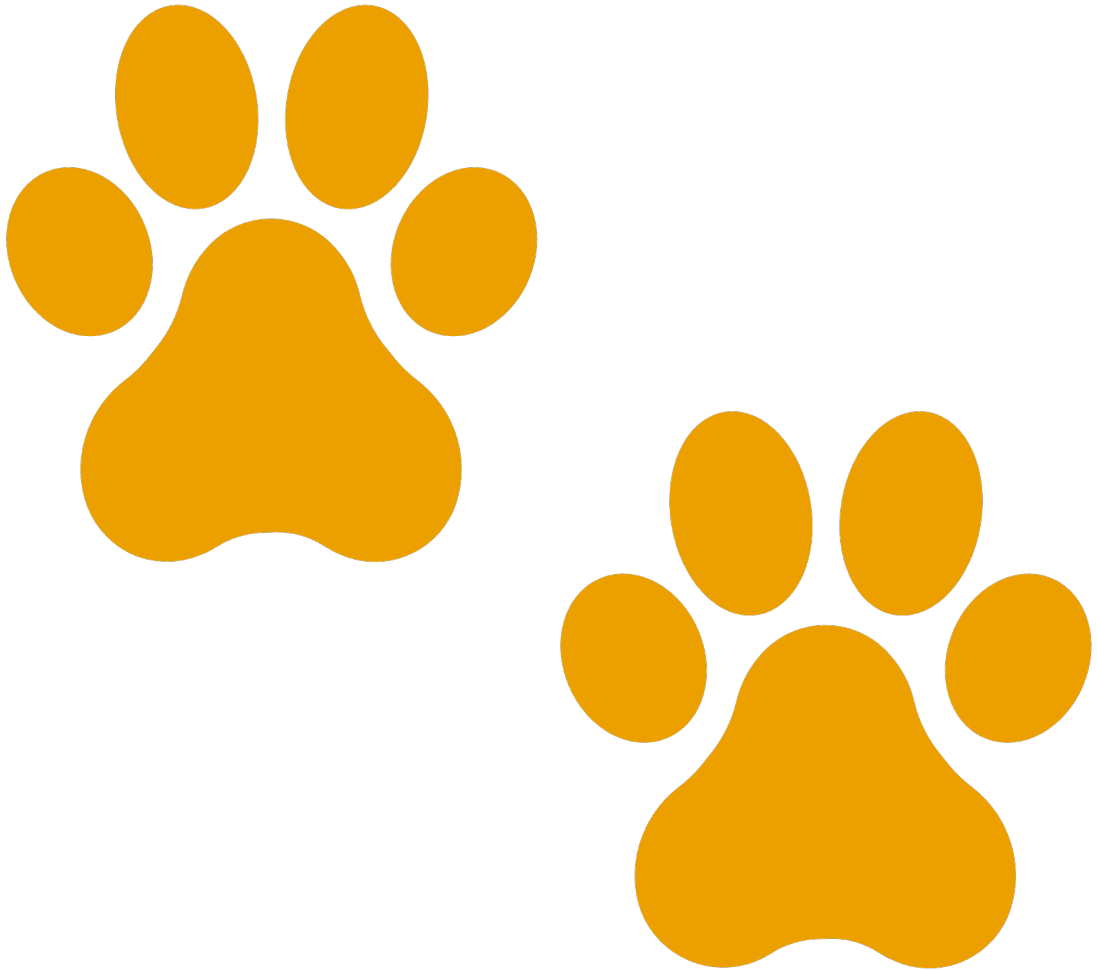
PUMPKIN
SWEETENED
CONDENSED
MILK

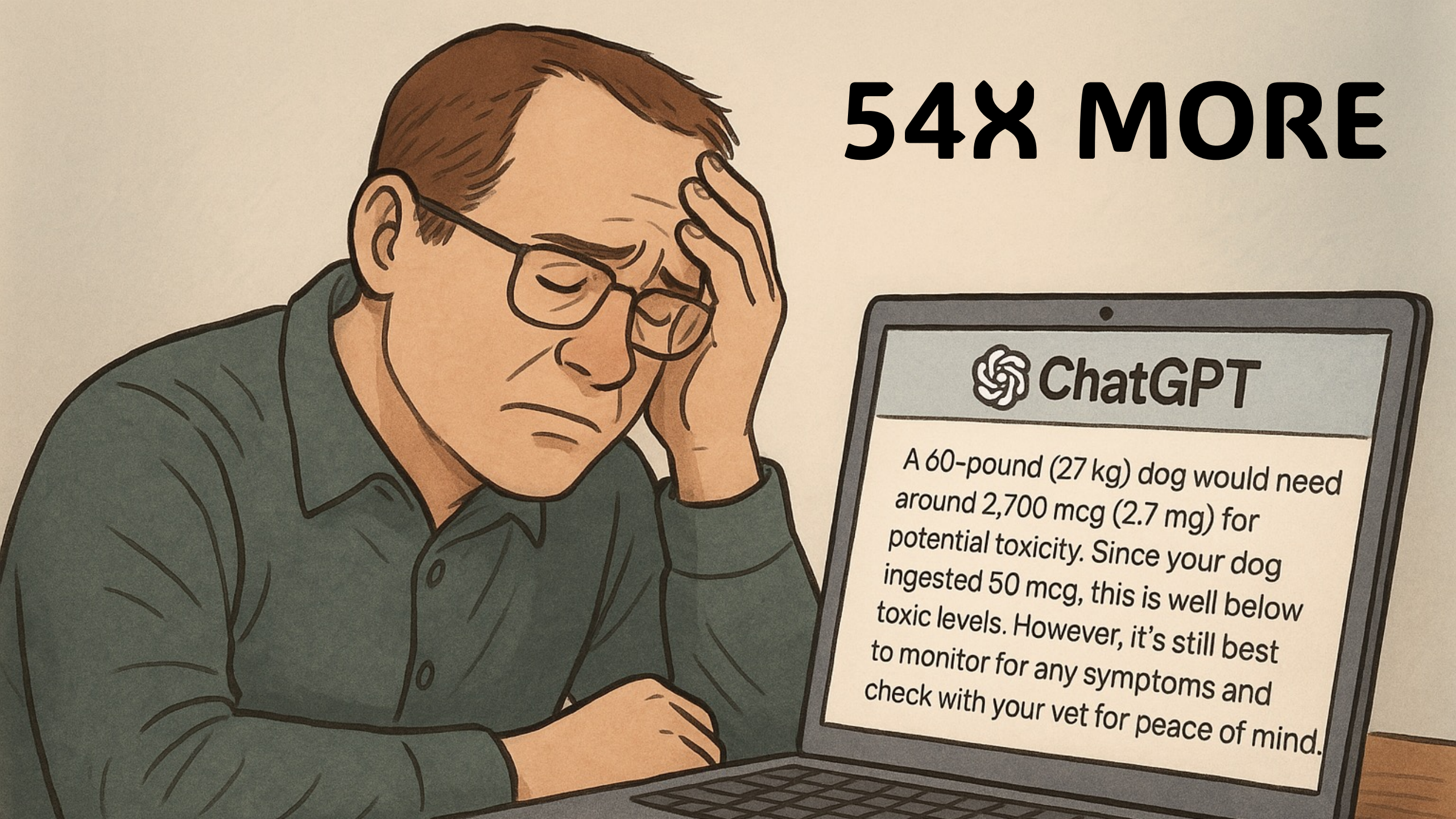
ACTIVATED
CHARCOAL

```
If (panic.cooldown=true)
{
return(Prefrontal_Cortex());
};
```

Wait a second...

How much is deadly?

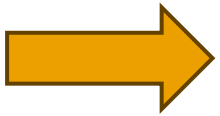



54X MORE
ChatGPT
A 60-pound (27 kg) dog would need around 2,700 mcg (2.7 mg) for potential toxicity. Since your dog ingested 50 mcg, this is well below toxic levels. However, it's still best to monitor for any symptoms and check with your vet for peace of mind.

Phycology - What happened?

I

PANIC



Everyone else

PANICS

No one is thinking rationally.
Everyone is in Fight or Flight mode.

In complex environments,
this usually makes things worse!

e·mo·tion·al con·ta·gion
/ əˈmōSH(ə)nəl / kənˈtāj(ə)n/

the tendency to mimic verbal, physiological and/or behavioral aspects of another person's emotional experience and thus to express/experience the same emotion

(Sonnby-Borgström and Jönsson, 2004).

What does this have to do with leadership?

lead·er·ship con·ta·gion
/ˈlēdərˌSHip / kənˈtāj(ə)n/

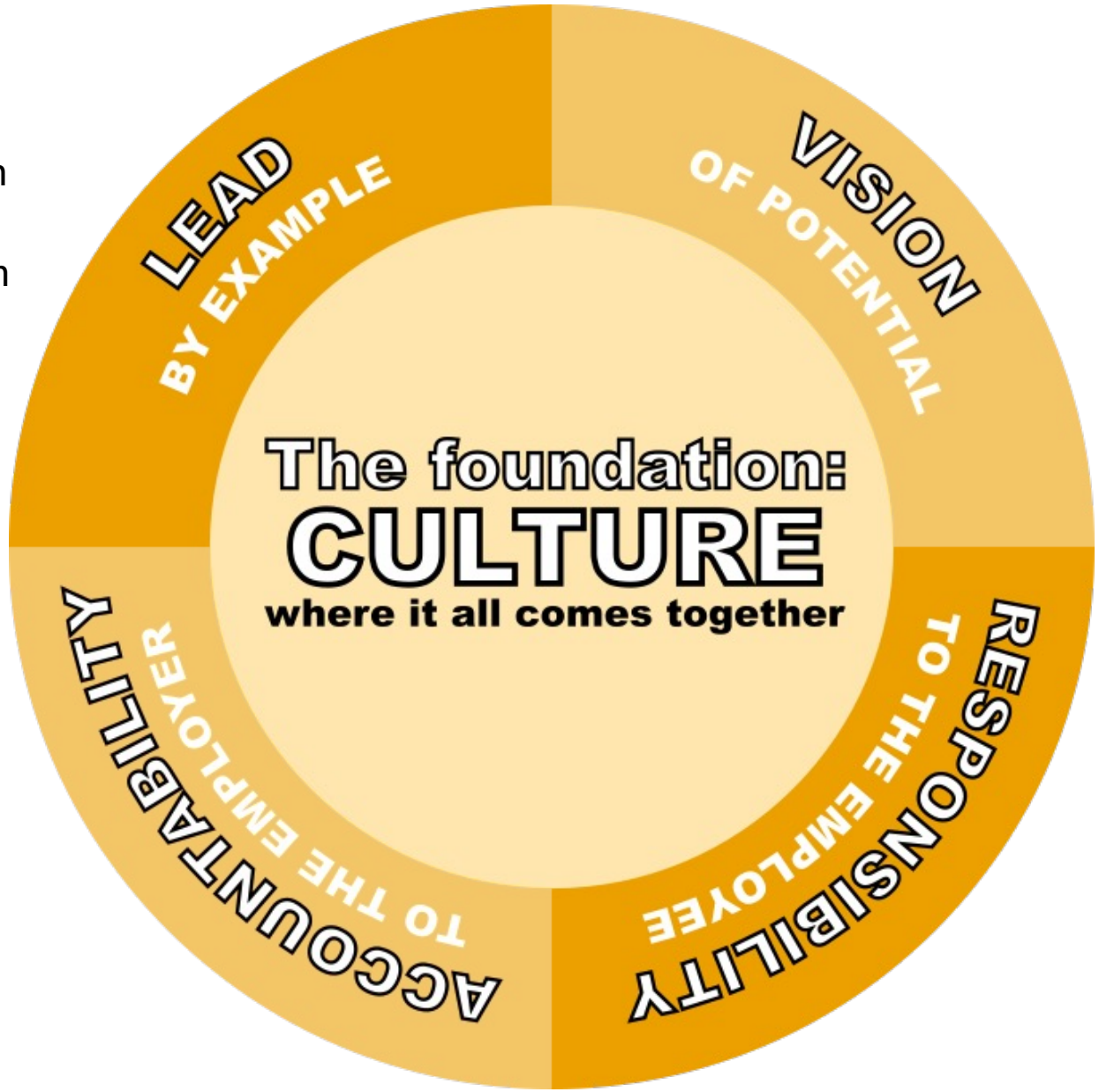
"leadership contagion" refers to the process where a leader's emotions and behaviors influence the emotions and behaviors of their team members. This influence can be positive or negative, impacting team morale, motivation, and performance. Leaders who effectively manage their emotions and behaviors can create a positive contagious leadership style, while those who struggle with self-awareness can spread negative emotions.

Leadership Goals

1. Want them to know that I really care
2. Feel valued and supported in their responsibilities
3. Innovative
4. Collaborative
5. Expect accountability that is focused on personal and team growth, empowered with personal choice
6. Integrity

4 LEADERSHIP PILLARS

Lead like your team is watching (because they are)
Be the person you want them to be.
Never expect something from them that you won't do yourself
Teams are a mirror and an amplifier of their leader



Know each employee.
See the potential of each person and team.
“Find round people for round holes.”
Tap into potential.
After meeting the baseline, hire for attitude, train for aptitude.

“Great performance without great conduct is unsustainable. Great conduct without performance is ineffective. Culture thrives when both are held accountable—together.”

Empower with personal choice to solve problems.
Recognition.
Training.
Tools.
Feedback and Support.
Invest in them, and they will invest in the team.

Culture is not a perk—it’s your foundation.

“Great teams run on great culture. And culture starts with you.”

Michael Gervais

leader@org:~$ culture --set-defaults

- Culture cascades from leadership
- It’s not what you say—it’s what you do
- It’s the *defaults* your team inherits
- Your Team is a Mirror—and an Amplifier

What kind of leader do I NEED to be?

1. Care about every member of my staff as equally as possible
2. Take care of my staff (tools, training, recognition, encouragement, help)
3. Encourage Innovation & think outside the box
4. Encourage collaboration, pull the team together, build relationships
5. Maintain accountability, enlist personal buy-in, focus on growth, give employee's the choice to change
6. Have Integrity: Positive, Ethical, Fair, Transparent & Trusted

What kind of leader do I NEED to be?

A lesson I was taught many years ago…

Threatened the air raids in WWII on all major cities throughout Britan, in 1939 the British Government wanted to strengthen morale, and eliminate panic.

Dad’s Army

- *Dad’s Army* is a British wartime sitcom that humorously follows the misadventures of a bumbling Home Guard unit in WWII-era England as they prepare to defend their town from invasion.
- BBC TV Show in 1968
- Converted to a Radio Show in 1974
- When I lived in England, we often listened to the Radio Show while we drove.

Corporal Jones, a loveable but excitable member of the Home Guard platoon.

Jones would often shout “Don’t panic! Don’t panic!” in moments of crisis or confusion—ironically while panicking himself.

His attempts to reassure others (and himself) usually backfired, creating chaos (and laughter).

What kind of leader do I NEED to be?

DON'T

PANIC

But what if I’m not in a leadership role?

Model the Culture You Want to See

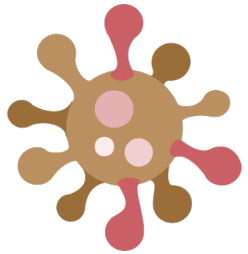
Even without authority, you have *influence*—and culture often spreads sideways.

- Be the first to help.
- Speak respectfully, especially under stress.
- Show curiosity instead of cynicism.
- Take ownership, even if it’s not “your problem.”

“You don’t need a title to lead—just intention.”

The real question is:

WHAT ARE YOU SPREADING?



Because we all know that working in IT is easy...
It's like riding a bike.

WORKING IN IT
IS LIKE RIDING A BIKE

EXCEPT THE BIKE IS ON FIRE
AND YOU'RE ON FIRE
AND EVERYTHING IS ON FIRE

So if you take anything from this message today, just remember...

Dad's
Army
Don't PANIC.

WHATEVER TOMORROW BRINGS TO IT

~

WE WILL GET THROUGH IT TOGETHER

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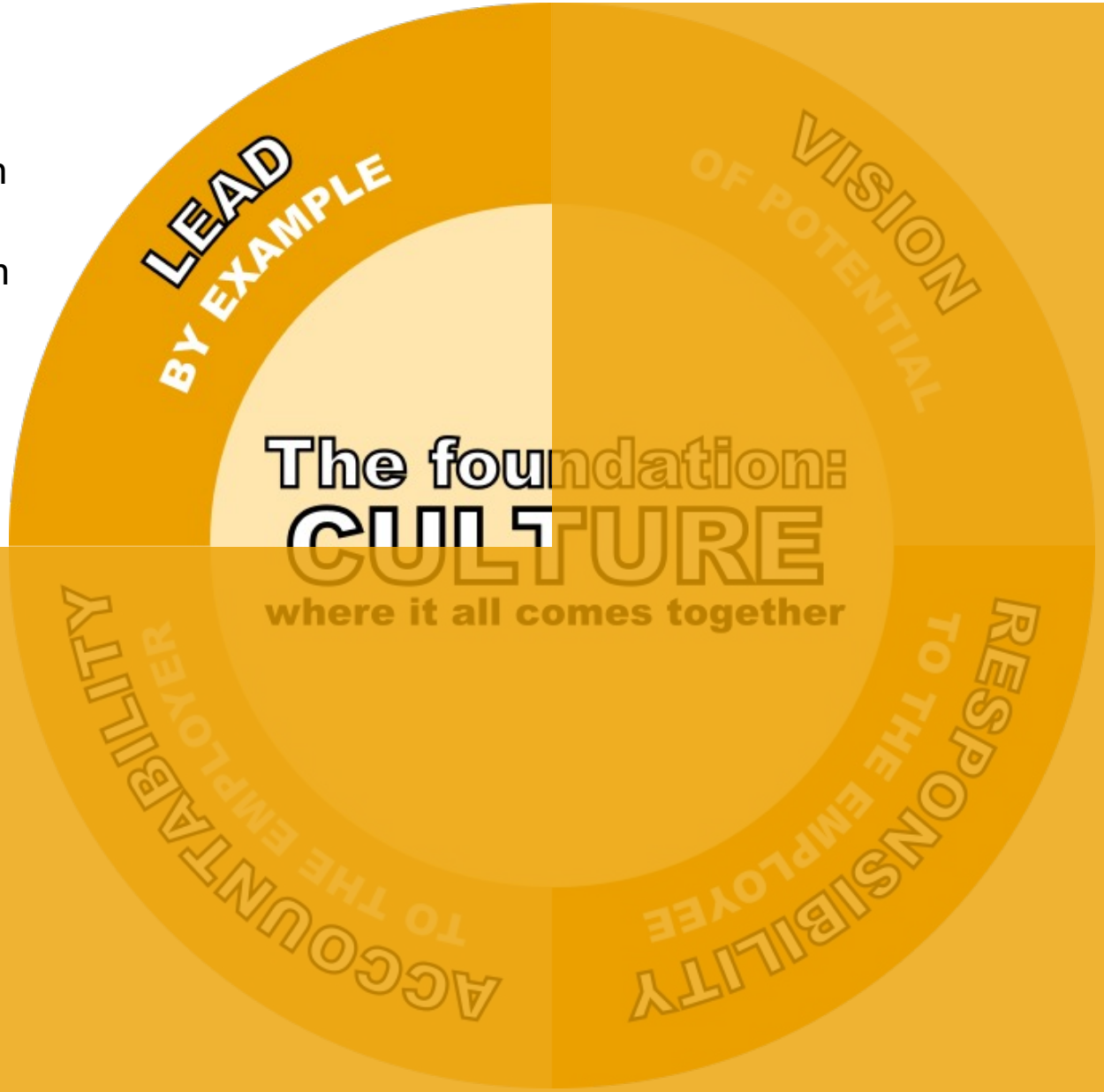

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