



Changing the Narrative

A Model for Building Financial Stability: Jobs and Applying for Social Security Disability Benefits

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We Want Your Opinion

A Model for Building Financial Stability

Objectives

1. Discuss what is hard about discussing jobs while applying for Social Security Disability Benefits
2. Describe the SEEKS approach on *Changing the Narrative*
3. Review some SEEKS results
4. Provide tools for Building Financial Security: Jobs and Applying for Social Security Disability Benefits

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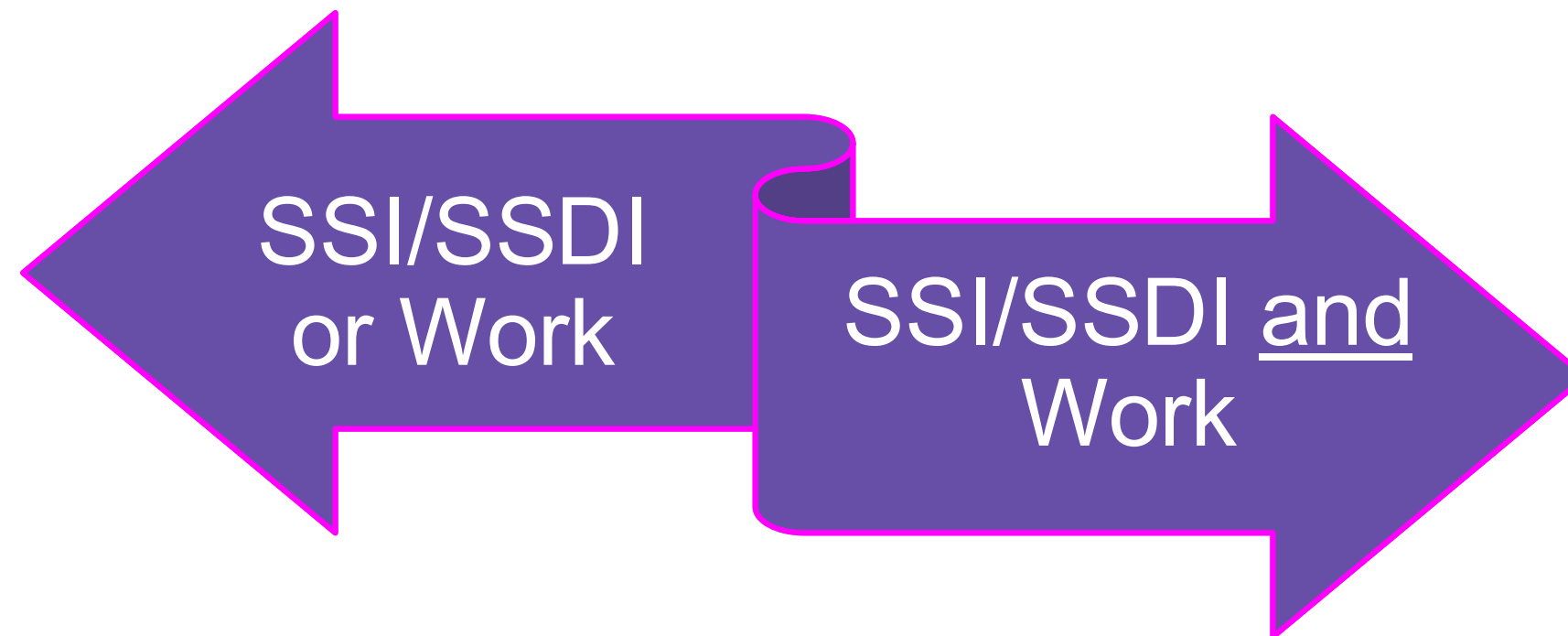
Changing the Narrative

SEEKS Paradigm

Changing the expectations around disability benefits and work through:

- Messaging
- Accurate information/Informed Choice
- Provide support & resources

**TYPICAL
PARADIGM**



**SEEKS
PARADIGM**

2

Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability (SEEKS) Research Project

What is SEEKS?

The SEEKS intervention is a practice model that aims to address high poverty and unemployment rates by shifting expectations

But how...?

The SEEKS Design

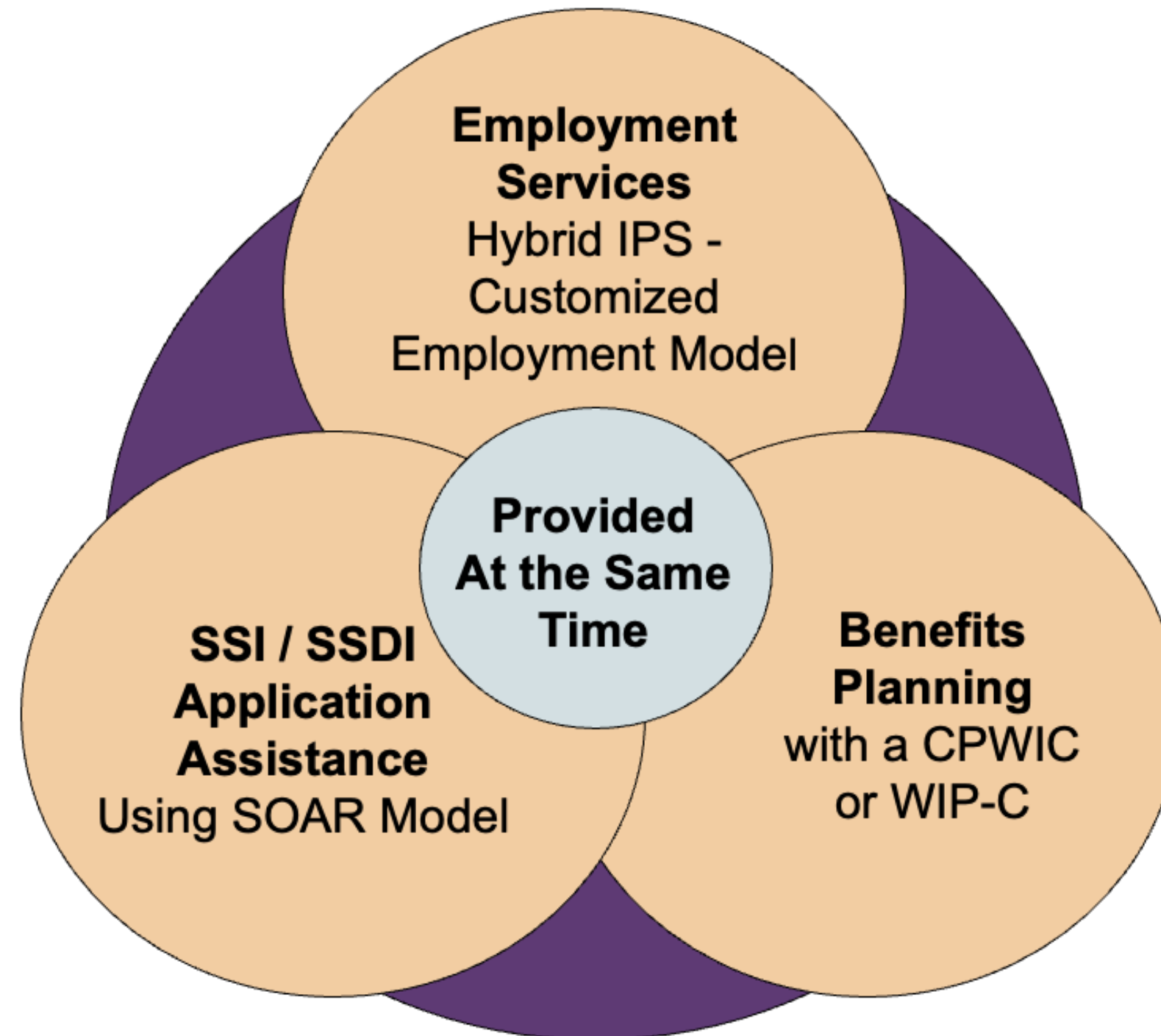


SEEKS serves people likely eligible for SSA disability benefits (SSI/SSDI)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: To participate in the SEEKS Research Study, participants must:

- ✓ Be adults (18-60 years of age)
- ✓ Have a disability (as defined by Centers for Independent Living)
- ✓ Be likely eligible for SSI / SSDI
- ✓ Be willing to work with Certified Vendors
- ✗ Not have an Individual Plan for Employment with DVR or be enrolled in certain DVR contracts

SEEKS Intervention Model



SEEKS Intervention Model

Videos

[Team Approach for Applying for Social Security Benefits](#)

[SEEKS Approach for Applying for Social Security Benefits](#)

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SEEKS Outcomes

For Qualitative Interviewees . . .

**There is evidence that individuals
moved towards the SEEKS Model**

When asked about their goals going into **SEEKS**
and if their goals changed . . .

we see that employment became more important



These word clouds show that employment was not a goal for most of the interviewees when starting SEEKS, but became a goal later in SEEKS.

It also shows that the goal of getting benefits and application assistance remained high.

I believe they could be done together [Apply for Benefits and Work]... I don't want to be one of those guys that live off the government unless I have to.

As interviewees worked with the whole team, they saw the value of the and approach.

I think that definitely just getting more knowledge about how all of those three different categories [SOAR, Employment, Benefits] work, and especially about the benefits.

I wouldn't say that one [team service] was more important than the other because it was all really relevant to being where I'm at today, honestly.

Promising Trends from the Qualitative Data

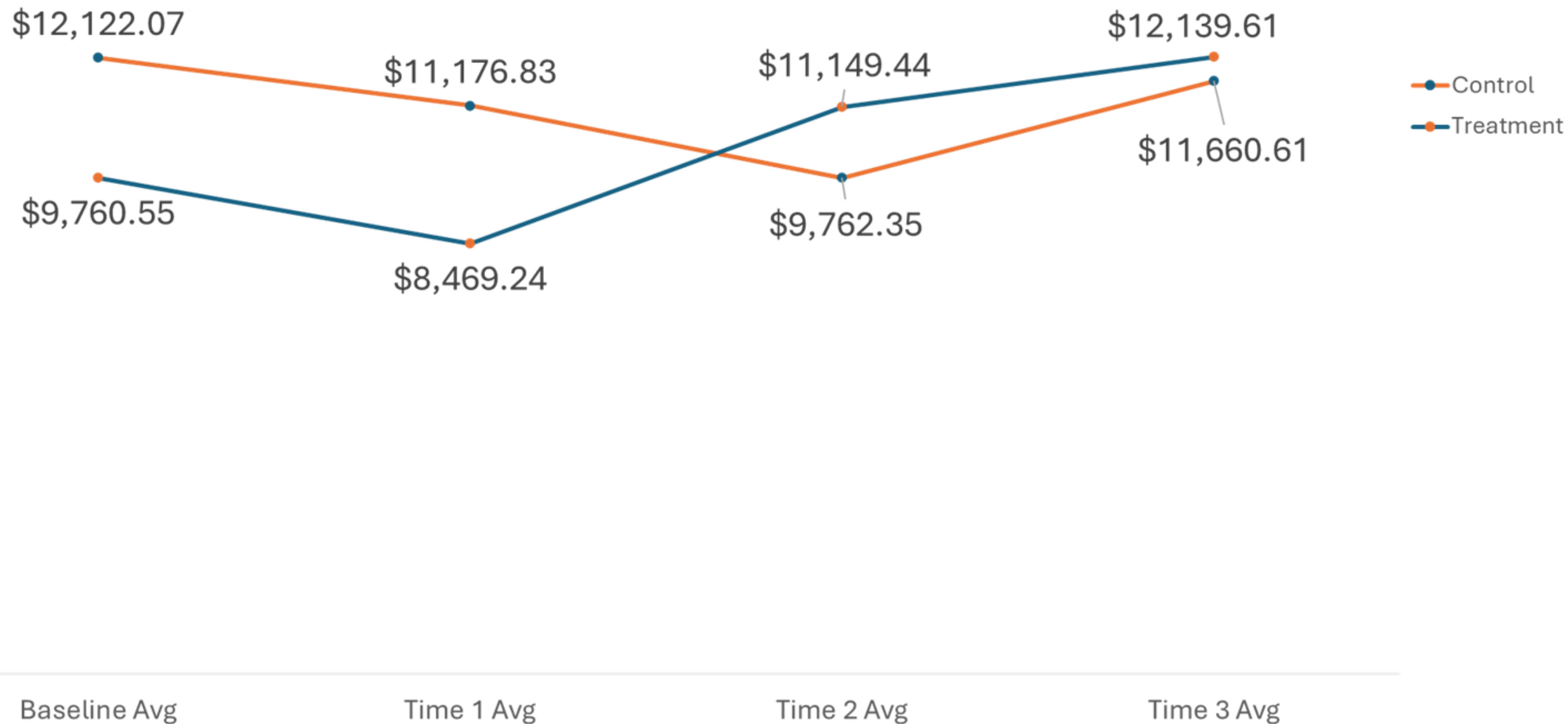
- Average annual income for the treatment group showed an upward trajectory throughout the study while the control group remained the same.
- Benefits planning motivated participants to pursue work.
- Simply asking about social connection encouraged some participants to improve their networks.
- More participants enrolled in the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, where they received additional support after beginning SEEKS.

FINDING

Certified Vendor Intervention delivery showed promising outcomes for changes in gross annual income

- There were trends showing that if the groups were larger and/or the study were longer there is a good chance we would have seen a difference, especially with the Certified Vendor Intervention Team.
- Average annual income for the Control Group did not change much throughout any of the follow-up data collection period.
- it did increase for the Intervention Group who worked with the Certified Vendors Team at each data collection point throughout the study.

Average Yearly Income Across Groups



Outcomes

- No statistically significant difference in employment, income and social connection
- Was a statistically significant difference in benefits planning
 - Twice as many intervention participants met with a Benefits Planner as control participants (45.8% v 21.9%)
 - 84% of those who met with a Benefits Planner were motivated to pursue employment

Sharing the narrative



COLORADO

Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation

Department of Labor and Employment



SEEKS & DVR COLLABORATION FEATURING:
Billy and his employment success story!

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A Model for Building Financial Stability: Tools



Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Website

- [Help Applying for Social Security Disability Benefits \(DVR\)](#)

Tools

- [Brief Talking Points](#)

Additional Tools

- [SSI/SSDI Likely Eligibility Tool](#)
- [The SEEKS paradigm description](#)
- [SEEKS Initial Meeting Talking points](#)

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Questions / Comments

Contact information

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Thank
You

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