

Why Your Memory Isn't What It Used To Be

Memory can play tricks on people. Maybe that's why many of us don't bother to commit addresses, friends' names and other bits of key information to memory. Instead, we rely on Google, Bing and sometimes even our spouse to do it for us.

According to scientists at Columbia University, the Internet has become our primary form of external memory. Studies done at Columbia found that participants who expected to have access to information in the future had a lower recall rate. However, they had high rates of remembering where to access that information. The conclusion: We don't need to remember things anymore. We just have to know where to find it.

Interestingly, when it comes to remembering, the Internet has some competition, and that competition is your partner. According to studies conducted by Hollingshead and Brandon in 2003, couples who have been together for some time automatically "assign" the job of remembering, say, a second cousin's kid's name to one spouse, while the other might be "in charge" of remembering garbage days.

Both are forms of something called transactive memory, meaning you rely on an external memory source to locate key information.

The danger is that you become so reliant on your computer or your spouse that a technological or relationship meltdown leaves you with no access to important information. So, let's hope our technology - and our relationships - never fail us.

Want to Sell Your Home Quickly? Get My Free Guide



In a competitive real estate market, it pays to do as much as you can to help your house sell.

Discover how to make your home attractive to buyers by requesting my free guide, **"50 Essential Tips to Prepare Your Home for a Speedy, Top-Price Sale."**

Call me at **(604) 808-9661** or email robinmcinnis@shaw.ca and I'll send it right out to you.

Where Does Halloween Come From Anyway?

Similarities suggest at least a notional link between the present-day Halloween custom of wearing costumes and going trick-or-treating and the Medieval practices of "mumming" and "going-a-souling" on the eve of All Saints Day (November 1) and All Souls Day (November 2).

Mumming took the form of wearing costumes, chanting or singing, play-acting and general mischief making while "souling" entailed going door to door and offering prayers for the dead in exchange for treats, particularly "soul cakes."

Another antecedent comes from the British custom, dating from the 1600s, of youths carrying effigies and begging for pennies on Bonfire Night (also known as Guy Fawkes Night), the November 5 commemoration of the so-called Gunpowder Plot to blow up Parliament in 1605 (while not an official holiday, Bonfire Night is still celebrated in parts of the UK).

Interestingly, by the mid 1800s, when Irish immigrants brought Halloween to North America, the customs of "mumming" and "souling" were all but forgotten in most of the Great Britain. Americans, by and large, had no idea who Guy Fawkes was, let alone why anyone should go begging for "pennies for the Guy." And despite the fact that the October 31 observance of Halloween had earned a permanent spot on the American holiday calendar by the turn of the 20th century there is no mention in published sources of trick-or-treating or anything resembling it before 1939.

iPhone Apps For Your Health

CalorieTracker by Livestrong – Lose weight easily by setting your weight management goals and track your calories and progress with its comprehensive online food journal containing over 625,000 food and fitness items - \$2.99 on iTunes or get the lite version for free.

Nike Training Club – is a personal training app that gives you your own personal trainer anytime, anywhere. Get lean, toned and strong with over 60 custom built workouts in video form. No more excuses for not working out, your trainer goes with you and all you need is an

open space. Free on iTunes.

Pocket Yoga – With Pocket Yoga you can keep up your yoga practice in the comfort of your own home. Just place your iPod/iPhone/iPad in front of your mat and Pocket Yoga will guide you through your routine. Choose between three different practices, three difficulty levels and three durations, for a total of twenty-seven different sessions. Free on iTunes.

Correction: Last month, I wrote about a daily organizer named Everlast. It should have read: **Evernote**

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Email robinmcinnis@shaw.ca or call **(604) 808-9661** for the answer.

What colour is an octopus's blood?

Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbour, friend or co-worker.

And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give me a call or send me an email!

Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

How has the price of your home changed in today's market? How much are other homes in your neighbourhood selling for?

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, I'll be able to help.

Just give me a call for a no-fuss, professional evaluation.

I'll give you the most current market data about your home and its value.

Maybe I'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live!

Call me today at **(604) 808-9661** to arrange an appointment.

Worth Quoting

"An hour of basketball feels like 15 minutes. An hour on a treadmill feels like a weekend in traffic school."

~ David Walters

"As for butter versus margarine, I trust cows more than chemists."

~ Joan Gussow

"It's not food if it arrived through the window of your car."

~ Michael Pollan

"The word aerobics comes from two Greek words: aero, meaning "ability to," and bics, meaning "withstand tremendous boredom"

~ Dave Barry

"As a child my family's menu consisted of two choices: take it or leave it."

~ Buddy Hackett

"Somewhere, someone busier than you is running."

~ Nike

"Those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness."

~ Edward Stanley

Add Spice to Your Life by Breaking Old Routines

Routines are comfortable because their familiarity saves us time and thought. But when automatic pilot takes over too many aspects of our lives or the wrong ones, we feel the need to reinvigorate ourselves. Breaking out of boring old routines can be done easily and safely. Well, maybe not easily, but safely at least!

Identify the Old Routines

It's a fascinating, fun exercise to keep a log of activities, conversations and recurring thoughts for a week. This gives context to the routines that need breaking. If there's more than one habit to be done away with, put them in priority sequence. Especially

note any events that are not routine, and write down what makes them special.

Practice Kaizen

It's sometimes easier to define clearly what we *don't* want than to be certain about what we want that is better. By making small, incremental improvements, which is the Japanese concept of *kaizen*, the process of change will teach us what we want.

Doing tasks in a different way, re-decorating the surroundings or reorganizing the schedule can breathe new life into old patterns. Doing so may satisfy the need for

change, or it may suggest other renovations.

A revival of gratitude for common things makes them look shiny and new. It's impossible to be grateful and bored at the same time.

Expand Your Horizons

New perspectives must come from somewhere. Expand your horizons by talking to new people, entering new situations, travelling to new places and reading new books. Investigate how to make a dormant passion or dream a part of your life. Bring it into being step by step and don't let anyone discourage you along the way!

Is Bypassing the Salt Good for Your Heart?

Some may still be rimming their margaritas with it, but just about everyone else is trying to reduce their salt intake.

After more than a century of warnings from the medical community, most of us get the fact that high levels of salt intake are linked to hypertension (high blood pressure), which, in turn, is linked to heart attacks, strokes and death. Cut back on salt and reduce your risk of heart disease. Seems logical. However, not one study has conclusively demonstrated a direct causal relationship between salt and death from heart disease.

Even more confusing, some recent studies have gone so far as to suggest that the less sodium consumed, the greater the risk of dying from a heart attack. That's what was reported in a May 2011 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

So should we go back to happily shaking salt on our whole wheat pasta?

Maybe it's a cop-out, but moderation may be the answer. Lightly seasoned good-for-us veggies certainly trump the plain-Jane version, and if something tastes better, we're more likely to consume it. Then again, it may not be about salt at all. So pass the homemade margaritas.

This month in History

October 1, 1908 - Henry Ford's Model T, a "universal car" designed for the masses, went on sale for the first time.

October 13, 1884 - Greenwich was established as the universal time from which standard times throughout the world are calculated.

October 20, 1818 - The U.S. and Britain agreed to set the U.S.- Canadian border at the 49th parallel.

October 21, 1879 - Thomas Edison successfully tested an electric incandescent lamp with a carbonized filament, keeping it lit for over 13 hours.

Worth Reading

More Evidence That Exercise Is Key to Brain Health

By Karen Pallarito, *health.com*, in *Time Healthland*

Worried about cognitive decline? Get busy. Yes, exercise is important, but lab tests indicate that everyday activity, not just at-the-gym exercise, may help maintain brain health.

More: <http://tinyurl.com/44aff49>

How to Live the Maximalist Life

By Peter G. James Sinclair *DumbLittleMan.com*

Many questions here: How to live the best, most productive life possible by becoming a maximalist (as opposed to a minimalist)? How to think, read and associate maximalist? And is the Dumb Little Man website aptly named?

More: <http://tinyurl.com/62ctfds>

NEWS YOU CAN USE

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Bolognese

- 2 tbsps extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 lb pancetta, finely chopped
- 1 med onion, finely chopped
- 2 celery stalks, finely chopped
- 2 carrots, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 thyme sprig, leaves only
- 2 oregano sprig, leaves only
- 1 fresh rosemary sprig, needles only
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 cup cream
- 1 (28-ounce) can peeled tomatoes, hand-crushed
- 2 cups dry white wine, or 1 red and 1 white
- 1 tsp salt, pepper to taste

In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat olive oil on medium. Add pancetta and saute for 2 minutes. Add the onion, celery, carrots, and garlic; stirring to combine. Toss in thyme, oregano, rosemary, and bay leaves. Cook for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring, 'til vegetables are tender but not browned.

Raise the heat and add ground pork and beef to brown. Add cream and simmer until liquid is evaporated, about 10 minutes. Pour in tomatoes and wine; season with salt and pepper. Bring the sauce to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer 1 1/2 to 2 hours, stirring now and then, until sauce reduces and is very thick. Taste for salt/pepper. Serve over Spaghetti and top with fresh Parmesan.

Sudoku instructions: Complete the 9x9 grid so that each row, each column and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact me for the solution!

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