

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1501 Science Says to Embrace the Power of Forgetting

Are you a forgetful person? As you've gotten older, have you found that you forget things more often. Are you worried about that. Do you read articles and watch videos that tell you that maybe you're "losing it"? Well, today is for you, because science has decided to blow you a kiss. I'm Jerry Roberts and I'll explain why, next on The Extra Point.

Not too long ago, I was trying to remember the name of the Dodgers player who struck out with the bases loaded, at a critical moment in the playoffs. I couldn't come up with his name.

I was able to recall the other names I came up with for him at that moment, just not the name on the back of his uniform. Well, forgetfulness is a part of the human experience. And now, get ready for why that is a good thing.

Recent research suggests that forgetting plays an active role in learning and the maintenance of our memory.

A study published in the publication, *Cell Reports* proposes that forgetting is a crucial part of learning and memory updating. The information suggests that the brain employs strategic forgetting as a mechanism to promote adaptive behavior and facilitate memory plasticity.

What that means is the brain allows for the modification of existing memories and the creation of new memories, based on new information and experiences.

Here's something that could brighten your day. Forgotten memories are not completely erased. Instead, they enter a dormant state, awaiting potential reactivation. This explains why recognition is often easier than recall.

This has likely happened to you, as it has in my case. You met someone at a gathering and now you run into them again. You recognize their face, but you don't remember their name. You struggle to pull up the name. "Oh no," you think, "this is going to be embarrassing." Well,

it was the dormant memory that was revived, and which resulted in the recognition.

I'll give you a bonus here. How do you handle this? You reach out your hand to them and say, "Hi, I'm sure you don't remember me, I'm Jerry Roberts of Guam Training."

Maybe they forgot your name, too, and they'll reply with, "Hi Jerry, I do remember you, I'm Ray Gibson of Choice Broadcasting, it's great to see you again." No pain, no strain, no embarrassment.

To revive dormant memories, brief re-exposure to previously learned information is the key. A study published in *Psychological Science* found that individuals who reviewed material before sleep and performed a quick review the next morning, increased their long-term retention by 50%.

Got that? You go over information before you go to sleep, then do a fast review when you wake up, and long-term retention improves.

It seems to get even better. Each attempt to retrieve information from memory strengthens the memory tracer, making it easier to access in the future. Therefore, periodic review and re-learning help consolidate and reinforce memories over time.

When I complete a training with a team, I suggest to participants and their managers alike that they go over their notes within 24 hours, again in the next couple of weeks, and then once a month. This drives the data in deeper, and makes it stick.

While the idea of strategic forgetting may seem counterintuitive at first, scientific evidence suggests its vital role in memory optimization.

So, rather than seeing forgetting as a negative, embrace it as a natural part of the memory process, ensuring that you retain and build upon your knowledge effectively over time. (Con't.)

As a public service, I have now given you the perfect response when someone says to you, "Good grief, did you forget again?"

You can smile, pop out your chest proudly, and proclaim, "Yes, I did. I was doing so to build up my long-term memory!"

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: [guamtraining.com](http://guamtraining.com)

