

Remembering last year like last week: Is a perfect memory a blessing or a curse?

The ability to remember every moment of your life sounds like an amazing proposition, but for the very few people who actually have this ability, it comes at a cost.

Known as Highly Superior Autobiographical Memory (HSAM), or hyperthymesia, the condition—such that it is—was first chronicled by University of California-Irvine neurobiologist James McGaugh in 2006. In his [seminal Neurocase study](#), McGaugh described “AJ,” a 42-year-old woman “whose remembering dominates her life.”

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At the same time, AJ described her recall abilities as “exhausting,” saying her memory has “ruled her life.” She said she thinks about the past “all the time,” and that it’s like a “running movie that never stops.”

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[Research done by \[neurobiologist Craig\] Stark and his colleagues](#) shows that neurotypical people are just as good as people with HSAM at recalling personal information after one week. After longer durations of time, such as one month or a year, HSAMs retain the ability to recall information with exquisite clarity, while the neurotypical people (the control group) most certainly cannot.

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[T]here does appear to be some value in forgetting, whether it be autobiographical memory or the flood of information that pours into our brain on a daily basis. The human brain, [it has been argued](#), must forget unimportant information in order to remain efficient.

Read full, original post: [Would Perfect Memory Be a Burden or a Superpower?](#)