

Being Forgetful is a Sign of High Intelligence

by Samuel Adeosun - Tuesday, October 16, 2018

<https://dhm.com.ng/being-forgetful-is-a-sign-of-high-intelligence/>

Being forgetful has, for the most part, usually gone hand in hand with a lack of intelligence, at least that's what films and TV programs have generally tried to inform us.

However, a new study conducted by the University of Toronto is claiming that having a strong memory is a severely overrated asset and it concludes that being forgetful could actually be a benefit to your intelligence.

Professor Blake Richland, one of the publishers of the study, said:

“It’s important that the brain forgets irrelevant details and instead focuses on the stuff that’s going to help make decisions in the real world.”

We know that exercise increases the number of neurons in the hippocampus (a small, curved formation in the brain that plays an important role in the limbic system. It is involved in the formation of new memories and is also associated with learning and emotions), but they’re exactly those details from your life that don’t actually matter, and that may be keeping you from making good decisions.

Professor Richards and Paul Frankland proposed that memory is utilised to optimise decision making by retaining valuable information and letting the other unimportant stuff go, essentially making room for the things that matter.

They say that this aspect of forgetfulness is possibly a boon to us more than a hindrance.

So, say for example our brain forgets specific details about a past event, yet it still remembers the larger picture, researchers believe that this allows us to generalise previous experiences better, as opposed to someone who can remember more minute details of the event.

They are quick, however, to make a point of saying that if people forget important things at an alarming frequency, then this is a cause for concern.

The study claims that forgetting details every now and then is a sign of a healthy memory system, working exactly as it's intended. The kind of information you want to discard depends on the situation at hand, according to professor Richards:

So, one of the things that distinguishes an environment where you want to remember stuff versus an environment where you want to forget stuff is this question of how consistent the environment is and how likely things are to come back into your life.

Supposedly, the best thing for storing memories is to not memorise absolutely everything because, If

you're trying to make a decision, it will be impossible to do so if your brain is constantly being bombarded with useless information.

It's therefore pertinent for you to choose the kind of information you want to retain and as well decide on the ones you want to discard. Go for what interests you and let go of anything that is of low interest.

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